I. Renaissance: its meaning, its beginning; Medieval Legacy to the European Renaissance; Greek Texts and Classical Works translated by the Arabs

II. Oriental Influence On European Science and Art during the Renaissance

III. Original Contributions of Eastern Philosophers to European Renaissance

IV. The Marriage of Beauty to Sensuality in the Western Renaissance
The term 'Renaissance' has a wide connotation and suggests many meanings. Various are the causes that cannot be pinned down to a particular moment of time, for the real symptoms of this movement began much earlier than the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. It is also wrong to understand Renaissance as a literary movement that began with the inspiration for classical learning and classical knowledge; Oriental elements and Eastern philosophical ideas: chiefly derived from the Eastern countries in the medieval time have played as much role as the Greek texts: in this phenomenon.

Some authors make a fundamental mistake in asserting that the Renaissance was mainly brought about by the revival of interest in the classical literature of Greece and Rome. "It is," says Douglas Bush, "self evident that the Renaissance, even in its narrower meaning of a classical revival, was a heterogeneous movement which contained many mutually antagonistic impulses." ¹

If on the one hand people showed great interest in classical learning, on the other, they were quite sceptical regarding some of the classical theories and views, as Bush has pointed out, "we must remember too that classical literature was never more often attacked than it was throughout the centuries of Renaissance enlightenment." ² It is, therefore, wrong to attribute any one meaning or definition to this term, which has a wider connotation and which, embraces all literary, intellectual, economic, scientific, and cultural changes that
began to appear under various influences much earlier than the specific time attributed to Renaissance.

In their attempt to give a comprehensive meaning of the term, Otis and Needleman define Renaissance thus:

The term Renaissance means, literally and etymologically, a rebirth; without implying previous death, the term is traditionally applied to the intellectual movement that embraced the reawakening of the scholarship, the recovery of the ancient learning, the rise of the spirit of religious and scientific enquiry, and summarily the self emancipation of the individual from the thralldom of institutions. By suverting feudalism, the intellectual tyranny of scholasticism and of the Church in secular matters, the transition from medieval to modern methods of study and thought occurred.

Similarly, it is extremely difficult to pin down this to a particular period. Renaissance is generally regarded as the period starting from 1453, with the fall of Constantinople, and ending in 1603 with the death of Queen Elizabeth. Recent scholarship has shown how this is a completely erroneous view. It is all the more difficult to hold the view that Renaissance began in Europe with the end of the Middle Ages. "One view," says Bush "extends the Renaissance backward to include the Middle Ages, the other extends the Middle Ages forward to include the Renaissance." According to Bush, it was in the twelfth century that the wholesale introduction of Aristotle enabled St. Thomas Aquinas to build the great structure of rational theology, which started the movement of scientific rationalism that was to undermine the structure of the Middle Ages. This may be said to have given the mind of man a new direction and helped in ushering in the modern age.
Actually, the Arabs translated thousands of Greek works into European languages during the medieval age. It is the East and the Eastern people, the Jews and the Arabs who opened the eyes of the European people to the classical treasure. Throughout the medieval period, the West was receiving influences from the East, and with above contacts the currents from the East began to flow into Europe with a strong vigour. Taylor aptly points out the role played by the Arabs during this time:

If the Arabs contributed from their (borrowed) stores of astronomy, mathematics and medicines, still larger was the passive role played by Orient in the advance of European culture. Through the crusades the Western people came in contact with a civilization different from their own; new fields of study were suggested by the Oriental languages, for example, Arabic language from which many words passed into the Western tongues, just as new plants and fruits and hand-made wares passed westward. The crusade also did not fail to inspire literature. The Historia Transmarina of William of Tyre is second to no other history in the Middle Ages; the cycle of Crusades enriched the store of narrative poetry while ever and anon the soul of lyric genius was moved by longing for that far holy enterprise whose symbol was the Cross.

This may be regarded as the first seeds of the Renaissance sown in Europe by the East-West contact through the crusades.

The real impulse came in the twelfth century with the introduction of the Greek learning into Europe by the Arabs. Before this medieval Europe lived for many centuries in the direct tradition of Roman antiquity, used the Latin language as a medium for its learning, and though it knew almost all the ancient Roman poets and prose authors quite thoroughly, was, with a few exceptions, unfamiliar with the Greek language and the classical literature. "During the later Middle Ages," says Paul Oskar Kristeller, in his book,
Renaissance Thought, "and more specifically between the middle of the eleventh and the end of the thirteenth centuries, profound changes occurred in the intellectual culture of Western-Europe. A growing professional interest developed in philosophy and in science which was kindled by Arabic influences and nourished by a flood of Latin translations from the Arabic and from the Greek."  

In fact, until the middle of the eleventh century Western thought had developed by natural stages and in a single direction. It was active in the eleventh century in examining and debating the problems of logic that had long been potentially stimulating in its text books, and the addition to its intellectual capital in the twelfth century was, almost without exception, the logical treatise of Aristotle which amplified and classified what had already been known and discussed. Save for isolated attempts, particularly at Chartres, to construct a metaphysic and a cosmology on platonic lines, almost all primæry philosophical thought had remained within the confines of logic, and the scattered translation from the Greeks that had appeared in Sicily had very little effect in changing the currents of thoughts. Towards the end of the twelfth century the familiar views had been exploited so thoroughly that something of a pause ensued. "What the sequel would have been," comments David Knowles in the Evolution of Medieval Thought, "had no external influence made itself felt, cannot be known. In fact the whole course of medieval intellectual life was changed and enriched by the arrival of the whole Aristotelian Corpus, accompanied by other works and lengthy commentaries which introduced the west to a whole world of Arabian and Jewish
The Arabic thinkers and philosophers made a considerable contribution by receiving the Greek thoughts, commenting them, translating them, and thereafter passing the entire knowledge to the West. These philosophers, therefore, are of great significance particularly in their role as agents between the unknown and unintelligible Greek thoughts and the European world, which was as yet deprived of this rich philosophy. The body of ancient thought, Aristotelian, Neoplatonic, Arabic, and Jewish, passed on to Western Europe, particularly to Paris and Oxford, between 1190 and 1260. In the past the whole movement has too often been labelled as "the introduction of Aristotle" in the West, but, in the long run, the significant fact has also been realised that the manner of its arrival and the vehicle by which it was conveyed, had a great share in determining the quality and the extent of its influence.

These Arab thinkers and translators did something more than merely enriching the West with the thoughts and ideas which they received from the Greeks and other Eastern sources. "Besides acting," says Knowles, "as agents in the long process of translating Aristotelian thought from Syria and Persia through Egypt to Spain, the Arabian thinkers handed over a legacy of their own to the Latins." It has often been said that the Arabs were not creative thinkers, and that they did not originate a totally new system of thought. It might nevertheless be claimed that the system of Aristotle underwent at their hands a change similar to that experienced by Plato's system at the hands of the Neoplationists, or by Aristotle himself in the thirteenth
century in the hands of Aquinas. Certainly, two or three of their most celebrated thinkers interpreted and extended the doctrines of Aristotle in a significant manner, besides adding from other sources elements that were to prove hard to disentangle.

A century of translation into Arabic at Baghdad was followed by an epoch of notable thinkers. Commenting on the way the Hellenistic philosophy was handed over to the West, De Lacy O' Leary, in his book Arabic Thought and Its Place in History says:

The first contact of the Latins with the philosophy of the Muslim was in Spain, as might be expected. At that time, that is to say, during the Middle Ages, we can rightly describe the Western parts of Europe as 'Latin,' since Latin was used not only in the services of the Church but as a means of teaching and as a means of intercourse between the educated... In Spain this Latin culture was in contact with the Arabic culture of the Moslems. The transmission of Arabic material to Latin is especially associated with Raymund, who was Archbishop of Toledo from 1130 to 1150 A.D. The Archbishop Raymund desired to make the Aristotelian philosophy available for Christian use. At the moment, it will be remembered, the Muwahhids were established in Spain and their bigotry caused a number of the Jews and Christians take refuge in the surrounding countries.

Raymond founded a college of translators at Toledo which he put in charge of archdeacon Domini Gondisalvi, and entrusted him with the duty of preparing Latin translation of the most important Arabic works on philosophy and science and thus many translations of the Arabic versions of Aristotle and of the commentaries as well as the Abridgement of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina were produced. 9

About 30 years later the whole text of Aristotle's Logical Organon was in use in Paris; this had not been possible so long as the Latin translations were limited to those which were transmitted by Boethius, John, Scotus, and
the fragments of Plato derived through St. Augustine. This limited material already in the possession of the West was the foundation of scholasticism and was developed as far as it would go. But it did not go any far. Boethius transmitted a Latin version of Porphyry's Isagoge and of the Categories and Hermenanties of Aristotle while John Scotus translated the Pseudo-Dionysius.

The real development of Latin Scholasticism came in three stages; first, the introduction of the rest of the text of Aristotle, as well as the scientific work of the whole logical canon, by translation from the Arabic, then the translation from the Greek following the capture of Constantinople and thirdly the introduction of the Arabic commentators.

In 1215 Frederik II became the Emperor, and in 1231 he began to reorganise the kingdom of Sicily. He knew many languages including Arabic and he showed a special fascination for Arabic studies. In 1224 Frederick founded a University at Naples, and made it an academy for the purpose of introducing Arabic science to the Western world, and then various translations were made from Arabic into Latin and into Hebrew. Through his encouragement Michael Scot visited Toledo about 1217 and translated Ibn Rush's Commentaries on Aristotle's de coelo at de mundo as well as the first part of the de anima. It seems probable also that he was the translator of commentaries on the Meteora, Parva, Naturalia, de substantia orbis, physics and de generatione et de corruptione. Ibn Sina's commentaries were in general circulation before this, and they were very probably the
'commentaries' referred to in the Paris decree of 1209. But we do not know who was responsible for their rendering into Latin, save that they almost certainly emanated from the college of Toledo.

Another translator of this period was a German Hermanu who was in Toledo about 1256, after Frederick's death. He translated the abridgement of the Rehetoric made by Al-Parabi, Ibn Rush's abridgement of the Poetics and some other less known works of Aristotle.

By the middle of the thirteenth century nearly all the philosophical works of Ibn Rush were translated into Latin except the commentary on the Organon, which came a little later, and the Destruction of the Destruction, which was not rendered into Latin until Calonymos, a Jew, translated this in 1328.

The first evidence of the general circulation of ideas taken from Averroes is associated with William of Auvergne, who was Bishop of Paris. In 1240 William published censures against certain opinions which according to him arrived from Arabic philosophers, but mentions Averroes as an orthodox defender of truth; William Condemns the doctrine of the unity of intellects, which he incorrectly attributes to Aristotle, and also refers to Al-Parabi as maintaining this heresy. Although he disapproved of many such concepts of Greek philosophy, and does not like the dominance of Arabic thought, he upholds Averroes who is cited as a sound teacher, and who tends to correct these ideas.
When the friars began to take their place in the Universities, we find them following a liberal policy towards the Arabic commentaries and works. The leader in these newer studies was the Franciscan Alexander Hales (d. 1245), who was the first to make free use of Aristotle outside the logical Organon. From this time onward the Franciscans began to use the Arabic commentators. A more accurate study of Aristotle in medieval scholasticism was initiated by Albertus Magnus (d. 1206), the Dominican friar, who first really perceived the importance of careful and critical versions of the text, and then introduced a strictly scientific, standard method. His studies were followed and developed by his pupil St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), who arranged his works already on the lines indicated in Albertus' commentary on Aristotle's Politics. There was, however, a significant change in the works of Albertus the commentators chiefly used Ibn Sina, but in those of St. Thomas there is a free use of Averroes. Although St. Thomas shows that he is well aware of the peculiar doctrines held by the latter philosophers, he guards himself carefully from them.

St. Thomas frequently enters into controversies with the Arabic commentators and especially attacks the doctrine that there was a primal indefinite matter to which form was given at the time of creation. All these objections were essentially the same as had been already raised by the orthodox scholastics of Islam, for instance, the Arab philosopher al-Ghazali refuted it. The early medieval Christian scholastics also quoted al-Ghazali and other Eastern philosophers in refuting them.
St. Thomas received his education, before joining the Dominican order, in the University of Naples, which had been founded by Frederick II and was a centre of Arabic studies; this probably goes far to account for his accurate appreciation of the teaching of Arabic philosophy.

Incidently, St. Thomas was the first to make free use of all Arabic commentators. He regards Averroes as the best exponent of the Aristotelian text and the supreme master in logic, but heretical in his metaphysics and psychology.

About 1256 Averroes's teaching about the unity of intelligence was sufficiently widespread at Paris to induce Albertus to write his 'treatise' on the unity of the intellect against the "Averroists," a treatise which he afterwards inserted in his summa.

As Bacon points out in Copus (Text. 23), philosophers in Paris and other centres of learning in England were originally inclined towards Averroes, but in 1277 various Averroist theses to be condemned there. For the most part these criticisms emanated from the Franciscans among whom was the great Franciscan doctor Duns Scotus (d. 1308) who took a definite anti-Averroist line. These scholastic criticisms, however, could not altogether stop the influence of Averroism in the Western Universities. Even in the fourteenth century, when Averroism was practically dead at Paris, it still retained its hold among the Franciscans in England.

John Bocanthrop (d. 1346), doctor of the Carmelite order, tends to palliate the heretical tendencies of Averroes' teaching, and he was called by his contemporaries
the prince of Averroists, a title which was apparently regarded as a compliment.

Among the Augustinian friars Giles of Rome in his *de Erroribus Philosophorum* was an opponent of the teaching of Averroes, especially attacking the doctrine of the unity of souls, but Paul of Venice (d. 1429) of the same order shows a tendency favourable to Averroism in his *Summa*.

The real home of Averroism was the University of Bologna with its sister University of Padua, and from these two centres the Averroist influence spread to North-East Italy, including Venice and Ferrara and it continued there until the 17th century. According to Knowles, "it was a precursor of the rationalism and anti-church feeling of the Renaissance, perhaps assisted by Venetian contact with the East. At Bologna the Arabic influence was predominant in medicine; already in the later thirteenth century the medical course centres in the cannon of Avicenna and the medical treatment of Averroes." 10

The 'Great Commentary,' was finally published at Padua and in 1334 the Servite friar Urbano de Bologna published a commentary on the commentary of Averroes, which was printed in 1492 by order of the general of the Servites. But it is Gaetano of Tiena (d. 1465), a canon of the cathedral at Padua, who is generally regarded as the founder of Paduan Averroism. He seems to have had much popularity as many copies of his lectures survive. This averroist cult in Padua held good throughout the greater part of the fifteenth century.
Officially the University of Padua continued to maintain a moderate type of Averroism. In 1472 the editio princeps of Averroes' commentaries was published at Padua. There in 1495-7 Niphus produced a full edition. Through the next half a century a series of essays, discussions, and analyses of Averroes was produced almost continuously, and in 1552-3 appeared the great edition of Averroes' commentaries with marginal notes by Zimara. In the course of sixteenth century also Padua produced a new translation of Averroes from Hebrew. The last of Averroist successor was Caeser Cremonini, (d.1631) who, however, shows a strong leaning towards Alexandrianism. By this time the study of the Arabic philosophers in Europe was confined to the centres of learning and to the commentaries of Averroes.

Outside Padua and Bolgna Averroes retained his position as the principal exponent of Aristotle to the end of the fifteenth century. In the ordinances of Louis XI(1473) it is laid down that the masters at Paris are to teach Aristotle and to use as commentaries Averroes, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, and similar writers instead of William of Ockham and others of his school which amounts to saying that the official attitude was realistic and not nominalistic.

With the sixteenth century the study of the Arabic commentators fell into disputes outside Padua and its circles, but for a century the Arabic philosophers continued to have a limited range of influence on the European Universities. Knowles has pointed this in the following:

The line of transmission in and after the fifteenth century lay in the development of the anti-ecclesiastical spirit in North-East Italy under the influence of the Arabic
Philosophers. The arrival of the Greek scholars after the fall of Constantinople and the growth of resultant interest in archeological research diverted attention, but this should not disguise the fact that the pro-Arabic element in scholastic days was the direct parent of the philopagan element in the Renaissance, at least in Southern Europe. 11

The great revival of learning in Europe which began to flower in the twelfth century nurtured by translations from the Arabic slowed down later chiefly owing to hostility for Mohammadanism and to the Church's growing impression that Averroism had adverse influence on the orthodox Christian people. But this did not affect the process of diffusion. The Latin translations from the Arabic continued to be copied, circulated, and studied. And the great names of the major Arabic scientists and also the names of the Arabic Philosophers - - Alkendi, Alfarabi and Avicenna - - continued to be invoked by the medieval scholars. Throughout the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the influence of Arabic Philosophical writings in Europe continued steadily, though slowly and on a diminished scale.

The Renaissance is generally thought of in terms of two major phenomana: (1) a turning away from the works of the medievals and back to those of the ancient themselves and (2) a turning away from the authority of the Aristotle - - the prime authority of the medievals - - to that of other ancient authorities, especially Plato and Pythagoras. The influence of Arabian philosophy on European thought, however, tends to be overlooked.

During the Middle Ages Constantinople acted as a meeting ground of the West and the East. It was a City
under the domination of the Christians in the midst of the
Ottoman Empire as an island. This situation led, on the
one hand, to an interest in the possible reconciliation
between the Church of Rome and that of the East — a
circumstance which took Nicholas of Cusa on a mission to
Constantinople in the late 1440's. On the other hand,
the Turkish threat to Constantinople re-aroused the
European interest in matters Arabic and Islamic which had
become dormant since the fever-pitch of the early Crusades.
The fall of the City in 1453 presaged: (1) a great revival
in the Christian polemic against Islam (2) the revival of
interest in the ancients; (3) and the renewal of interest
in the Arabic philosophers as the works of the ancients.

Frederick II of Hohenstanffen founded the University
of Naples in 1224, which had the works of Aristotle and
those of his Arabic expositors in its curriculum. The
University exerted an influence on others throughout
Europe, especially on two other Italian Universities, those
of Bologna and Padua. The renewed interest in the East
coming in the wake of the decline and fall of Constantinople
led, primarily at Padua and Bologna, to a restored interest
in the Arabic expositions of Aristotle and the renewal of
Averroism. The interest was not confined to scholastic
doctors of Paris and other Universities; it extended to
wider spheres among the materialistic teachers of the
medieval schools and the sceptical men of the cities of
Northern Italy. The Patricians of Venice and the lecturers
of Padua made Averroism the hallmark of advanced and
enlightened thinking.
This was a second wave of Latin translation of Arabic philosophical works extending wholly to Italy. The translations by Andreas Plagus (d. 1520), primarily of medical works of Avicenna, were made directly from the Arabic by a Padua professor who had spent over thirty years in the East in the study of Arabic and the pursuit of Avicenna manuscripts. More prominent are the translators, Elia del Medigo (fl. c. 1490) and Jacob Mantinus (d. 1549), who dealt primarily with Avicenna and Averroes.

This 'second wave' in the latinization of Arabic philosophy led to a curious and ironic circumstance. The Italian Aristotelians of the periods, represented at the highest point of development by Julius Caesar Scaliger and Joeols Zabarella, possessed a more detailed and accurate understanding of Aristotle and his philosophical system than was known by anyone before in Latin Europe.

The Averroist tradition of Padua kept alive the Arabic interest in the spirit of enquiry respecting natural science; it actually provided intellectual grist to the mill of Galileo and his teachers.

There was the third wave of the impact of Arabic philosophy on the West, which is known the least. Protestant theological doctrines sought to compensate for the loss of the authority of the Church by turning to the authority of the scripture; as a result, a strong impetus was given to Biblical scholarship in the Protestant circles. The study of Arabic came to be regarded as an adjunct to the study of Biblical antiquity chiefly because various Arabic commentaries and theological treatises helped the Protestant
Biblical scholars in explaining the text with their own interpretation and arguments without depending on the meaning given by the so-called authorities; and, as such, Arabic study received considerable impetus in the Universities. Archbishop William Laud founded a chair of Arabic studies at Oxford in 1636 in order to rival the Cambridge Professorship endowed by Sir Thomas Adairs four years earlier.

The contribution of the Scaliger family to the cause of Eastern learning is remarkable. Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609) is particularly remembered for his *De Emendatione Temporum*, that revolutionized ancient chronology by insisting on the recognition and importance of the historical material relating to the Jews, the Persians, the Babylonians, and the Egyptians. Similarly, Edward Pocock the elder (1604-91) and Edward Pocock the younger (1648-1727) also dedicated themselves to the cause of Arabic learning and philosophy.

The younger Pocock's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* (the living one, son of the Vigilant) is a philosophical romance based on a rough model by Avicenna. The guiding concept here is that human capacity even when unaided by any external inspiration may attain to the higher knowledge of the world and discover by degrees its dependence on a Supreme Being. Thus the impact of Arabian philosophy on the West has not only been continuous, but also extensive and profound.

Kristeller points out another aspect of the Arabic philosophy that helped to sustain Aristotelian study till the late Renaissance. According to him, Averroes actually
made a distinction between faith and philosophy, Christian theology and Aristotle; and it was owing to this distinction that interest in Aristotelian studies was kept alive during and even after the Renaissance. The main intention of the author in this work is:

- to show how Aristotle had become by the early fourteenth century, the master of those who know, in order to emphasize the additional fact which is less widely known, that this Aristotelian tradition, though exposed to attacks and subject to transformations, continued strangely and vigorously to the end of the sixteenth century and even later.
- The Renaissance is still in many respects an Aristotelian age which in part continued the trends of medieval Aristotelianism and in part gave it a new direction under the influence of classical humanism and other different ideas. 12

It was Averroism, therefore, that kept Aristotle alive and the intellectual spirit which almost brought about a total revolution against all kinds of authoritarianism. As such Averroism became one of the ruling modes of thought in the West. This has been analysed and aptly expressed by Hitti:

"Though using in most instances a Latin translation of Hebrew rendition of an Arabic commentary upon an Arabic translation of a Greek Original, the minds of the Christian Schoolmen, and scholars of medieval Europe were agitated by Ibn Roshd's Aristotle as by no other author. From the end of the twelfth to the end of the sixteenth century, Averroism remained the dominant school of thought, and that in spite of the orthodox reaction it created first among the Moslems in Spain then among the Talmudists and finally among the Christian clergy ... his writings after being purged of objectional matter by ecclesiastic authorities, became prescribed studies in the University of Paris and other institution of higher learning. 13"

Thus, by the sixteenth century Averroes philosophy became in the words of Renan "almost the official philosophy of Italy in general." 14
remarkable man of the East held sway over the intellect of Europe and laid the foundation of the Italian Renaissance. Coulton compares his influence with that of Darwin in our time, but for the comparison to be true, Darwinism has yet to live for three more centuries. Islamic studies as well as Eastern concepts, therefore, played a tremendous role in enriching the European civilization in the medieval times leading to the great achievements of the Renaissance. According to Dr. Schmidt, the ultimate cause of the Renaissance lies in the Islamic philosophical thoughts and commentaries; he says, "without the stimulation, without the slow penetration of the scholastic spirit in every field of Islam, European civilization would have stood still, it would have been stranded as a ghetto civilization."  

Thus Renaissance began with almost a cosmopolitan character with various different strands of thoughts -- Greek, Latin, Arabic -- all contributing to the basic elements of this movement. At the end it emerged not only as a European movement, but as a wider phenomenon comprising the most important literary, artistic, and cultural features of the West as well as of the East. Commenting on this particular feature of Renaissance, W. P. Frederic observes:

No period in the European literature offers more exciting and more exacting problems for the student of comparative literature than does the Renaissance. By its very nature the Renaissance was a period of intellectual cosmopolitanism and at the same time of growing political rationalism. Indeed students of Renaissance whether they be students of English, French, Spanish or Germanic literature, cannot avoid becoming internationalists.
Apart from the various eastern ideas which added to the richness of the Renaissance thought system, the East also played a significant role in other fields of Renaissance life. Between the middle of the thirteenth century and 1527 (the sack of Rome by the Germans) was laid the foundation of scientific knowledge. During this period the men of the East, scientists, free-thinkers, physicians, artists, and explorers, played as much role, perhaps a greater role, than the people of the West in laying the foundation of the scientific knowledge for the modern world.

One of the most important discoveries that took place is the idea of the people regarding the physical surface of the globe which the people of the East began to explore right from the beginning of the twelfth century. The Arabs were among the earliest men to make maps, charts and sea routes early in the thirteenth century. It was from the greatest Moslem astronomer, Abu Masher, that the West first learnt of the connection between the moon and the tides. Yaqut, a former Greek slave also known as al-Rumi, compiled a massive six-volume geographical dictionary Mujam-al-Balad in 1228, which contained a great deal of information about the physical features, climate, plant and animal life of various parts of the world. The most remarkable map of the world was drawn by a Moroccan, al-Idrisi, in the twelfth century; it recognizes the earth's shape as being spherical and also places the Nile correctly. A proof of the acceptance of Mohammedan geographical views-
by Christian writers is the world-map to be found in the
*Opus Tarvae Sanctae* completed by Marrino Sanuto in 1321
and dedicated to the Pope.

A legacy of still greater importance was the idea
that the known hemisphere of the world has a centre or
'world summit' situated at an equal distance from the east,
the west, the north and the south. Al-Battuni speaks of
this 'cupola of the Earth' as an island, but another author
of his time Ibn Rusta had already known it as 'cupola of Arin'.
The word 'Arin' is a misreading of the Arabic transliteration
of the name of Indian town Ujjayini (Ozen' in Ptolemy's
geography), where there was an astronomical observatory, and
on the meridian of which town the 'world summit,' which was
originally an Indian conception was supposed to lie. Like
the Moslem astronomers their Christian disciples considered
this doctrine to be of the highest importance; among the
latter were Adelard of Bath, who translated in 1126 the
trigonometrical tables of Khawarizmi, Gerard of Cremona
(1114-87), and Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus; the last
two lived in the thirteenth century. The Arin (or Arim)
theory was still to be found in the image *Mundi* of Cardinal
Peter of Atty, published in 1410, and it was from this
book that Christopher Columbus learnt that the earth was
shaped like a pear and that, on the western hemisphere
opposite the summit of Arin, there was another centre, much
more elevated than the one on the eastern side so as to form
the shape of the lower half of a pear. "Thus: Islamic
geographical theory," says Kramers, "may claim a share in
the discovery of new world."
From earliest times the Persian Gulf was the land of navigational activities of Asia and Europe. All maritime powers, the Portuguese, the Turks, the British, and the Dutch tried to dominate those waters. Inspired by the geographical knowledge of the East, daring seamen, guided by scientific research and trained in the new learning at the school founded by the Portuguese Prince called Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), sailed along the Atlantic coast of Africa, rounded the cape (1486-9) and laid open to the Portuguese the wealth of the Indies. The Portuguese sea-men were fully acquainted with the geographical knowledge made available to them by the Arab Geographers and astronomers; they used chiefly the Arabic geographical maps and sea routes. Kramers makes a significant statement here: "When Vasco de Gama after his circumnavigation of Africa in 1498 had reached Malinidi on the East coast of Africa, it was an Arab pilot that showed him the way to India. According to Portuguese sources this pilot was in possession of a very good sea-map and of other maritime instruments." 19

Pearce, too, states as follows in support of this view: "In 1497, even before Amerigo had reached South America, the Portuguese Captain, Vasco da Gama, sailed right round the Cape of Good Hope to Zanziban on the East Coast of Africa. From there, with the help of an Arab Pilot, he sailed on to India, reaching Calicut on the Malabar Coast." 20

Arabic sources of that time also refer to this fact, and mention the name of the Pilot as Ahmed Ibn Majid. He was the writer of Sailing manual for the Indian Ocean, the Red-Sea, the Persian Gulf, South China, and the East Indian Archipelago. According to a statement of Sir R.F.Burton
Ibn Majid was regarded as the inventor of the compass.

Thirty years after Columbus reached the new world, Magellan's expedition (1519-22) circumnavigated the Globe. The results of these great voyages were numerous. Evidently, these voyages brought about a revolution in the fields of commerce and trade. In other words, civilization, hitherto centred in the Mediterranean, came in closer contact with other people, and the influence of the Eastern civilization began to spread more rapidly.

A transformation of men's outlook upon nature was effected when the place of the earth in the solar system was determined by the discovery of a new scientific system. For more than a thousand years the learned as well as the vulgar in the West had accepted the Ptolemaic hypothesis that the earth is the centre of the universe. But this was not accepted fully by Arab astronomy, which was in a flourishing condition in Spain in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It was studied for a long time in the East and continued to retain the interest of scholars of medieval Europe. In Spain al-Zarkali (Arzachel), who lived in (1029-1087), was famous as an instrument maker. He invented a saifiha (an astrolabe) on which he wrote a treatise out of which a whole body of literature developed. A Jew of Montpellier translated it into Latin, King Alfonso of Castile made two translations of it into Romance (Spanish), and Regiomontanus in the fifteenth century published a collection of problems on the noble instrument of the Saifiha. Al-Bitruji (Alpetragius), a disciple of the philosopher Ibn Tufail (twelfth century), had original ideas on the movements of
planets. He left a book which was translated into Hebrew by Moses Ben Tibbon and then into Latin in the sixteenth century by Kalymos ben David. The Alfonso Tables compiled in the thirteenth century by Alfonso X the wise are a development of Arab astronomy. The longitudes are referred to the meridian of Toledo. During the Renaissance, Regiomontanus, in order to reconstruct the ecliptical theory of Ptolemy, used Arabic books, and it was from them that he became acquainted with the alidade, the name of which is derived from Arabic, al-idadah, (the revolving radius showing the degrees cut off on the arc).

Copernicus quotes Arzachel along with Alpetragius in his book De Revolutionibus Orbium coelestium, and his discovery that the earth rotates on its axis and the planets revolve in orbits round the sun was based on other earlier discoveries made by these and other Moslem astronomers. As De Vaux records, "these scholars had unfettered and inquiring minds, they do not hesitate to criticise Ptolemy, and with Averroes they declare themselves against the theory of the multiplicity and eccentricity of the spheres." This new theory of the daily rotation of the earth, which Copernicus arrived at under the influence of the earlier eastern astronomers, was decisively confirmed by Galileo (1564-1642) with the aid of the invention of the telescope. Indeed, the invention of telescope itself may be traced to the work of another Moslem scientist, Alhazen's, Optica Thesaurus. With these new ideas regarding the position of the earth it was no longer necessary to accept the Aristotelian distinction between the unchanging heavens and a mutable, sublunary world. Thus the leading eastern astronomers played as important a
role, if not more, that the people of the West, in the expansion of the Renaissance man's view of the universe; the conception of worlds beyond worlds in unbounded space, the relegation of the earth, man's habitation to an insignificant and transitory position within one of these numberless systems; and the explanation of nature in scientific not spiritual terms.

The sixteenth century witnessed the rebirth not only of astronomy and physics, but also of the biological sciences, medicine and anatomy. The Renaissance, in Michelet's phrase, bore fruits alike in the rediscovery of the world, and in the rediscovery of man. In this field too the eastern scientists, Arabs and Jews, made a significant contribution through their discoveries since the twelfth century. Rahazes's al-Hawi, i.e., Comprehensive Book, which was translated into Latin under the auspices of Charles I of Augon by the Sicilian-Jewish physician, Paraz ibn Salim (Farragut) of Girgenti (who finished his enormous task in 1279), had a great impact on the Western World, particularly in opening up studies in the field of natural science, biology, and medicine. Rahazes's disciple, Issac Judaeus's works were among the first to be translated into Latin, the task being accomplished by Constantine the African in about 1080. These exercised a great influence on Western medieval medicine and were still being read in the seventeenth century. Later, the works on chemistry by Jabir, who was the disciple of Issac, were soon translated into Latin; the first version of this was brought out by the Englishman Robert of Chester in A.D. 1144. The translation of the Book of the Seventy into Latin was one:
of the achievements of famous Gerard of Cremona (d. 1187). A work entitled the *Sun of Perfection* is ascribed to Jabir by the English Translator Richard Russell (1678), who describes him as 'Geber' the most famous Arabian prince and philosopher. Similarly, the surgical treatises of Abulcasis containing illustrations of instruments which especially helped to lay the foundation of survey in Europe, were earlier translated into Latin, Provencal and Hebrew. The celebrated French surgeon Gay de Chauliac (1300-68) appended the Latin version to one of his works. Federick II was so interested in Zoology that he used his wealth and his friendly relationship with Moslem rulers to keep a menagerie of elephants, dromedaries, lions, leopards, falcons, owls, etc., which he took with him in his travels. Guy de Chauliac (d. 1368), the Surgeon of Mountpellier, took up difficult operations for rupture and cataract. Lanfranchi of Milan, who established himself in France, introduced advanced methods in ligature of blood-vessels and suture of wounds. All these discoveries paved the way for the advancement of the knowledge of the human body and nature in the Renaissance. The anatomical research of Veslius (1514-14) formed the groundwork for Harvey's discovery of the circulation of blood, in the succeeding centuries. Descartes built on Harvey's work, when he traced the links that connect the physical stimulus, through the sense organs and the nervous system, with the brain, which give rise to feelings. For the first time the problem of the relation of mind and body was formulated in scientific terms.

One of the most significant phenomena that led to man's mastery over the surface of the earth was the
exploration of the sea routes. The role of the Arabs in this field was very important. The Moslems had already established their sea-routes from the twelfth century onward. Mesopotamia or the Persian Gulf was linked to Baghdad, the centre of the Islamic Empire. The whole of the Indian ocean was used by the Arabs for the purpose of navigation. The great merchants of Baghdad obtained the silk of China and the spices and aromatics of India, different kinds of wood, coconuts, and muscat nuts. All these wares found their way from Islamic countries into Europe, which then had a direct traffic with those countries. In later centuries Africa also remained a domain completely under the Moslem trade and navigation, and the people of Europe had no knowledge of this land at all. As Kramers records, "still the Europe of the Renaissance had no information except from Mohammadan sources about the interior of the Dark continent, for the description of Africa by the Christianised Muslim Leo Africanus in 1526 was then, and for long afterwards, almost the only source of knowledge." 22

By the time we come to the Renaissance we find that in manifold ways commercial relationship had led to close co-operation between Moslems and Christians, e.g., in the form of joint partnerships and commercial treaties. Chinese, Indian and African products which the enterprising Arabs had fetched from far distant lands as well as their own products were brought by them to Europe. All these opened the eyes of the people of Europe to the riches of the Orient and inspired the adventurers during the Renaissance to set out in search of new worlds.

It was chiefly because of the desire of the Spanish
Sovereign Queen Isabella for commercial expansion united with the new spirit of scientific enquiry that Columbus reached the New World in 1492. The leading maritime nations now eagerly competed for access to and control of the Asian markets, and the northern states, France, Holland, and England contended for sea power, first against Portugal and Spain and then amongst themselves. The struggle lasted till the close of Napoleonic War. Thus a new culture based on maritime activity and commercial expansion came into being.

It may be noted here that the imported products of the East led to changes in dress, food, and the style of living among the well-to-do classes. It has been remarked by C.S. Lewis that the interest of The Merchant of Venice is focussed on the precious metals; for the influx of precious metals from the East not only altered the value of money and the scale of prices, but also had a great influence on the socio-economic standard of the Renaissance life.

One of the major factors that paved the way for Renaissance and enabled the people of Europe to enjoy the fruits of humanism was the invention of printing, the development of the paper industry, and the methods of book production. In this field too the Moslem of the East played a major and decisive role. For a long time Islamic manuscripts continued to be produced by the scribes, the most honoured of all craftsmen, and preserved in leather bound book forms with beautiful designs. Further, although printing was perfected in Europe long before it spread to
Muslim countries, it is from the Far East that the West borrowed the invention of the printing press. The Moslems first came to know of paper, an ancient Chinese invention, when they captured Samarkand in 704, and learnt from Chinese workmen the art of making it. Its use spread eastwards throughout Islamic countries. A considerable number of Arabic manuscripts written on paper date from the ninth century, but it was not imported into Christian Europe until the twelfth and was still uncommon there even in the thirteenth. The first European paper factories were established by the Moslems in Spain and Sicily, from where the manufacture passed into Italy. In the fifteenth century with the introduction of mechanical apparatus, paper became an essential material in the manufacture of machine-made books, without which printing could hardly have progressed as it has done.

It is not, however, solely on account of paper that the publisher is indebted to the Moslems. During the fifteenth century, when Venice was so actively absorbing and scattering abroad Islamic fashions in art, books bound in Italian work shop assumed a highly Oriental appearance. At this period some volumes took on a feature peculiarly common in Moslem bindings, the flap that folds over to front edges. This feature still persists in certain bindings made for accountants and is a memorial of their Oriental descent. Further, the West also learnt the technique of rich decoration and the innovation of decorating with leather covers from the Moslems, who had perfect skill in this art. Similarly, the gaily decorated 'marbled' patterns so common upon end-papers, paper covers, and edges:
of books bound in European workshops, were directly derived from Oriental sources. Marbled papers were known in England from the time of Bacon, who tells us that "the Turkes have a pretty art of chamoletting of paper which is not with us in use. They take diverse oyled colours, and put them several (in drops) upon water, and stir the water lightly, and then wet their paper (being of same thickness) with it and the paper will be waved, and veined, like chamolet or Marble." 23

Thus with the invention of printing (C 1455) and the introduction of the manufacture of paper and the rich designs of book production by the Moslems, the Renaissance achieved a remarkable success in the field of diffusion of knowledge. Early in the sixteenth century the Spanish Cardinal Ximenes directed the preparation of a polyglot edition of the Bible in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin which was published in 1552. Because of this, a reading public came into being outside the bounds of the University, the monastery and the Church. "The invention of printing," says De Burgh, "with all its inestimable advantages had opened the door to the domination of the letter over the spirit." 24 With this indeed, the Renaissance reached its culmination.

Although the attention of the scholars and the artists of Renaissance was being focussed on the art of classical antiquity, Greek architecture, and Hellenistic beauty, the artistic world of Islam, with its artistic achievements in different fields, was not a closed book to the people of the Renaissance. "Perhaps nowhere," says Dr. Semidt, "are the influences of the Oriental civilization on the Occidental are of deeper and more lasting effect than
in the field of the fine arts, in literature as well as architecture. Perhaps, it is the artistic sensibility of the Eastern people that made Goethe observe, "Only a man who knows and loves Hafiz (a renowned poet of the East) understands the songs of Calderon."

The West owes a great deal to the East as regards the development of artistic taste, the knowledge of beautiful objects, and love for fine arts. From Persia, largely through Turkish and Syrian channels, Western people gathered the knowledge of certain flowers, now commonly cultivated in the western gardens, but once known in Europe only from representations of them seen on pottery and porcelain imported from the Islamic East. The tulip was first brought to the West by Busbecq, imperial ambassador to Constantinople, about the middle of the sixteenth century.

Among the various minor arts that the West derived from the East may be mentioned the incised method of drawing, known as graffito work. Though this was in common use in China, it actually did not originate there, as it also occurs in pre-Islamic Egypt. In the fifteenth century the process was used with great success by Italian potters, who not only derived it from Islamic sources, but also obtained from the East much of the mature technical knowledge that was so serviceable to them in the revival of the ceramic arts during the Renaissance.

The Moslems achieved a great triumph in what is known as 'lustred pottery', which was imitated with great vigour by the Renaissance people, particularly in Italy and Venice.
The best example of this may be found in the eastern vase painted usually in turquoise, dark blue, and black. A pot of such a shape and shade was known to the Italians as an albarello, a term perhaps derived from the Arabic al-barniya, denoting a drug-jar. The name shows the purpose that such vessels served in the Orient and the use to which they continued to be put in Italy. In the fifteenth century, Italian apothecary shops displayed many such pots, filled with drugs and preserves imported from the East. The Italian actually obtained drug-jars painted in lustre from Valencia, the Islamic centre of wares; in the West, where examples that rank amongst the finest ever made were manufactured, sometimes to the order of foreign purchasers, whose arms were painted upon them. Spanish lustred pottery inspired Italian emulation so successfully that in the sixteenth century native potters learnt how to illuminate characteristic Renaissance designs with unfading brilliance in ways that broke definitely with tradition.

In Syria, the Moslems developed a characteristic style of glass decoration, seen upon numerous bottles, beakers, vases, and other objects painted with figures and formal ornaments in coloured enamels and often with gold. Contemporary documents show that Syrian glass was highly prized in Christian Europe during the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. In the inventory of treasures belonging to Charles V of France, in 1397, two entries describe this kind of glass very explicitly thus, "Trois potz de voirre Ouvre par dehors a ymages a la façon de Damas;" and, "Un bassin plat de voirre paint a la façon
Another Syrian beaker now in the British Museum must have been made specially for a Christian, for it bears figures of the Virgin and Child, St. Peter and St. Paul, and an inscription in Latin. In the fifteenth century, Venetian glass-workers, famous throughout Europe since the thirteenth century, turned their attention to Oriental methods, and mastered the process of enamelling so thoroughly that it soon ceased to be a Moslem monopoly. From Venice the art spread to other European centres and developed new styles. The jaily enamelled spirit-bottles so common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are debased descendants of the medieval Moslem skill.

The Moslems also excelled in sumptuous textile arts which they developed in Syria, Persia and Egypt and thereafter introduced them in the West. Such was their interest in the luxurious and rich silken textiles that they rapidly gained a dominating position as leading silk-merchants in the medieval worlds. This is shown by the names by which main fabrics were known in the Middle Ages; trade terms have persisted in some cases down to the present times, recording the distant places where certain materials were originally made, or the markets where they were produced. Thus the cloth known in Chaucer's time as 'fustan' came from Fustat, the Moslem capital of Egypt. The stuff still called 'damask' took its name from Damascus, that great trade-centre to which the West referred many things not exclusively made there. The European 'muslin' is the 'mussolina' imported by Italian merchants from Mosul. Baghdad Italianized as 'Baldaco,' gave its name to the rich silk fabrics brought thence and also, to the silken canopy
suspended over the altar in many churches, known as the 'baldacchino.' In later times dress fabrics from Granada were known as 'grenadines' in European shops, where ladies also bought Persian 'taftah' under the name of 'taffeta.'

The Attabiyah quarter of Baghdad, where the descendants of Attab dwelt, a well-known tribe connected with the prophet, was, in the twelfth century, famous for a special fabric which, imitated in Spain, was known as attabi silk and was later introduced into the West by the Spanish Moslems. France and Italy adopted it as 'Tabis,' and very soon by this trade name it became popular throughout Europe. Christie gives an interesting record of how "in 1661, on October 13 (Lord's Day) Pepys put on his 'false taby waste coat with gold lace,' all unconscious of world's ancient history, and in 1786 Miss Burney attended a royal birthday celebration at Windsor attired in a gown of 'lilac tabby,' a tint known in Persia as 'lilaq' and brought westwards with the flowering shrub of that name." 27

(Christie II 113) In the medieval age the demand for rich silk textiles increased rapidly in Europe as the Oriental trade developed. Finely wrought stuff from Moslem countries were so popular that Western enterprise found in this lucrative industry a potential source of wealth, and, setting up looms in various centres, began seriously to compete with the Eastern and Spanish factories. It was largely from Sicily, where Moslem invaders had established in the royal palace at Palermo a famous weaving house; this continued to flourish when the island reverted to Christian rule under the Normans. The first Italian workers gained their technical knowledge and models for their
1. Royal Muslim Fabric Used as Church Vestment

2. Fabric Made for a Caliph as Object of Christian Veneration

3. Muslim Fabric with Iranian Motif Serving as Wrapping for the "Veil of Our Lady"
designs from this centre. At the beginning of the thirteenth century silk-weaving was already the chief industry in several opulent western cities, where fabrics, hard to distinguish from the Sicilian stuff they imitated, were produced and exported in profusion.

Throughout the Middle Ages up to the late sixteenth century Oriental silk was often made up into church vestment and was also used for the rich royal robes of the European monarchs. Curiously enough, the robes of the medieval German Emperors bore Arabic inscriptions; they were ordered and executed probably in Sicily, where Islamic art and silk industry continued for a long time after the Christian reconquest. In the greatest Cathedrals of Christendom textiles from various Moslem weaving centres provided the precious fabrics with which to wrap the relics of saints or to serve as priestly vestments. This may be seen in Fig. I which shows royal Moslem fabric used as Church Vestment — a Cape of Mamluk brocade inscribed with 'al-Sultan al-alim' (the learned Sultan). It belongs to the early fourteenth century found in Danzig, Mary's Church. Similarly Fig. 4 illustrates the Muslin fabric with Iranian motif serving as wrapping for the 'Veil of Our Lady.' It belongs to the eighth century and has been preserved in Chartres Cathedral. Sometimes these fabrics became the very object of veneration. In many instances these textiles had Arabic inscriptions, some even praising Allah, but this indication of their origin did not interfere with people's appreciation of these. Indeed, when at the end of the Middle Ages and during the early Renaissance, painters wanted to present the Madonna in a worthy garment, they very often adorned her robes with
border designs in which Arabic writing was imitated. Fig-2 depicts a fabric which was made for a Caliph but became an object of Christian veneration. It presents a section of the "Veil of St. Annie," of silk tapestry made in Damietta, Egypt, in 1096 (or 1097) for the Fatimid Caliph al-Musta'li bittah and his vazier al-Afdel. At present it is to be found at the Church of St. Annie, France.

The carpet, which has now become a universal necessity, came into Europe from the East as a luxury reserved for wealthy connoisseurs, who at first regarded it more as a treasure than as a thing of use. From representations of Oriental rugs in Italian pictures it may be concluded that they came to Europe at least as early as the fourteenth century. In the sixteenth century they were regular articles of commerce. It has been recorded that in 1521 Cardinal Wolsey, through the good offices of the Venetian Ambassador, secured sixty Oriental rugs for his palace at Hampton Court. They probably resembled examples seen in pictures by Holbein, which can be matched by existing carpets made in Asia Minor at that time. At Boughton House, in Northamptonshire, are preserved three pile carpets especially made for Sir Edward Montagu, with his arms and date 1584, woven in the border. Known then as Turkey carpets, they are decorated with shaped ornaments, coloured blue, and enlivened with details in yellow, set upon a red ground. In the sixteenth century Persian craftsmen carried carpet weaving to heights never attained before or since, producing with miraculous skill designs unparalleled in beauty. European craftsmen learnt how to weave pile-carpets from the Moslems, using at first the traditional Oriental sleight of hand,
3. A Fatimid Decoration Re-used in a Vessel for the Host

5. Fatimid Rock Crystal Vessel as Container of the Miraculous Blood
8. An Early Muslim Rug with Geometric Patterns on a Flemish Painting of the Fifteenth Century

9. An Early Muslim Rug with an Animal Design on an Italian Painting of the Fifteenth Century
but later by purely mechanical means.

No less significant is the medieval use of carved rock crystal vessels and implements which, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, were made in Fatimid Egypt and which later influenced to a great extent the Renaissance artists of Europe. On reaching Europe they were inserted like precious stones and enamels in ceremonial crosses, monstrances, and ecclesiastical lighting fixtures. It was in this manner that a crescent shaped ring carved with the name of the Sultan al-Zahir li-Izaz-din-allah (1021-1036) made a metamorphosis from an ornament probably once worn by the Sultan's horse to the crowning element of a late Gothic monstrance. Thus Fig-3 shows a Fatimid decoration re-used in a late Gothic vessel for the consecrated Ghost, set into a gilded monstrance of the fifteenth-sixteenth century to be found now at Nuremberg's Germanisches National Museum. There are also many other instances of Moslem crystal vessels being used as reliquaries in Cathedrals and Churches. A characteristic example of this group is the Reliquiario de Sangue Miraculoso in St. Mark's in Venice. Its cylindrical body shows an arabesque decoration, and, in addition, a Kufic inscription demonstrating its original dedication to Allah which, however, did not prevent its later use as a receptacle for the Holy Blood. Fig-5 shows such a Fatimid rock crystal vessel used as container of the Miraculous Blood. The vessel is of late tenth century carving in an Italian mounting of the early fifteenth century, present in Venice St. Mark's. There are many such reliquaries, i.e., Moslem made bottles with relics of the Holy Virgin, John the Baptist, and Mary Magdalen.
We may also find the influence of the Moslem artists on writings in all kinds of ecclesiastical works of art. In Fig-6 is shown simulated Arabic writing on a Cathedral door—a section of the door of the Cathedral of Notre Dame du Pay—while Fig-7 shows simulated Arabic writing in the Halo of the Madonna from the details of Madonna and child by Gentile de Fabriand (c. A. 1360-1427) now present at Washington National Gallery of Art, Kress Collection.

In other spheres too Moslem art exercised great influence. As early as the fourteenth century Oriental rugs came to be used under the throne of Madonna, under the feet of the Saints, as floor coverings in rooms and courtyards and as table covers—in short nearly always in place of honour. Evidence of this can be found in the paintings of the period. In Fig-8 is shown an early Moslem rug with geometric patterns on a Flemish painting of the fifteenth century; its, subject being, Madonna and the child with angels, by Hans Memling (c. A. 1430-1494), showing an Oriental carpet under the throne (Washington, National Gallery of Art, Mellon Collection). Similarly Fig-9 presents an early Moslem rug with an animal design on an Italian painting of the fifteenth century. It has as its subject, 'Adoration of the child' by Sano di Pietro (1406-1481) showing an Oriental rug with a pattern of two birds on either side of a tree (Washington National Gallery of Art, Kress Collection).

Thus, the influence of the Oriental skill in the various fields of minor arts has been of no less importance in providing inspiration than the Hellenistic ones on the Renaissance in Europe. Commenting on the influence of the
East on the Renaissance in these fields, Ettinghausen observes:

Western artists were fascinated by Moslem ornamentation, especially by the arabesque. When, in Venice in the first half of the sixteenth century, Near Eastern metal workers created vessels and platters with rich and yet well balanced arabesque decorations, Western artists were not slow to imitate this kind of design. The arabesque with all its intricacy became a favourite subject of the Renaissance artists and even a master like Hans Halbein the younger did not think it below his station to paraphrase patterns in this vein. 28

As regards painting as an art in the Islamic world, there were conflicting theories about it. The inhibition regarding the painting of human forms arose out of fear that the image of the prophet or a saint was likely to become the object of worship. One of the reasons why Islamic artists concentrated on the ornamental script is the absence of pictorial form, especially in religious manuscripts and architecture. But the Arabs in the long run did not find this a set-back; since they had no pictorial traditions, they concentrated on the figural paintings and the artistic use of Arabic letters for decorative purposes. Moreover besides the Arabs, other people who came under the sway of Islam, especially the Persians, the Turks, and the Mongols, who had a long traditional background in painting, continued to practise this art. As such, although painting was treated as a lower form of art, some of the greatest miniatures are of Islamic origin; among these some of the most exquisite miniatures that the Islamic world possesses are from India, where this art developed to a considerable extent under the patronage of the Mughal Emperors.
It is but obvious that the pictorial art had little influence on the West. But the European painters chiefly during the Renaissance were very much impressed by the ornamental art and the exquisite Arabic letters written in complex technical patterns that excelled almost every other art. In fact to the contemplative Oriental eye the rhythmic dance of a pattern is as much a recreative necessity as is melody to the Western ear. Ornamental composition had such fascination for Oriental craftsmen that they continuously devoted themselves to intensive study of its problems, systematizing its practice on lines which modern workers still pursue. Commenting on the direct influence of the Arabic letters on the Renaissance artists, Thomas Arnold observes:

Such an ornamental use of Arabic characters appears in Italian painting as early as Giotto (e.g., on the right shoulder of the figure of Christ in the Resurrection of Lazarus, in the Arana Chapel, Padua). Fra Angelico and Fra Lippo Lippi were especially fond of this kind of decoration and employed it even for the slaves of the Virgin and the borders of her robe — obviously entirely in ignorance of the origin of such shapes. The source of their knowledge of this script must be sought in the many pieces of silk and other fabrics brought into Europe from the East, or in lamps or other brass vessels.

Islamic painting, which developed in India chiefly as a fusion of two styles, Persian-Islamic and Indian-Hindu, had also limited but effective impact on the European artists. Ettinghausen states this as following:

The fact that no less a figure than Rembrandt was one of the first to be captivated by the artistic quality of figural painting speaks for itself. He owned a collection of twenty-five Mughal miniatures which he liked so much that he copied them, when, about 1656, adverse conditions forced him to part with them. That it was not an unusual caprice of Rembrandt to have such miniatures in possession is shown by
the fact that these same paintings were later owned by several English painters of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The president of the Royal Academy, Sir Joshua Reynolds, greatly admired another set, now one of the treasures of the British Museum. 30

Thus, although Europe during the Renaissance was mostly fascinated by the Greek art and Hellenistic culture, the art of the Orient had no less an attraction for the people of the West. The total impact of the East on the Renaissance culture of the West in various fields of art and industry was tremendous. Christie attempts to catch the historic importance of this impact in these words:

During that critical period when the West was emerging from medieval conditions, forces aroused and fostered by religious enthusiasm entered upon another phase of energy centred wholly on commercial activities. In the fifteenth century European craftsmen, impelled by Moslem success in the sumptuous and lucrative arts that had become essential to Renaissance splendour, turned with renewed interest to the Orient. Moved by deeper study of Islamic methods, they reviewed and enlarged their own technical procedure, and in so doing were no longer content to absorb such ornamental elements as came by the way. They began to explore intently Moslem canons of design, and to adapt them in a new spirit to work that was purely European in conception. Not only humble craftsmen, but also outstanding figures like Leonardo da Vinci, experimented with Oriental pattern-work; the design developed from a rough sketch in one of his note books, records his interest in such studies. 31
It is customary to think of the revival of interest in classical culture as the distinctive features of the epoch known as the Renaissance in Western Europe. It is also narrated in almost all the history books how, in the dark hour when the Turks were closing round Constantinople, the exodus of the Greek teachers from the East disclosed the secrets of the Hellenic genius to the wondering gaze of the Western world, and brought about the Renaissance.

This view is, however, not wholly correct. "From the late eighth century onwards," says De Burgh, "the story of Western civilization is a progressive anticipation of the Renaissance." An objective and impartial investigation further reveals that this process actually started from the Mediterranean regions of the West through the impact of the people from the East, the Arabs and the Jews, on this region. As a result of this influence there took place the growth of self-consciousness in the people of the medieval time, the habit of free-enquiry was encouraged, the confidence in reason was restored, untiring energy in thought and action was noticed, and the people came to take delight in the actual world present before man's eyes, which also came to be regarded as a field for practical experiment, an inspiration for aesthetic creation and a stimulus for reasoned knowledge. In other words, a spirit of secularism came to pervade in all fields of life and it provided to man the key to the earthly paradise. It is this spirit that really led to the Renaissance movement.
This spirit of secularism, the search for the scientific truth, the quest for knowledge for the sake of knowledge, is to be seen as early as the tenth century in the Moslem occupied countries of the West. Commenting on the emergence of free thought in the medieval period, Joinrille points out how a friend of his met an old woman in the street of Acre bearing a chafing dish of live charcoal in her right hand and a flask of water in her left saying that she meant to burn up paradise with the one and quench hell fire with the other, so that no man might henceforth do right for the hope of heaven or for the fear of hell, but only for the pure love of God, who is so worthy and can do for us what is best. This tells us what the Saracens were in their bid to stimulate free thought in the medieval period and at once recalls to us the secular ideas of Averroes who wrote against the idea of heaven represented in the Koran, saying, "Among dangerous fiction we must class those which tend to make us look upon virtue as only a means to happiness. If that be so, virtue has no meaning, since we abstain from self-gratification only in the hope of being repaid with interest." Thus Coulton points out how the direct influence of Arab philosophy on free thought in Christendom, especially that of Averroes, was very great. As Renan points out, "he has the singular fortune of being better known outside than inside his country. He is not the greatest of Arab philosophers but the last, summing up the work of his predecessors." 34

In fact it was Averroes who injected the spirit of free thought and scientific enquiry in his efforts to
separate philosophy from faith, reason from ethics, which became the cardinal principle of the entire thought system of the Renaissance in Europe. The famous letter of Stephen, Bishop of Paris, which prefaces the 219 propositions of the Averroists that were condemned, sets the seal on Averroes as the father of free thought and unbelief. Such was his influence on the minds of the European people who were awakened by his spirit of scientific enquiry that clergymen were deeply stirred by him, and when Thomas Aquinas went from Italy to Paris, he discovered that Averroism had long since captured a part of the faculty. In 1252 Thomas found Averroism flourishing among the University youth. Perhaps alarmed by Thomas's report, Pope Alexandar IV (1256) directed Albertus Magnus to write an anti-Averroist treatise on the Unity of the Intellect against Averroes. "When Thomas taught at Paris (1252-61)," says Durant, "the Averroistic movement was at its height; its leader in France, Siger of Barabant taught in the University from 1266 to 1276. For a generation, Averroism and Catholicism made Paris their battle field."

Yet nothing could quench the fire of free thought and secularism with which Averroes had stirred the medieval minds and inspired the Renaissance love of freedom, secularism, reason, and respect for scientific enquiry. At Padua Aristotelian free thinkers defended Averroes' denial of divine providence, and human freedom against the orthodox scholastics. The same University of Paris which had condemned the Averroistic doctrines required its alumni a century later by a solemn oath to teach only those teachings which were consistent with Aristotle as expounded
Another feature of the Renaissance closely linked with the spirit of free thought is the rise of humanism, that diverted the attention of the medieval people from divine scriptures to pure and simple human interest. One of the most important and difficult tasks for the forerunners of Renaissance was to connect matter with spirit, for hitherto the medieval mind had been completely absorbed in the scheme of divine providence and man's eternal destiny as a result of which it had completely neglected matter or man's life on this earth though the scriptures had recognised it as a thing of intrinsic value: on the morning of creation God had described it as a thing that was very good. In the eagerness to concentrate fully on the spiritual world, the medieval people had completely neglected matter and the importance of the earth.

One of the first eastern philosophers who attempted to effect the marriage of matter with spirit and thereby shift the importance from spirit to matter or to the interest of life on earth was certainly Selomon Ibn Gabinol (Aviceborn),
who gained an astonishing reputation after his *Fons Vitae* was translated from Arabic into Latin by Avendeath and Dominie Gundisalvus, in the first half of the twelfth century. Almost without exception the Franciscan school came under the spell of *Fons Vitae*, while the Dominicans, inspired by St. Thomas Aquinas, subjected its doctrine to sharp destructive criticism. In this work Aviceborn expressed the view that everything save God is composed of matter and form and he laid emphasis on this composition. The book did not catch to any considerable extent the attention of the East in the early days of its appearance. But *Fons Vitae* found a more fertile ground in the Western Christian world of the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. The fact that Raymond, Archbishop of Toledo, had its translation prepared is an indication of the reception it was to get later. Its obvious oriental ideas and the Spanish Arabian concepts were welcomed by medieval schoolmen, who needed such theories to turn their attention to human affairs. Aviceborn may be regarded as the first Jewish philosopher, who attempted to give a new direction to the people of the Renaissance -- the much needed direction towards Humanism.

Another philosopher of the East who also attempted to belittle the importance of spirit and raise interest in matter was Ibn Bajjah known in the Middle Ages as Avempace (1106-1138). He made an open revolt against mysticism and held that man could reach the highest peaks of knowledge by the natural advance from sense-experience to thought. As one of the first humanists of the medieval west, he believed in the spirit of humanity, a pan-psyche,
and regarded personal immortality possible in the case of some souls. In this famous work, *A Guide to the Solitary*, he declares that human intellect is composed of two parts: the material intellect which is bound up with the body and dies with it, and the active intellect or impersonal cosmic mind, which enters into all men and is alone immortal. According to him thought is man's highest function; by thought rather than by mystic ecstasy, man can attain the knowledge of, and union with, the Active Intellect or God. Thus denying all importance to the hitherto preponderant theory of spiritualism and the divine scheme, he lays emphasis on the function of man's thought and the necessity of the cultivation of this thought in his natural surroundings. His philosophy was well known to the Latin schoolmen especially to Albert Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, but his emphasis on the development of man's material intellect actually opened a new interest in the study of man in his natural world rather than in the metaphysical world.

Close to the philosophy of Avempace, came Abu Bekr Ibn Tufail known in Europe as Abubacer (1107-1187), who went a step further in making man the centre of the world in his philosophical romance *Hayy ibn Yaqzan (Alive, Son of Vigilant)*. The story deals with an infant who is left in an uninhabited island where he grows in the natural surroundings and comes to a fuller understanding of the knowledge of the physical world and with further ascetic discipline he attains union with his own eternal spirit. He, however, fails to impart his knowledge of the active intellect to the people of another inhabited island which he visits and returns to his own life of secularism along with Asal, the man who visits
This medieval philosophical romance serves two important purposes in our study of the development of the humanism from the medieval time to the Renaissance. First, it shows that without the help of tradition and revelation man can attain the knowledge of nature and through that he can acquire the knowledge of God. Secondly, it is perhaps the first medieval romance in which an experiment is made whereby the hero is left in the natural setting where he gathers his own experiences and develops his infantile sensibility till he acquires union with the Active Intellect without the help of any external source or religious teaching. In other words, Ibn Tufail successfully directs the attention of the medieval minds from sheer scholasticism to humanism and thus adds to renewed interest of the Renaissance minds in the problems of humanity.

The man who firmly believed in Averroes's free thought and the humanism of Aviceborn and Avempace was Siger of Barbanta (1235-1281), a secular priest and a man of learning. He was perhaps one of the staunch disciples of the Eastern philosophers as he freely quotes from al-Kandi, al-Farabi, al-Ghazali, Avicenna, Avempace, Aviceborn, Averroes and Maimonides. He strongly defends Averroes for his free thought and declares that he has correctly interpreted the philosopher. In our study of the philosophers who contributed to the development of the thoughts of humanism and free enquiry paving the way for the Renaissance, Siger is certainly an important personality having continued the tradition and passed on these
stimulating ideas to the coming generation although he had to face inquisition and imprisonment until he was finally murdered inside the prison.

But the most important man of the medieval time, who actually paved the way for the Renaissance humanists is Fredrick II. Fascinated right from his childhood by Oriental ideas, he read many Arabic masterpieces, himself brought Moslem and Jewish Scientists and philosophers to his court, and paid scholars to translate into Latin the most important works of Greece and Islam. It was in his time and under his influence that the true spirit of secularism was inoculated into the medieval West and it was he who started the humanistic trend. "The replacement of the Bible with the classics, of faith with reason, of God with Nature, of providence with necessity appeared in the thought and court of Frederick, and, after an orthodox interlude, captured the humanists and philosophers of the Renaissance. Frederick was the man of Renaissance, a century before its time." 37

Thus the Eastern philosophers, scientists, and men of letters played as great a role, or, perhaps a greater one, than, the classical authors in preparing the way for Renaissance humanism. Dr. Schmidt has correctly pointed this in his comment on The Influence of Islamic World on European Civilization:

As Humanism is founded on the writings of the antiquity, which the Moslems had discovered, so the Renaissance is based on the fresh blood which Islam brought to Europe; the Italian Renaissance is born from the combination of unhampered occidental sensual enjoyment and unlimited oriental thirst for knowledge: ex Oriete lux. 38
With the initiative taken by these men of the medieval times, Arab, Jewish, and Christian free thinkers, the other-worldliness of the Middle Ages, yielded place to the desire to know man in his relation to nature and nature in relation to man. As pointed by Avempace, the intellectual interest was centred now on the study of physical facts and the discovery of the laws of nature. Deeply influenced by the logic and the humanistic reasoning shown by Averroes, Aviceborn, Avempace, Siger and their followers, the sensitive thinkers of the West now felt that "the proper study of mankind was now to be man, in all the potential strength and beauty of the body, in all the joy and pain of his senses and feelings, in all the frail majesty of his reason, and in these as most abundantly and perfectly revealed in the literature and art of ancient Greece and Rome." Thus began Humanism which added a new dimension to the European Renaissance.

We will understand very well the magnitude of this revolution if we compare the early Eastern philosophers with the later medieval European philosophers of secular character and finally with the great humanists of the sixteenth century like, Rabelais, Montaigne, and Cervantes, Shakespeare, whose interest is almost wholly absorbed in human life as enacted amidst its actual surroundings, and, in portraying men's intellectual perplexities and moral crises, gives scarcely a thought to God or to the life to come. By the end of the sixteenth century the work began by the later medieval thinkers was complete; humanism was in the ascendent, and the spirit of secularism was dominant, explicitly in men's thought, and instinctively in their
Among the various beliefs that the Renaissance people inherited from the medieval world was the concept of God as the supreme Artist. The idea actually formed a system of beliefs that enabled the Renaissance man to conclude that the "whole Universe was governed by divine will; Nature was God's instrument, the social hierarchy, a product of Nature." But an investigation into the development of medieval thought - system once again reveals that it is from the eastern philosophers that such thoughts have travelled all the way to the age of Renaissance through the medieval Jewish and Christian thinkers. Maimonides, the great Jewish philosopher, adopts certain propositions formulated by Avicenna regarding the nature of the knowledge of God and of his design of creation. Of course, Avicenna does not make any original contribution to this idea as God has been revealed again and again as the supreme Artist, the best designer and the most perfect architect of the marvels of creation in the Holy Koran as may be noticed in the following verse:

He is Allah, than whom there is no other God, the sovereign Lord, the Holy one, peace, the keeper of Faith, the Guardian, the Majestic, the compeller, the Superb, Glorified be allah from all that they ascribe as partner (unto Him).

He is Allah, the Creator, the Shaper out of naught, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifieth Him, and He is the Mighty, the wise. 41 (The Holy Quran)

Avicenna, however, puts it in his usual philosophical terms identifying God with Supreme Intellect, thereby bringing the concept close to the Neo-Platonic idea of Supreme Beauty. On the same lines, Maimonides deduces-
from the evidence of perfect design in nature that Supreme Intellegence rules the universe. To him things exist only because God, their source and life, exists. "If it could be supposed," says Maimonides, "that He does not exist it would follow that nothing else could possibly exist -- a thing which has in itself the necessity of existence cannot have for its existence any cause whatever." 42

St. Thomas Aquinas, who was much influenced by the philosophical thought of the Moslems and Jews in Spain, is particularly indebted to Maimonides for this concept of God as the Supreme Artist, although he wrote his treatise Summa Contra Gentiles in refutation of the Spanish thinkers. Aquinas, thus, takes the idea from Maimonides's concept of the Divine intellegence based on Avicenna's expositions and commentaries on the nature of God's knowledge and creation and thereafter passes it on to other philosophers of the medieval times.

Leone Ebreo, who was the personal physician to Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile until the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 and who was well-versed in Latin and Arabic scholastic learning, expresses the same idea of God in his Dialoghi d' amore. "The Universe is designed by a divine architect, its perfection is the unity and the harmonious functioning of its parts which are beautiful and worthy to the extent to which they participate in the eternal life of an intellect and form." 43 Leone's influence, particularly through his treatise on love has been considerable, and among the Renaissance writings, it is regarded as equal to that of Ficino.
Thus the concept of God as the supreme Artist, originating with and developed by the Eastern philosophers, finally comes to have, through such medieval thinkers as Maimoniders and St. Thomas Aquinas, great impact on the Renaissance concept of the creation under the direct influence of persons like Leone Ebreo and others.

Another belief which was current during the Renaissance and which found expression in the works of many of the Elizabethan writers was the theory of humours. A human being was regarded as a blend of four humours which was supposed to be the reflection of the four elements of nature. The proportion in which these humours occurred constituted the essential nature of a man.

This theory appears to be an off-shoot of that of Avicenna, the Eastern philosopher and physician who was the most authoritative writer on the theory and practice of medicine between the age of Galen and Italian Renaissance and who gave universal currency to the notion of a close connection between natural dispositions (the later humours) on the one hand and the mingling of four elements (earth, air, fire and water) on the other, with its consequence for health and medical treatment. In his famous work, Qanun-fi-l-Tibb (Canon of Medicine), he makes an survey of physiology, hygiene, therapy, and pharmacology with sundry excursions into philosophy. Apart from the vast knowledge of medicine that he shows in this work, he gives chapters on the special study of pathology containing excellent discussions in pleurisy, empyema, intestinal disorders, sexual diseases, perversions, and nervous ailments, including
love. It is in this famous work that he expands his idea regarding the elements corresponding to the different humours in his analysis of the natural disposition of a man. He attributed the existence of four elements to a knowledge within the pure intellegences that were four in God's thought. To endeavour to safeguard his principle and still leave room for multiplicity, Avicenna advanced the theory that matter, though it is the manifestation of Divine Intellect, was 'prepared' or 'disposed' to accept a particular form.

"The Qanun, translated into Latin in the twelfth century, dethroned the works of Al-Razi, and even Galen as the chief text in European medical schools; it held its place as required reading in the universities of Montpellier and Louvain till the middle of the seventeenth century." 44 The idea of humour, that Avicenna made known in his Qanun, was repeatedly expressed by subsequent writers till it became an important theory having a direct bearing on the Elizabethan concept of social order and the nature of man. This view has been restated by Elyet, Hooker, and many others, such as, "the creation consisted of numberless but linked degrees of being from the four physical elements up to the pure intellegence of angels, the idea (which Donne has expressed in a different phrase) of man being "a little world made cunningly of Elements, and an angelic spirit." 45

One of the important beliefs of the people of the Renaissance was based on the concept of self-development which derived its inspiration from the confidence in the capabilities of pure intellect. Led by this firm conviction in the development of the self, men during that period were inspired to explore all possibilities in life in order to
move towards various kinds of achievement which man could conceive of. This important concept of Renaissance was also inspired by Avicenna, who had given currency to the principle of struggle for self-development with reference to an ideal.

To Avicenna, the existence of the soul is attested by our most immediate internal perception. It is the principle of self-movement and growth in a body and in this sense even the celestial spheres have souls; he believes that "the whole cosmos is the manifestation of a universal principle of life." By itself a body can cause nothing; the cause of its every motion is inherent in its soul. Each soul or intelligence possesses a measure of freedom and creative power akin to that of the first cause, for it is an emanation of that cause. It is in this way that the individual has the urge to strive for perfection and the development of the self.

Avicenna's philosophy had a great influence on almost all the medieval Christian philosophers. His dominant ideas appeared again and again till they acquired the status of being incorporated as philosophical theories in the West.

In the fifteenth century Leone expresses the same idea of the soul's inherent urge to lift matter towards spirit. It is this urge that sets man unto the path of struggle for self development and perfection:

The soul is midway between the intellect and the body. I speak not only of the world soul, but also of ours, its simulcrum. Our soul has then two faces (as I told you about the moon toward the sun and toward the earth), one face towards the intellect its superior, the other towards the body, its inferior.
This sublime confidence of the Renaissance scholars in the capabilities of pure intellect as pointed out by Salinger, based "on the urge of the soul for perfection" has been very well expressed by Marlowe, the great Renaissance dramatist:

Out souls, whose faculties can comprehend The wondrous Architecture of the World, And measure every wandering planet's course, Still climbing after knowledge infinite, And always moving as the restless spheres, Will us to wear ourselves and never rest. 49

Music, or what Tillyard terms 'the Cosmic Dance,' has played an important role in the general understanding of the Universe by the people during the Renaissance. It is true that "ever since the early Greek philosophers creation had been figured as an act of music" but it is interesting to know that several ideas regarding music prevalent in the Renaissance were again contributed by the early Eastern writers on music and musical theories. Although Moslem music developed in contact with Greek 'modes' which were themselves of Asian origin, it also contributed certain elements which were hitherto unknown to the Western World.

Philosophers like al-Kindi, Avicenna and Al-Farabi made a considerable contribution to the concept of music. Constant the African (d. 1037), one of the early translators of Arabic works into Latin, introduced the Arabian theories on the influences of the planets and the curative effects of music in his De humana natura and De morborum cognitione. It was expressed in a maxim by Avicenna: "inter omnia exercitia sanitatis cantare melius est." Along with Ptolemy and Euclid, Roger Bacon quotes al-Farabi copiously in the
section on music in the Opus terium. Avicenna chiefly contributed to the therapeutic value of music, and Roger Bacon has drawn substantially on this theory, which he passed on to the subsequent generations. This theory is again borrowed by Walter Odington (1280), in his De Speculatione music, and by Engelbert (d. 1331) in his De musica. But among the Eastern philosophers on music, al-Farabi had the greatest influence on subsequent writers of the West through his work Grand Book on Music; he continued to attract the attention of scholars until the seventeenth century. His views and specific ideas on music have appeared in George Vella's De expetendis et fugiendis i rebus (1497-1501), George Reish's Margirita philosophies (1508), and Camerarius, who issued De Scietics (1638).

A medieval Spanish writer, known as Isidore of Seville had a considerable influence on the Renaissance ideas of music. One of the most popular encyclopaedists of his time, his ideas on music, as quoted by Tillyard, expresses very well the Renaissance idea of creation based on the degree of motion:

Nothing exists without music; for the universe itself is said to have been framed by a kind of harmony of sounds, and the human itself revolves under the tones of that harmony. 51

This concept of music was derived by Isidore from the Arabian theories on the influence of planets, particularly the curative effects and the therapeutic value of music propounded chiefly by al-Farabi and Avicenna. Both of them added to what the Greeks taught regarding music and left it a much developed art. In his comments:
on the contributions of these teachers to the theory of
music Farner observes:

Just as the Arabic astronomers corrected
Ptolemy and others, so the Arab musical
theorists improved on the Greek teachers.
The introduction to al-Farabi's Grand Book
on music is certainly equal if not superior
to anything that has come down to us from
the Greek sources. 52

Besides Isidore of Seville, other medieval theorists
like Boethius, Hugo of St. Victor, Guido of Arezzo, and
Johannes Garlandic have also drawn from these Eastern
writers; whose echoes, therefore, may be definitely seen
in the Renaissance doctrine of music.

Among the Renaissance philosophers, we have an
explicit expression of this idea in Montaigne, who echoes
almost the same medieval theory of music of the universe:

What philosophers deeme of the cellestiall
musick, which is that the bodies of it's
circles, being solid smooth, and in their
rowling motion, touching and rubbing one
against another, must of necessitie produce
a wonderful harmonic. 53

A remarkable close parallel of this may be seen in
The Merchant of Venice by Shakespeare who may have read
the early books of Montaigne in manuscript:

Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou be hold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:
Such harmony is in immortal souls:

(The Merchant of Venice, V, I, 58-62)

The idea that the music of the spheres' maintained
the degree of the universe in perfect order actually
expresses the medieval concept of the therapeutic effect
of music. Without harmony, there would be discord and chaos. This is also illustrated in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida:

Take but degree away, untune that string,
And, hark, what discord follows! each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy: the bounded waters
Should lift their bosom higher than the stores
And make a sop of all this solid globe. 

(T.C., I.i.1, 103-114)

Among the Eastern writers of the fifteenth century who had a considerable influence on the West is Ibn Khaldun, the great writer of the philosophy of history and a man who dealt with all aspects of society and religion in his time. Regarding his place as a writer Sartor observes:

Not only is he (Ibn Khaldun) the greatest historian of the Middle Ages, towering like a giant over a tribe of pygmies, but one of the first philosophers of history, a forerunner of Machiavelli, Bodin, Vice, Courte and Burent. Among Christian historians of the Middle Ages there are but one or two who can perhaps compare with him, to wit, Otto Ven and John of Salistury ... What is equally remarkable -- Ibn Khaldun also ventured to speculate on what we should call to-day the methods of historical research. 54

No wonder, the various concepts of Ibn Khaldun on human society, sociology, kingship, human nature, and state influenced not only the people of his age but also the coming generation of both the East and the West.

Many of Ibn Khaldun's ideas are found to have formed the basis of popular Renaissance thoughts. His thoughts have also been used by the Elizabethan writers in a figurative way in their literary works. One of his popular ideas may be seen in his concept of the state, which according to him is an evolution of the human society. His basic premise regarding the evolution of human society was his belief in the similarity of the state and the life of
the individual. He considered that the states, like
individuals, are born, grow and die, and like individuals;
are subject to the natural law of evolution.

Now, this was exactly the concept of the State
that people of Renaissance had as may be seen in Thomas
Starkey’s Dialogue between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset:

Like as in everyman there is a body and also
a soul in whose flourishing and prosperous
state both together standeth the weal and
felicity of man, so likewise there is in
very commonalty city and country as it were
a politic body and another thing also
resembling the soul of man in whose flourishing
both together resteth also the true common
weal. 55

Ibn Khaldun also talks of the idea of the divine
kingship. First, he examines in a scientific way how a
state is formed and how thereafter kingship is established
by the necessary condition of solidarity. But once
kingship is established it almost acquires the sanction of
the Divine will and the people too accept it as such:

Once kingship has been established, however,
and inherited by successive generations or
dynasties, the people forget their original
condition, the rulers are invested with the
aura of leadership and the subjects obey them
almost as they obey the precepts of their
religion and fight for them as they would
fight for their faith. At this stage the
rulers do not need to rely on a great armed
force, since their rule is accepted as the
will of God, which does not admit of change
or contradiction. 56 (Italics mine)

It is from such authors that we have the development
of the notion of the Divine kingship that played so
important a role in the life and literature of the
Elizabethan people as expressed in the Homily of
Obedinces: "In the earth God hath assigned kings and
princes with their governors under them, all in good and
necessary order."

Ibn Khaldun also analyses the inherent nature of man and the need of authority and kingship to keep peace and order in the society:

Kingship is a position natural to mankind. For we have shown men can exist and survive only if they live in groups and co-operate in their search for food and other necessities of life. Now congregation for the satisfaction of needs implies intercourse which means that owing to animal propensities of aggressiveness and oppression each will help himself on the possession of his fellows. The person so attacked will hit back, spurned by pride and anger and enabled to do so by the strength he shares with other human beings. All this leads to quarrels and strifes which provoke unrest, bloodshed and the loss of life, endangering the survival of the species whose preservation is willed by God himself. 57

Bacon expresses almost the same idea of the nature, the need, and the authority of kingship for the maintenance of peace and order in the society, with his characteristic brevity:

Where in is aptly described the nature and condition of man; who are full of savage and unclaimed desires, of profit, of lust, of revenge which as long as they give ears to precepts to laws of religions... So long is society and peace maintained. 58

Not only did the Arabic philosophers introduce the concepts of Plato and Aristotle to the West but also developed, explained, commented on these ideas, and enriched them with their own contributions. Indeed very often some of the classical notions remained quite unintelligible to the West till the Arabs through their explanatory notes gave currency to these ideas.

The same may be said of the metaphor of the 'Great Chain of Being,' that the Elizabethans used in many of
their works to express their idea of the system underlying God's creation. This concept of Plato too was taken by Ibn Khaldun, discussed, explained developed and finally was transmitted to the posterity. The Renaissance metaphor of 'the Great Chain of Being' is based on the title that Ibn Khaldun used, 'The Scale of Being' which he explains thus:

Know this - may God guide us and you - that there is no end to the wonders of this world. All creatures are subjected to a regularly and orderly system; causes are linked to effects, and beings to beings; while certain objects are transformed into other objects.

Beginning with the corporal sensible world notice first how the visible elements are arranged in an ascending order from earth through water and air to fire. Each is connected with the other and each is ready to transform itself into the one immediately above or below it and sometimes does in fact so transform itself. Each is more delicate than the one below it until we reach the world of spheres. 59

How close this fourteenth century Eastern philosopher comes to the Renaissance idea based on the classical concept may be noticed in his work, Polychronicon of Higden:

In the universal order of things the top of an inferior class touches the bottom of a superior... The upper surface of the earth is in contact with the lower surface of water, the highest part of the water touches the lowest part of the air and so by a ladder of ascent to the outermost sphere of the Universe. 60

Similarly, Ibn Khaldun expresses his concept of the soul and its position in the ascending order which is exactly like the Elizabethan idea regarding the same:

The soul, therefore, touches two order of beings one below it and one above. From below it is connected with the body from which it derives its power of sense perception which makes it capable of
Renaissance, therefore, began much earlier than is usually believed. Similarly, the revival of classical learning is not the only factor that brought about the Renaissance. The new philosophical, metaphysical and social ideas which inspired the people of Renaissance and led them to have altogether a new attitude towards life and literature, indeed, gave birth to a new movement in the whole of Europe.
The concept of love, which was to become the most dominating theme of the Renaissance, was in the most fluid form in the fourteenth century. As we move from Dante onwards we find these different traditions of love in vogue, one running exactly opposite the other. First, we have the mystical, spiritual or ideal concept of love initiated by Dante in the West. This was carried on by Petrarch who, along with other followers of his, set a new trend in European literature. As opposed to this, there was the sensual tradition which was condemned by the followers of NeoPlatonism and moralistic Christian philosophers. Such conflicting concepts of love created confusion and raised doubts regarding the union of Beauty and Love. It was, however, a Jewish philosopher, Leone Ebreo, who, made a correct restatement of the Platonic concept of love, and brought about a synthesis of the human and the spiritual beauty chiefly under the influence of Eastern doctrine of love.

The spiritual concept of love poetry that we have in Dante was not based on Platonic concept of love. In a comparative study of Dante and Ficino, Nelson points the basic difference:

For all Ficino's desire to reconcile Platonism with Christianity, his concept of love is basically Platonic, that of Dante Christian and Chivalric. 62

Nelson moves on to point another significant fact that most of the scholars have perhaps missed, e.g., Dante's ignorance of Plato's Symposium or the Phaedrus. "Nor is:
there in Dante," says the author, "who did not know the Symposium or the Phaedrus; an equivalent of the theme of divine madness or of Ficino's concern with Platonic myths about the origin of love. But the greatest basic difference about their theories of love, which alone has important philosophical and religious ramifications, is the monism of Dante's doctrine and dualism of Ficino's theory." 63

Dante's treatment of love with his concept of the ideal woman, therefore, has a basic difference with the Platonic concept, which gave rise to an altogether different tradition. Further, Dante's spiritual concept was chiefly derived from the Eastern concept of mystical poetry, which found as much a place in Christianity as in the other Eastern religions. The universality in Dante's poetry is to be sought not in his attempt to raise the poetry of the West to a heightened level but in the fact that he is the first major European poet who connects the two great civilizations, the East and the West; he picks up the Eastern image of the ideal woman and extends the same concept in the West by emphasizing the supernatural quality of the dona angelicata and her theological symbolism.

Hence, it was essentially and originally an Eastern tradition that Petrarch carried from the medieval Europe through Dante to the Renaissance Europe almost unconsciously, all the while thinking that he was carrying the torch of his great favourite Plato. It is true he had treasured a Plato, which he was unable to read and his vague aspiration whetted by his acquaintance with Cicere, St.Augustine, and the Timaeus, to revive the Platonic philosophy, was actually realized a century later by Marsilio Ficino and others.
If, however, Petrarch is to be considered the first man of Renaissance, it is chiefly because he introduces into the Renaissance Europe a poetic tradition, which was bequeathed to him by Dante but which he wrongly thinks to belong to the Platonic tradition.

It will be appropriate to discuss here the basic meaning of the Platonic concept of love. In its ordinary sense, the term Platonic love means something like "heterosexual companionship without sexual desire." Three of his dialogues are devoted specifically to love: Lysis, the Symposium, and the Phaedrus, in which Plato presents his theory as well as his idea about love. To him love is not a relationship between man and woman, but between two men, or more frequently a man and a youth. W. Hamilton in his introduction to a translation of the Symposium makes this very explicit:

The love with which the dialogue is concerned, and which is accepted as a matter of course by all the speakers, including Socrates, is homosexual love; it is assumed without argument that this alone is capable of satisfying a man's highest and noblest aspirations. 64

Discussing the meaning of such a notion of love as conceived by Plato, Hamilton further explains:

And he (Plato) certainly seems to have held that a homosexual relationship is alone capable of being transformed into a lifelong partnership, and that homosexual love, like heterosexual love with us, has a range which extends from the crudest physical passion to a marriage of nobler minds with no physical manifestation at all. 65

From this it is evident that the woman plays little part in Plato's concept of love.

In the Symposium Socrates makes his famous speech ---
the 'Diotiman ladder of love,' which enjoyed the greatest vogue among Renaissance authors of love treatises—preceded by encomiums of five speakers. The first, Phaedrus, praises love as the oldest god, inspirer of virtue, and the sense of honour in men. Pausanias distinguishes two aphrodites—a transient earthly love of body and an enduring heavenly love of soul. Bryximachus, the doctor, identifies love with the cosmic force of attraction. Aristophanes describes love as a quest for the other half of the divided self. Following him, the young poet Agathon, who is celebrating his triumph as a tragedian, glorifies love as the best and most beautiful of gods, superlative in all qualities—a brilliant speech the eulogistic hyperbole of which irritates Socrates.

Plato, who regarded Socrates as the true philosopher in love and never ceased to regard his own system as having been implicit in the methods and conclusions of Socrates, gives the latter the final and most important place in this discussion on love in his Symposium. Socrates embarks upon his speech, which takes the form of a reported debate between him and a woman called Diotima, and it is through Diotima that Socrates reveals the mystery of love. The desire of the beautiful begins in youth with the love of a particular beautiful body, which is generalised into the love of all bodily beauty, when the lover rises through successive stages of loving beautiful souls, institutions, and sciences to the boundless love of wisdom. Then he suddenly perceives the changeless idea of beauty itself, contemplating and conversing with the divine essence of beauty; thus he would be able to create not images of
beauty but realities, becoming ever more virtuous, the friend of God, and immortal, to the extent a mortal being can reach that state.

Plotinus (C.A.D.203-62), the founder of the Roman School of neo-Platonism, restated the philosophy of Plato giving it "more than aesthetic or mystical 'excess' or ascent into boundless." The chief aim of Plotinus was to purge Plato's philosophy of all kinds of sorceries by adding to it essentially a spiritual touch. Hence it is through an emphasis on divinity, on the Divine One, as the radiating source and constitutive principles of all Being, that neo-Platonism, and especially the philosophy of Plotinus, makes its peculiar contribution to aesthetics as well as the Platonic concept of love.

Plotinus thus attempts to effect a reconciliation between two worlds, the sensible and the spiritual. In fact his whole purpose is to overcome the dualism. The spiritual has true being; the sensible is no alien reality, but an image gotten by the spiritual in its likeness, in accordance with the universal law. In his six Enneads, Plotinus formulates his doctrines entirely on the ideas of Plato. It is a philosophy of Being through emanation from, and return to, the Divine One. Like Plato, he finds in human love a scale of ascents, that leaving the human soul, should lead to a more than human perfection. This concept was later modified by the medieval philosophers, Pico, Bembo, and Castiglione who tried to make it acceptable to the people of their age.

But it is precisely in this that the Christian
concept of love differs from the Platonic theory of love. In 1929 Andres Mygrin made a distinction between Agape and Eros and thereby tried to differentiate between Christian love and its opposite, Platonic love. To him Christian love means the love that the Supreme God has for man. St. Paul talks of the overflow of God's goodness, which does not deny benevolence to the most wretched of sinners. St. Paul implies that our salvation is not in ourselves and in our power, but subject to a will which can neither be understood nor defined. A man cannot assert himself and secure for himself an upward ascendency. As against this concept, Plato gives just the opposite meaning of love -- love for him means man's love for the Supreme Good. He talks of our surge upward towards an understanding of reality, which fill us with joy; he shows them the way out of corruption and stupidity to immortal happiness. To Plato it would be grotesque not to think, act, perfect ourselves and make works of art of our lives, whereas according to the Christians such self-assertion is grotesque as the sight of a helpless child responding to its parent's love and care with restless criticism instead of gratitude and trust. Hence, love to Plato is the universal longing for happiness -- the intense joy and the Supreme goal of life being to find beauty and discover happiness therein.

As against these opposite theories, there was another concept of love based on the realistic, naturalistic or Ovidian tradition. This could be found in the poetry of Ovid as well as other classical poets to whom love could best be defined as the physical satisfaction of the sensual desire.
The advocates of Platonic as well Christian concept of love vehemently speak against the sensual concept which, to them, is 'bestial' and 'animalistic.'

Thus the artists as well as the common people had rather confused and conflicting ideas of love in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Some of the poets wrote in one of the three strains whereas many other poets were found vacillating in their attitudes towards these conflicting ideas. Towards the later part of the fourteenth century, the courtly tradition of love degenerated, and the poets in general began to write merely on the mere popular sensual tradition of Ovid. Thus, the courtly tradition of love as treated by the later generations of the French poets differed from that of earlier generations. The love they celebrate is illicit and sensual at bottom, although described mostly with refinement and restraint. It is, therefore, still condemned by the Church, and the various documents of the time contrast it with the higher love of conjugal life.

The major English poets of the fourteenth century continue to write in the same strain, although they condemn such love because of the moralistic strain of Christianity. The plan of Gower's Confessio Amantis is based on a lover's confession of his sins against love. The prevailing general conception of the love deity here is ecclesiastical. In the setting of the poem a double personification is used, and Venus and Cupid appear together, a feature frequently found in French love versions. The author also dwells on the sensual elements of the physical charms of the lady:
As regards Gower's attitude towards love, it may be noticed that he was rather a moralist; hence the end of a lover's passion to him is the possession of the lady in marriage. In the illustrative stories we have a more earthly treatent of love, which is identified with physical love (vide lines 148-157, iii). Anything approaching Platonic love, however remotely, is not to be found in the Confesesio Amantis. And yet adulterous love which was inherent in the courtly system, Gower frankly condemns:

The Middle is mad for the female
Bot where as on desireth fele,
That nedet to noght be weis of kind (Confesesio Amantis, VII, 4215)

In short, this is a clear evidence of Gower vacillating between the two major concepts, i.e., Christian and sensual. He makes some suggestions which run counter to the system of courtly love and also accepts some elements which are against the ecclesiastical canons of Christianity.

Chaucer too continues this tradition of the sensual love, which may be seen in 'The Miller's Tale' particularly in the description of the carpenter's wife:

She was a pretty creature, fair and tender
And had a weasel's body softly slender.
(The Miller's Tale)

In "The Franklin's Tale" the situation of love is exactly what is to be seen in the courtly love. Here is a woman who is married and happy with a knight; but her beauty influences another man with passion. He suffers in
in silence as long as he can bear it.

The best illustration of sensual tradition of love is found in Chaucer's portrayal of the character of the wife of Bath. As depicted by the poet her attitude towards love and marriage is purely physical:

She was a worthy woman at her lure,
Honsbondes at chirche dore she hadde fyve,
Withouten oother compaignye in youth
(‘Wife of Bath; Tale’ 460-63)

Although age had now bereft her of her beauty, she tells us in a sensual manner that she retains the spirit and the taste of her youth:

Unto this day it doth myncherte boote
That I have had my world as in my time
(‘Wife of Bath’s Tale’)

The same tradition of love is illustrated in "The Reeve's Tale." We have as much of the sensual element in the character of the Reeve as in his tale:

So was her joly whistle wel y-wet.
("The Reeves Tale" L.235)

It is, however, difficult to determine exactly what was Chaucer's attitude towards love. Sometimes he appears quite critical and satirical while at other moments he is quite merry and light about it. In any case the vacillating attitude towards love may also be seen in his works as he too does not take a clear stand supporting any one of the existing theories.

Thus the whole of the fourteenth century had conflicting concepts of love, which gave rise to different kinds of poetic tradition too. The people had no clear idea of love nor did the poets and writers make an attempt
to examine the validity of one or other kind of concepts.

To add to these, there took place an intensification of Platonic studies following the arrival in 1438 in Italy of Gemisthus Pletho, his pupil, Bessarion, and other Greek scholars. The greatest impetus to the study and diffusion of Platonic and NeoPlatonic ideas during this period was given by Ficino's translation with commentary of the complete works of Plato and Plotinus. With Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on the Symposium of Plato which appeared in 1484, the Platonic trattato d' amore became a literary genre, that achieved much vogue in the sixteenth century. It frequently appeared in the dialogue form and was usually written in Italian, not in Latin. These dialogues reveal the different kinds of ideals the people of the age had regarding love. There were authors, who wrote of love as a human biological and emotional Phenomenon devoid of philosophical implications. Some treatises were written in a popular vein without philosophical pretensions, such as, those of Francesco Sanserino, Messer Bartolomeo Gottifredi (Dialogue in which young ladies are taught how to fall in love), Mario Equicola, and others. A large number of other writers chose to treat Platonic love as an intellectual, non-sexual, or even anti-sexual phenomenon.

To most of these authors, including Marsilio Ficino, love is limited to sight, hearing, and thought. The appetite, which follows the other senses, is not love but lust or frenzy. The trattatisti overlook the existence of emotional, psychological, and aesthetic factors in sensual love, which they identify with animality. To Castiglione, sensual lovers
experience only the same pleasure that irrational animals feel, as he, like many others of his age, identified sexual activity with ugliness and bestiality. Further, these writers also appear to have inherited from the Dialogues of Plato the concept that made youths rather than women excite love in men, although they were, at the same time, careful to make plain their abhorrence for the practice of homosexuality. Obviously, in these treatises love becomes a concept of multiple derivation: Christian chastity, Platonic spirituality, Aristotelian and Ciceronian friendship, and the love of Stil nuovo poets – all these are represented in either an incomplete or a defective manner.

One of the most outstanding authors of this period was Marsilio Ficino, who first used the term "Platonic Love" which, according to him, signified an intellectual love between friends based on the individual's love of God. To him love is the desire of beauty or the desire of enjoying beauty, and this love desires only temperate, modest, and honourable things. As such, the rabbia venerea (appetite for coitus) is a foolish perturbation contrary to love.

In Platonic philosophy love is defined in terms of beauty. Love is the desire for beauty, the desire of birth or reproduction in beauty. Since Platonic love theory involves a whole system of ethics, beauty is a key concept of the moral realm. By its association with truth and goodness, beauty is related to the field of psychognosy as well. The beauty that one loves cannot be unknown. Hence some Renaissance writers use the terms 'love' and 'beauty' almost interchangeably.
Plato and the Greeks generally considered beauty to be the result of harmony and proportion among the parts of a thing. Plotinus, who did not accept this view, modified the concept; to him such objects as sphere and light can also be beautiful. Beauty for him becomes an intangible, spiritual essence. Ficino, leaning alternately towards the Platonic and the Christian concepts in his exposition of the Symposium, shows a certain inconsistency in defining beauty, which is reflected in some later writers. To him, beauty, like love, is everywhere and it is Divine beauty which gives birth to love; personal beauty, which is exterior perfection, can come only from the interior perfection of moral goodness.

It may be noted here that Ficino's Commentary was the prime source for subsequent trattati. His statements are so widely repeated that their source is frequently overlooked. He was considered to be a faithful interpreter of Plato. Later authors fail as did Ficino to recognize the mutual antagonism of some of his speeches in the Symposium and Plato's occasional playfulness, as in the fable of Aristophanes. For all his desire to reconcile Platonism with Christianity, Ficino's concept of love remains basically Platonic as he puts emphasis all the time on the essence of beauty and the distinction between Divine love and the bestial love which from sight enters the "concupiscence of touch." Thus Ficino along with a large number of other writers who followed him added further complexity to the concept of love in the fifteenth century. It is chiefly the problem of sensual or what Ficino calls the bestial love that creates...
all kinds of confusion and also makes the later writers contradict themselves on the issue.

To Castiglione, sensual love is false and deceitful:

And therefore, he who thinks by possessing the body to enjoy beauty, is deceived and is moved not by true cognition and rational choice, but by false opinion and sensual appetite, where the pleasure that follows from it is also necessarily false and lying. 68

Influenced by such opinions as were expressed by Ficino and others many of the Renaissance essayists, who wrote on love, held vulgar love in low esteem. In considering the love of man for woman as simply carnal, Bruno agreed with the long-standing ecclesiastical and scholastic opinion. To him, woman is "Cosa Senza fede" (a faithless thing), totally lacking in constancy, destitute of all wit, without any merit, lacking any gratitude or thankfulness, where there can be no more sense, intellect, and goodness than can be found in a statue or image painted in the wall." 69

Similarly, Bruno expressed his anger against what he called the sensual tradition of love poetry. He also attacks the refined and studied love celebrated by Petrarch and the countless Petrarchians of his century:

What spectacle — O Good God — more vile and ignoble can be presented to an eye of lucid sentience, than a man who is worried, afflicted, tormented, sad, melancholy, cold one minute, hot the next, now fervent, now trembling, now pale, now red, now with a perplexed air, now appearing resolute. 70

In other words, Bruno makes it clear in his preface that his Eroici Furori is to be understood in terms of its antithesis to the studied sensual love of the Petrarch which he, breaking with traditional attitude of Platonic writers
on love, calls vulgar and bestial love.

From all these conflicting treatises on love, it is but obvious that the fifteenth century witnessed almost a confused concept that the philosophers and writers expressed on the issue. The sensual tradition of poetry as a continuation of classical poetry was vehemently condemned both by the Christian moralistic writers and the serious advocates of Plato's notion of supreme beauty. Moreover, these philosophers even go to the extent of condemning the sensual elements in Petrarch and his followers. Thus the sensual and the beautiful stand poles apart, and this breach creates great problems for the Renaissance mind, which was as much steeped in sensuality as in beauty — the mind that very much required a synthesis of these two elements each of which was not only necessary but was considered most essential to complete the meaning of love in life for the Renaissance people. It needed a man of a high order who would make a reconciliation of the two opposing ideas and thereby effect the marriage of the sensual and the beautiful.

The man who understood this and thereby showed the way to eliminate the existing dichotomy between the two traditions was a Jewish philosopher of the Renaissance period. In his Dialoghi d' amore written probably in Italian in 1502, Leone Ebreo or Jehudah Abasrbanel expressed his idea of love in an entirely different way from those of others who had written on Plato's concept of love. This is, therefore, not only a treatise on love, but also a detailed synthesis of philosophical doctrines centring on a re-statement of the Neo-Platonic position. While dealing with all aspects of
love, Ebreo, makes a new approach to the subject, particularly when he shows that the sensual impulse in a man's soul is not the sheer bestiality described by Ficino and others, but is tinged with the desire to ameliorate the object of desire by imparting to it something of the beauty, which the soul derives from the intellect.

Some of the basic elements which help Ebreo to connect the sensual with the beautiful are actually derived from the Eastern concept of love as conceived by the Arab mystical poets. Ebreo, though born in Lisbon, was the personal physician to Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile until the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. "In addition to his medical studies, he was well versed in Latin and Arabic scholastic learning, Talmudic and Cabalistic doctrine, and in astrology which was related to medicine."71 As a scholarly resident of Spain for a long time well connected with the culture of the various Spanish kingdoms, which were steeped in Eastern elements and the Oriental concept of love and poetry, Ebreo was very well acquainted with the Moslem as well as the Jewish concepts on these subjects and was also aware of their influence on Latin culture. As such, he noted the disturbing dichotomy between the sensual impulse and beauty expressed in the important treatises written by such influential philosophers as Ficino and many others and thereby he attempted to make a synthesis of these in his re-statement of the Platonic doctrine.

Ebreo's dialogues on love, therefore, essentially differ from Ficino's Commentary. Ficino's Commentary is primarily an exposition and interpretation of Plato's
Symposium, the dialogues of Leone Ebreo, on the other hand, are from the beginning to the end an exhaustive discussion on love.

Ebreo's book on love is consequently more comprehensive than Ficino's work in its consideration of love, and its treatment of cosmic questions in regard to love, which do not occur either in Plato's Symposium or in Ficino's Commentary upon it. Further, Ebreo is the first Renaissance man to bring the subject closer to an Oriental interpretation of love when he declares that Plato in the Symposium spoke only of human love, not of God's love, whereas he is discussing universal love. Ebreo also differs from Ficino's interpretation in various other aspects. By human love Ebreo usually means man's love of God or sometimes of another human, and by divine love, the Creator's love of the created. On the contrary other trattatistic call human love the sensual love of a human being, whereas by divine love they mean man's love of the deity. To distinguish the conventional vulgar love from the divine, Ebreo speaks of sensual and spiritual love, the latter resulting from rational cognition and the former from sensuous cognition.

We have essentially an Eastern concept of love when Ebreo says that love is the force which binds together the inferior and the superior worlds in a union desired by both entities. To him "the world constitutes plurality unified" and lover, loved and love are three entities only when they are in potency; "in act they are the one and the same." In God, who is pure act, their unity is pure and simple." To him God is the cause and the material world is an effect.
Here we have the distinct echoes of a great Eastern poet of love of the twelfth century, Farid-al-bin Attar whose idea, Durant expresses thus:

Reason cannot know God, for it cannot understand itself, but love and ecstasy can reach to God, for He is the essential reality and life of the World. 74

Similarly Ebreo's concept of desire leading to ecstasy, which makes the union with love possible, is essentially based on the Oriental concept. Strong love and desire, says Ebreo cause the intellect to lose itself in contemplation and to rise enlightened by divine grace to a super-human knowledge and union with God. "Some blessed men in contemplating divine beauty with extreme desire even abandoned their bodies altogether." 75 This also reminds us of the Eastern poet Attar to whom "No soul is happy until it loses itself as a part in this spirit as a whole; longing for such union is the only true religion, self effacement in that union is the only true immortality." 76

In his restatement of Diotima's ladder of love Ebreo comes close to an eastern concept of union with the divine soul, which has been very well expressed by Davis:

But the love of the All-Good, All-Beautiful remains, and when such is found in earthly love it is God finding Himself in you and you in Him, that is the supreme teaching of Sufism, in the religion of love. 77

Ebreo expresses the same idea through that ladder metaphor when he says that "by cognition and love of beauty man himself becomes pure and beautiful. Material beauty should be loved in so far as it induces love and knowledge of perfect, incorporeal beauty." The philosopher ascends
in virtue and science from the minor beauties to major ones, and thence to the love and knowledge not only of the most beautiful intelligences who move the stars, but of the very highest beauty which "is giver of very beauty, life, intelligences, and being." 78 In becoming he is but returning to his progenitor, beauty in his native land, which is wisdom. This sweetest union is the ultimate felicity and beatitude of pure intellects. What Ebreo here calls "Sweetest Union" (Beavissima unione) is particularly an eastern epithet that has played a vital role in the love poetry of the East.

The transformation of the lover into the beloved and the union of the two resulting in one inseparable unity was the usual theme in the Oriental mystical poetry as may be seen in the poem of al-Halla;j, the great Sufi-poet of the East:

I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I,
We are two Spirits dwelling in one body
If thou seest me, thou seest Him,
And if thou seest Him, thou seest us both. 79

Ebreo too has expressed this idea in his treatise on love when he says, "Two material lovers are no longer two but one in their unity, or four as each transforms himself into the other and in both lover and loved." 80 The end of love, therefore, is pleasure — great beautiful pleasure. This became a favourite theme of most of the Renaissance poets, chiefly of Donne, who uses this extensively in his love poetry.

Ebreo's greatest contribution to the Renaissance concept of love lies in the way he uses the image of woman
in the human soul's strife for union with the perfect soul.
The human soul is midway between the intellect and the body.
This he expresses in the characteristic, Renaissance metaphor,
of the 'Chain of Being':

I speak not only of the world soul, but also of ours, its simulacrum. Our soul has then two faces (as I told you about the moon toward the sun and toward the earth) One face toward the intellect, its superior, the other toward the body its inferior. 81

But the sensual impulse in man's soul facing the body has also the desire to raise the object of desire to divine beauty, and here the woman (or love of the body) plays a vital role. This role or image of woman is totally absent in Plato's concept of love and also in many of the trattatis on love, which never deal with a relation between man and woman but between two men, or more frequently a man and a youth, lover and loved. Ebreo, on the contrary, introduces the woman as playing an important role in the progress of man's soul towards the union with the divine intellect. In his reference to the soul's love of the beauty of the divine intellect, he compares it to the love of the female perfecting the male:

To this love is joined another twin love of the soul for the corporeal world inferior to it, as the male for the female, (come del maschie a la femminal) impressing into it the beauty which it takes from the intellect through the first love as though the soul, impregnated with the beauty of the intellect desired to bring it forth into the corporeal world. 82

It is precisely at this point that Ebreo introduces the role of woman in the concept of love and thereby resolves the dichotomy between sensuality and beauty. This is essentially a concept drawn from the Oriental
mystical poetry; it was possible for the sufi love poets
to combine mystic pursuits with the possession of a
beautiful woman and also with the languorous contemplation
of beautiful young bodies. Avicenna also expressed the
same idea in different words:

But whenever he (man) loves a pleasing form
with an intellectual consideration then this
is to be considered as an approximation to
nobility and an increase in goodness. For he
covets something whereby he will come nearer
to the influence of that which is the First
source of influence and the pure object of
love and more similar to the exalted and noble
beings. For this reason one will never find
the wise free from having their hearts occupied
with a beautiful human form. 83

Herein we have the symbolic method of the Oriental
poets, who write about the love of God also in terms
applicable to beautiful women and this, at the same time,
explains the essentially erotic character of Eastern poetry,
which is essentially symbolic in meaning. But it is
Avicenna's symbolic expression "hearts pre-occupied with a
beautiful human form" that helps Ebreo raise the sensual
tradition of poetry above the bestial treatment and also
releases the Renaissance thought from the disturbing
Christian conscience creating thereby the necessary
atmosphere for an era that could be called 'the age of
singing birds.'

As a matter of fact, Ebreo's Dialoghi d' amore
soon became a widely quoted, authoritative, and
enthusiastically accepted source for writers of love
treatise. Gaiuseppe Betussi refers to him as "quello ebreo
che si divinamente n' ha scritto," 84 Whereas Fullia d'
Aeragona, does not hesitate to place Ebreo above all other
writers on love:

Among all those ... who have written of love ...
I like none better than Ebreo." 85

Commenting on Ebreo's treatise on love and comparing it with others written on the same subject Varchi pays the greatest tribute to Dialoghi d'amore when he observes:

"I for my part prefer it to all others." 86

Indeed Ebreo's influence on the subsequent writers on the subject of love and the poets has been more than that of Picino, particularly because, with his acquaintance with Eastern concept of love and Oriental mystical poetry, he, while making a restatement of Platonic love, introduces a new tension of mental attitudes and a new synthesis of the human and the spiritual beauty far exceeding in scope the initial, limited distinction between the divine love and the vulgar love. Such Renaissance writers as Elyot, Breght, and Burton immediately came under the influence of Ebreo and explored further the beauty of such a psyche of love. The Renaissance poets were thus capable of analyzing and dramatizing the basic psychology of love, and thereby, were able to present it as a fusion of the body and the soul, and bring into being a golden age in poetry.
NOTES


2. Ibid., p. 42.


8. Ibid., p. 193.


11. Ibid., p. 294.


14. Renan,

15. G. G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama*, p. 44.


19. Ibid., p. 96.


23 Bacon, (See A.H. Christie's essay on 'Islamic Minor Arts,' The Legacy of Islam, p.147.)


26 Goethe, Western-Eastern Anthology.


28 Richard Ettinghausen, Islamic Art and Archeology.

29 Thomas Arrold, The Legacy of Islam, p.133.

30 Richard Ettinghausen, Islamic Art and Archeology, p.20.


33 G.G. Coulton, Medieval Panorama, p.460.

34 Ibid., p.461.

35 Will Durant, The Age of Faith, p.957.

36 Alfred Guillaume, Essay on 'Philosophy and Theology,' The Legacy of Islam, p.275.

37 Will Durant, The Age of Faith, p.724.


39 Will Durant, The Renaissance, pp.77-78.


42 Maimonides, Guide, Part II, Introd. & Prop XX.

43 Leone Ebreo, Dialoghi d' amore, p.163.

44 Will Durant, The Age of Faith, p.249.
46. O.C. Gruner, 'Treatise' on the Canon of Medicine, Avicenna, Introd, p. 9.
47. Leone Ebreo, Dialoghi d'amore, p. 331.
49. Marlowe, Tamburlaine Part-I.
51. Ibid.,
54. George Sarton, Introduction to the History of Science.
60. Higden, Polybrioneian.
63. Ibid., p. 84.
70 Ibid., p.309.
73 Ibid., p.255.
75 Leone Ebreo, *Dialoghi d' amore*, 178.
77 F. Hadland Davis, *Wisdom of the East*, Lahore, 1907, p.27.
78 Leone Ebreo, *Dialoghi d' amore*, p.357.
79 Al-Hallaj, *The Poems*.
80 Leone Ebreo, *Dialoghi d' amore*, p.222.
81 Ibid., p.331.
82 Ibid., p.175.
83 Avicenna, *Treatise on Love*.
84 Giuseppe Betussi, *II Raverta*, p.4
85 Fullia d' Aeragona, *Opera*, II, p.536.