

ISLAMIC CULTURE FORUM

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August-October 1975



ISLAMIC CULTURE SOCIETY (JAPAN)

EDITOR'S NOTE

ISLAMIC CULTURE FORUM is an English language quarterly magazine of the Islamic Culture Society (Japan).

ISLAMIC CULTURE FORUM does make efforts to promote understanding of Islam as a cultural force.

ISLAMIC CULTURE FORUM also does make efforts to foster mutual understanding among peoples irrespective of race, religion or geography.

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ABU BAKR MORIMOTO

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TO OUR READERS

Dear Reader, HAPPY EID-UL-FITR MUBARAK!

By the grace of Allah, Islamic Culture Forum has completed its full one year with the publication of the present issue. Last year about this time when we undertook this work we very much worried about its continuity. Though we had to struggle a lot, we express our deep gratitude to the Almighty and our thanks to all of our well-wishers that we have been able to continue its publication and to reach it to your hands. We solicit your further support and encouragement so that ICF can continue its life up to your expectation.

In August this year, Professor Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah visited Tokyo on invitation from Islamic Culture Society, Japan and stayed with us for two days. Although very short, his visit gave us new support and strength to continue our mission with full vigour. After the first night's stay with us in a typical Japanese inn of a mountain resort near Mount Fuji, next day he spoke at a lecture meeting in Tokyo. This was an enlightening and memorable event for us. His lecture is published in a separate article elsewhere in this issue.

As is well-known to you, Japan was a country which had a very weak link with Islam. The situation was extremely different from other societies in the world so far as religious preaching is concerned. Owing to various factors spreading of Islam in this country could not find a base in the past. Nor was it welcome by the Japanese society. The process holds good even today. In spite of that, the handful of Japanese Muslims are endeavouring to make Islam understood by the Japanese people and to spread it.

For the success of these efforts, first of all, we must inculcate among ourselves the spirit of Islam and mould our life accordingly. In that way, we must show the Japanese people actual example of Islamic life concretely. Only looking back to the past achievements or taking pride in the glories of Islamic history or the lure of happiness of paradise in the life hereafter cannot meet success in appealing to the heart of the Japanese people. We must create an atmosphere where they can understand Islam with both head and mind. Because the Japanese Muslims know better the spiritual make-up of the Japanese mind, they must take the direct charge of carrying out Islamic activities in Japan. For that purpose, of course, the support of the 700 million Muslims of the world is necessary.

Since the establishment of Islamic Culture Society, Japan, about a year ago, it has received hundreds of publications on Islam, such as magazines, news and viewpapers, pamphlets and other reference materials from various Islamic organizations and Muslim brothers of the world. We express our deep gratitude to them for this support and encouragement.

Because more pages have been given to the articles, colour photo pages have been omitted this time. Inshallah, they will find their proper place in the future issues.

SOME ASPECTS OF PROPHET'S LIFE AND WORKS

Muhammad Hamidullah

Dear Brothers,

Assalamu alaikum warahmatullahe wabarkatuhu. It is a great pleasure that I am here today since long years I was thinking to visit this country which is a pride to Asia, to the East. Occasion has prevented that now I pass by Tokyo for two nights only. But to meet you here and to see the activities what you are doing has filled me with great joy and great enthusiasm.

My talks today is a bit delicate because it is desired of me that I talk to you something about the life of the Prophet and also something about Islam in the modern world. It is a delicate task in the sense that the time is short and both these subjects are very vast. Anyhow I shall try what I can. And I hope you will excuse me if there are short-comings in the expositions that I am going to make.

As far as the life of the Holy Prophet is concerned, I think I can just refer to certain characteristics of his personality and his teachings, and not any clear description of his life and his work.

The Prophet of Islam Recognizes Other Religions

There has been and there are many religions in the world and religion means something which is by nature jealous of others. It cannot tolerate other religions

in the sense it thinks that it alone has the monopoly of truth and that all other religions are a falsehood.

By nature so. Let us see in this connection what the Prophet of Islam has taught us. In the teaching of Prophet of Islam the first thing we notice is, that is, it is a continuity and universality. In fact, he has said that all the great reformers of humanity from the first man Adam down to himself who had received the Message of God through revelations are not only for the people of their times but also for Muslims. For instance, Adam was not only the prophet of his time but he is also the prophet of Islam. So are Abraham, Moses, Jesus, in short, all the founders of religions, if we can say, they are also prophets of God and, Islam recognizing them, and say they are also Islam's prophet. This shows there is a continuity from the beginning of time and a universality in the sense these different prophets of antiquity lived in different countries, and in spite of that, Islam recognizes them as its own prophets, so there is a continuity and there is a universality which must be the teaching of the Prophet of Islam. For instance, it will not say that Judaism is a false religion, it will not say that Christianity is a false religion, so on and so forth. But it will say God had revealed to different great men, the prophets in different

epochs, some teachings and it is God Himself which modify the changes in His teachings according to the requirements of humanity. So, to Islam, Judaism is a divinely revealed religion, Christianity is a divinely revealed religion, and so on and so forth, and we see that in this attitude there is absolutely nothing to shock people of other religions, because Islam says the God Which taught you your religion, it is the same God Which adds something to the teachings which were revealed to you according to the requirements of the progressing society and humanity.

And the Prophet of Islam has had great respect also for different religions and for the founders of those religions — the prophets of Islam, and I shall give you some instances. In the Holy Quran he is called “RAHMATUL-LIL-ALAMEEN,” a mercy for all the nations. Let us see how it really applies to his attitude regarding other religions, say for instance, Judaism. Nowadays, these people of Jewish religion, on account of political and other reasons, may be considered as enemies for Islam. But that does not mean that their religion is condemned by Islam. On the other hand, the Holy Quran says that the Jewish people were superior to all the other peoples, at least, in the time of Prophet Moses, when God says: “We have given them excellence on all the other peoples of the world.” That is the attitude regarding the Jewish religion and regarding the Jews in so far as the time when they practised this religion, and it is true because in the time of Moses the humanity was probably idolatrous and polytheist, and the Jews were the only people who believed in the monotheism, in the

one God; so God said that these are the people whom God has given excellence on other nations. And the Holy Quran, at least three times, refers to it and voluntarily accepts that God has given excellence to the Jewish people. That is the Islamic attitude.

Another example is regarding Christianity. As you all know, according to the Christian belief, Jesus Christ had no father and he was born to a virgin pious woman, Mary. Islam is the only religion in the world which believes that it is so. All other religions either keep silent or crudely reject it and accuse virgin Mary with all sorts of ignominy. This shows Islamic attitude toward the founders of divinely revealed religions is of great respect and also of comprehension.

Religions, in general, attach very great importance to the spiritual aspect of man and, practically, we can say all the great religions of the world have taught, as the means of salvation, the renunciation of the world. They say: Abandon the world, do not enjoy the life of this world, and you will get salvation. In this respect, it is quite clear that this sort of teaching can appeal to only a very small number of man. The immense majority — the ordinary man in the street, although may have a respect for this teaching, he cannot practise it.

Islam, on the other hand, unites between the spirit and the body and says: “The good in this world, the good in the hereafter.” That is a teaching which can be practicable not only to the saintly people but also to the man in the street, the ordinary man.

The Prophet of Islam: Founder of a State

In the life of the founders of great

religions, we can find one was a great warrior in the path of God, the other was a great ascetic person, and so on and so forth. In the life of the Prophet of Islam, we see that he combined all the important attributes which could be found in a man. For instance, the Prophet of Islam is the founder of a religion. At the same time, he is founder of a State. At the same time, he is Great Commander of Army, and so on and so forth, which distinguish him from other founders of religions. Take for instance, the foundation of a State and the Prophet of Islam as a Ruler. When he began preaching in Mecca, there was great resistance to his teaching. He was persecuted and he had to leave his country and take refuge in another town, Medina. And there he found a complete chaos. In Medina, at no time, a State had existed. He comes there and finds that different elements of the city were only warring with each other for a very long time. Now, he establishes there a State with the consent of the population. In fact, he persuaded the population of Medina, both Muslims and non-Muslims, and there were pagan Arabs, that is, idolatrous Arabs, there were Jews, there were also some Christians besides the Muslims and told them: "As you are, everyone of you is weak. If your enemy attacks you and nobody else helps you, you can be destroyed and annihilated. And so also all the other tribes. On the other hand, if you collaborate and unite yourselves under a central organism, then your force will be strong enough to resist any enemy." They agreed. Muslims and non-Muslims, they all wanted to have a sort of City State, that is to say, a State whose territory extends over a city only, not a great empire but only a city. And

they agreed to it.

I will not give you in detail the reason for which not only Muslims but also non-Muslims agreed that Muhammad (SAW), the Prophet of Islam, should be the Head of this State. In fact, all agreed that he should be the Ruler of the country.

In the beginning, it was a State only on a part of the town of Medina, not even the entire town agreed to merge in this new State. Ten years later when the Prophet of Islam died, he was ruling over the entire Arabian peninsula, the southern part of Iraq and the southern part of Palestine. This meant three million square kilometers of territory. And he gave to this State all the organisms of administration. This shows he had a genius not only to rule, but even to create a State, and where there nothing existed, he introduced all the administration like education, like army, like finances, like administration of justice and so on and so forth.

Among the peculiarities of this State is that the Prophet of Islam gave it also a written constitution, a document of fifty two clauses in which he gave in detail the duties and the rights of the ruler as well as of his subjects, a document which has come down to us and we can say that it is the oldest written constitution promulgated by a ruler for the administration of the country and it has now been translated in practically all the important languages of the world and it contains description in detail of all the subjects which were considered important for a state in those days.

As I said, from a zero to three million square kilometers of territory in ten years — that was the expansion of the State.

There were wars. But what kind of wars? We can say that during the conquest, if I can employ that term, during the conquest of this territory, not even two enemies were killed every month. Ten-year means 120 months. Not even 240 enemies were killed in the battles to conquer the vast territories of three million square kilometers. This shows how great respect he paid to human blood. To kill so little, perhaps one may think, was due to the fact that he had a great army and the enemy submitted easily. Not so. Always the enemy was more numerous than the Muslim army. For instance, in the Battle of Badr, the very first battle, Muslims numbered 312 and the enemy 950. More than three times was the enemy, still the Muslims triumphed. Next came the Battle of Ohud in which Muslims were 700 and the enemy 3,000, more than four times, still the Muslims triumphed. In the Battle of Khandak, Muslims were 1,500 and the enemy was 12,000, still the Muslims triumphed. In the Battle Khaebar, a year later, Muslims were again 1,500 and the enemy was 20,000 combatants and still the Prophet of Islam conquered and occupied the territory. This shows his capacity as an army commander. He was a genius and with a small number of soldiers he could defeat the greater and superior forces of the enemy.

Success in life-time

Another aspect of his greatness is his success during his own life. Normally, the founder of a religion does not succeed in his life, it is after him that his religion expands. So was Jesus Christ, so was the Buddha, and so were the other founders of great religions. What we see in this

respect regarding the Prophet of Islam?

We do not possess the census of the exact number of Muslims in his time. But we have certain indications. Three months before he died, he went for pilgrimage to Mecca and, historians say, 140,000 Muslims had come that year for pilgrimage to Mecca. In the life of Jesus Christ we find not even 50 converts to Christianity during his life-time. Not every Muslim goes to Mecca for pilgrimage every year. A few go this year, a few others go next year and so on and so forth. So this number of 140,000 should not be taken as the number of the totality of the Muslims of that epoch. Even if we consider that one in three Muslims or four Muslims had gone for pilgrimage that year, we may imagine the number. Perhaps half a million people had embraced Islam in the life-time of the Prophet.

With one more aspect of the life of the Prophet I conclude, because the time is running out. The Holy Quran, the Muslim religious Book, orders that non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic State should not only be tolerated, but also protected with complete internal autonomy. The Holy Quran says the Christians should apply the Law of the Gospel to themselves. It does not say Muslim Law should be applied to them, on the other hand, says every community living in the Islamic territory should apply its own law to its own affairs. This autonomy to non-Muslim subjects was applied during the life-time of the Prophet and also afterwards by all the Caliphs.

Thirty years after the death of the Prophet there was a civil war among the Muslims. The Muslims fought among themselves. At that time the Byzantine Emperor who was a Christian and who

had lost many territories to the Muslims like Egypt, like Palestine, like Syria, suggested to his ancient subjects, the Christians, who were now in the Muslim State, to revolt and promised them that he, too, would attack the Islamic territory. The Christians refused and said they prefer Muslim rule to the Christian rule which they knew under the Emperor's domination. And that was not only at that moment, but all along the centuries we find that non-Muslim subjects preferred Islamic rule to the rule of their co-religionists.

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Can We Practise Islamic Rules and Regulations in Our Life in the Modern Age?

Now, with your permission, I turn to the second aspect of this talk, that is, "Islam in the Modern World." That is to say, "Can we practise Islamic rules and regulations in our life in our modern age?"

Islam is a religion, as I said a few minutes ago, which combines both spirit and body, this world and the other world. So its demands of us concern both aspects of our life. We should pray, for instance, we should work also to earn for our life. In most religions, we see, people go out once a week to the temple or to the church for prayer. In Islam, as you know, man is required to pray five times every day. People may ask: Why so many prayers? We are engaged in our livelihood and we do not find time for five prayers, people may say. But just think over the fact that 24 hours we spend for our material life. Should we not reserve 24 minutes in these 24 hours for our spirit, for our own soul? In fact, the five prayers do not require more than 24 minutes. Even these five prayers, in time of need, could be reduced to three. I

shall explain to you how.

As you know, the first prayer is to be celebrated before sunrise. The second prayer is after the midday. The third prayer is said in the afternoon. The fourth prayer is after sunset. The fifth and the last before we go to bed at night. Now, the Holy Prophet of Islam himself has said: If you are very busy with your affairs, you can combine two prayers together — the prayer after the midday and the prayer of afternoon. You can celebrate them both at the same moment from midday to sunset any time you are free to do that. In the same way, the prayer of the evening and the prayer at night could be combined at any moment which is suitable to the individual before going to bed. Thus, you see, only three times could be sufficient for celebrating the five prayers. Now, these three times which I mentioned could easily suit to anybody. When one rises up, one can pray. There is no difficulty for anybody regarding the morning prayer. Similarly, for the prayers at night when we have terminated all our works and we want to go to bed, at that moment we can spend a few minutes and that is also practicable for every individual. The other two prayers, as I said, could be celebrated at any time between midday and sunset. And, in fact, every one of us gets time at midday for our lunch. In this time, we can spare a few moments for the benefit of our soul, for rendering grace to our Lord. This can create an equilibrium in our life and both material and spiritual interest of our personality could be achieved. Our materialism may procure us material abundance, no doubt. But that will not give us spiritual satisfaction. I can say in general:

where there is a will, there is a way. If we impose on ourselves some tasks, we do find means. So also regarding our spiritual duty. If we are convinced that this duty is our duty and we must do that, we shall find easily the possibilities to accomplish them.

For the prayer, one must wash oneself. This has not only a spiritual significance, but it is also good for our material interest, hygiene and so on. In the ablution's washing, we wash our hands, we wash our mouth, we wash our nose, we wash our face, we wash our hands to the elbow, we wash our head, ears and feet. What do they signify spiritually? In fact, with these organs we do all sorts of mischiefs. With the hand we can beat somebody. With our mouth we can talk injustice. With our face we can influence for injustice. With our head we can meditate plots. With our feet we can walk in the path of injustice. By washing them we want to emphasize that we take the resolution of not doing these things in the future and are repenting for the past.

Fasting is another duty of Muslims. Not to eat and not to drink during the whole month of Ramadan from dawn to dusk, as you know all. It may be said that fasting is found in all the nature. Not only Muslims, but even trees and even wild animals fast for the benefit of their life. In winter, for instance, the wild bees get nothing to eat on account of snow or other reasons. They do not eat, they do not drink for months together. They do not die. They make their hibernation, and in the end of winter they become more vigorous, more young and more active. By this fasting they bring it. They become more strong, more healthy; and that is one instance. The

same applies to plants as I shall describe. When winter comes, you know, the leaves of a tree falls. The tree becomes like a dead body. We do not irrigate it. That is to say, during winter months, the tree fasts; it neither eats nor drinks. When spring comes, new blossoms come. The tree becomes younger and more vigorous, gives flowers, gives fruits and shows that it acquired a greater vitality on account of fasting. Human organs also require rest. If walk a long distance, we stop and give rest to our legs, and our legs soon become again normal. We can walk further. Our eyes, when they are tired of the day's work or by reading, we shed them re-sleep, and with the re-sleep which is a rest, we recuperate our lost energy. So also our stomach which works all the time requires a rest. And what rest could be given to our stomach, if not, but by not giving it to digest. Food and drink we stop. It gives a sort of rest and the stomach becomes more healthy, more vigorous.

Problem of Food

To tell the truth, there is not a great difference between a Muslim's life and a non-Muslim's life. Everybody requires eating, drinking, sleeping and so on and so forth. So, essentially, there is not a great difference between a Muslim life and a non-Muslim life except a few points. Regarding drinks, the only or at least the most essential injunction is on wine. And if you do not consume wine, it is better even for our own interest. And it is not difficult for somebody not to drink wine because there are so many other things which replace it. We can drink fruit juice, we can drink milk, we can drink water and anything; there is no prohibition.

Only one thing which was harmful to the individual and to the society has been forbidden. Regarding food, there are a few injunctions. Pork is forbidden by Islam. The other injunction is not to eat an animal which has not been slaughtered in the name of God ritually. This we find difficult in our time, specially, if we live in a non-Muslim country. Many people ask me in Europe, in France, in Switzerland, in Germany, etc., what to do in this respect. I tell them: where there is a will there is a way. If you want to practise Islam, it is easy to find means. At my suggestion in Geneva, for instance, they found an easy means themselves. A Muslim went to the Government slaughter-house, and they permitted him to slaughter an animal with his own hands in the Government slaughter house. He contacted Muslims and said: "I shall bring to your house every week the quantity of meat you require"... And since in every house there is a refrigerator, they put it there and the whole week they do not require to purchase meat which is illicit for the Muslims. And this Muslim got a sort of livelihood and other Muslims got the meat which is licit to them religiously. In Paris, for instance, there is a great Muslim community. Half-a-million inhabitants of Paris are Muslims. The Government is also liberal. In the Government slaughter-house, there are now three sections: one is the general section, another is a Jewish section and the third is a Muslim section. In Paris, there is no difficulty. We can easily get every day the quantity of ritually slaughtered animals as we like. Since the number of Muslims in Paris is great, there are some fifty meat dealers, there are two hundred restaurants of Muslims, so it is not dif-

icult for any Muslim who wants to eat only the lawful meat and who profits by these facilities. The same is true of London. There the Muslim community is quite large and they wanted to practise Islam regarding their need. The result is that many Muslims get their livelihood by procuring licit meat to the clients.

In fact, in our modern age, Western countries are very liberal. There is no persecution, no compulsion in matters of religion. So if we observe hygienic condition, there is no difficulty. We cannot slaughter animals in our house and make it dirty. But we can go to the Government slaughter-house and there slaughter the animal, and then distribute meat to our clients, and this is possible in great towns as well as in small villages.

Now I shall deal with one more point and come through because I have taken too much of time. That point is the difficulties for prayer – the lack of mosques. This difficulty also can be met with our own determination. The daily prayers one can pray even at home, in the field, in the garden or anywhere one is at the moment. So that is practically not a difficult thing. What we require is only our own will to pray. If we want a place for the meeting of a greater number for praying in common, the experience in Paris shows that it is also very easy to accomplish. The French Government constructed a mosque in 1924. It is a very big mosque, naturally for political purposes. Paris is a huge city with six million inhabitants. And, naturally, all the Muslims, that is, the half-a-million Muslims cannot meet in the same mosque. During the last five to ten years, at the initiative of individual Muslims, we are hiring

rooms in different localities of the city; a small room, a bigger room according to the number of Muslims in the locality.

In fact, we require two places for the prayer: one is near our home and the other is near the place where we work. So, as I said, during the last five to ten years a great number of such places have been provided and, actually, there are 80 mosques in the city and suburb of Paris. Even these 80 mosques do not suffice and we are expecting that in near future the number will at least be doubled. Sometimes, a room is hired. At other times, people give a part of their own house. For instance, in Paris, in my quarters where I live, there is a merchant who has his shop in the groundfloor and on the upper floor he and his family live, the highest one, that is, the top floor he has given as a mosque. And all the people in the locality meet there.

Sometimes, the Christians show their charity and generosity. In many places, the church gives a place to Muslims for prayer. Sometimes, unusual things pass. Perhaps it will be unexpected to you to know that Muslims in Paris have purchased three churches. And this is with the permission of the Christian authorities, that is, the church itself. The reason is, in Paris, the number of churches is too

great. Sometimes, in the same street there are two or three churches, and now-a-days all rest empty. So they want to sell one church, and one church there suffices them, which will be filled up. In fact, the church authorities prefer a Muslim for selling their churches. They say that the house of God will remain house of God if the Muslims purchase it. Otherwise, if it is sold to anybody else, it may become a cabaret, it may become a shop, it may become any other profane thing. So, in this way, in Paris we have found some solution and perhaps in other countries other things will also be possible and again I repeat: Where there is a will there is a way.

These our mosques in Paris are not only for the prayers: daily prayers, Friday prayers, Eid Feast prayer, tarawih prayer, but also they are teaching centres. Muslim children, new converts and everybody who desire to know Islam, there are facilities where voluntary Muslims give them all the necessary information according to their capacity.

So, Dear Friends, I have terminated the few points which came into my mind and I thank you very much for the patience with which you have listened to me.

NOTE: The above is a transcription of a lecture by Professor Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah who very kindly took some time out to visit Tokyo on his way back to Paris after completing his teaching assignment in Kuala Lumpur. In the reproduction of the tape-recorded talk there might remain some errors which are ours.

A celebrated authority of Islamic Law, he is internationally reputed and needs no further introduction. He graced the ICF No. 2 issue with an article which you already know.

What concerns us here most is that when he visited Tokyo during 2-4 August we found in him not only a scholar of great repute, but also a man and a Muslim, unpretentious and honest. The serene, at the same time radiant, face of this 70-year old scholar and man taught us how a Muslim should be, not by appearance but by spirit and deed. His steadfast refusal to allow his photo and life-sketch published has attracted us more strongly and more cordially towards him. – Editor

ISLAM

(Continued from previous issue)

Paul Thomas Welty

THE KORAN

According to the teachings of Islam, Muhammed was the last of the prophets through whom God's message was transmitted to mankind. He was not God but the instrument God used to convey His truth to man, and although Muhammed is revered and honored by all Muslims as Allah's prophet, he is not worshipped. God's revelation as spoken through the voice of Muhammed was recorded in a holy book called the Koran (*Qu'ran*), which is the final authority in Islam, and for all Muslims the written word of God. The Koran has 114 chapters, or *surahs*, which range in length from 286 to 4 verses. Most Westerners find the Koran difficult reading but to the Muslim it is an incomparable work. Many Muslims think that in the translation of the Koran from Arabic, the original language, to other languages much is lost of the symbolism, poetry, richness of imagery, and nuances of thought. Perhaps it is for this reason that so much time and effort is spent in teaching the

followers of Islam to read the Koran in the original Arabic. God gave to man a complete revelation through Muhammed, and it is the sacred duty of Muslims to insure that it is known completely. Even after a quick reading of the Koran one is struck by the fact that Muhammed, who could neither read nor write, dictated a book which reveals an amazing knowledge of Jewish and Christian traditions and history, and a penetrating insight into the psychology and nature of man. The laws and ordinances that are promulgated throughout the Koran have withstood the vicissitudes of time and are still applicable to man. The social and ethical teachings of the Koran possess the stamp of permanency because they continue to meet the needs of the community and the yearning of the human heart. Of course, the good Muslim would not be amazed by the wisdom displayed in the Koran because it contains the words and knowledge of God, not Muhammed. The voice was the voice of Muhammed, but the thought and the words were of God. Nonetheless the voice had a magnificent tone and it reverberates through the pages of the Koran. For such a message, God chose a man whose voice could be heard through the ages.

From **THE ASIANS: Their Heritage and Destiny** by Paul Thomas Welty. Copyright © 1966, 1963 by J.B. Lippincott Company. Reprinted by permission of J.B. Lippincott Company.

Very early in the history of Islam problems in the interpretation of the Koran and in the adjustment of the Muslims to the requirements of Islam arose. As a result another authority developed, based upon tradition and anecdotes, which describes what Muhammed said, did, or tolerated among his followers. This authority is called the *Hadith* or *Sunna*. The *Hadith* supplements the Koran and is equally authoritative in matters which are not treated in the Koran.

BASIC BELIEFS OF ISLAM

Islam teaches that there is but one God, and his name is Allah. Belief in the oneness of God is fundamental to the Muslim religion, and the primary purpose of Islam is to remind man that He exists and should be worshipped and obeyed. The opening surah of the Koran reads:

**In the name of Allah, the Beneficent,
the Merciful.**

**Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and
Sustainer,**

The Beneficent, the Merciful.

Master of the Day of Judgment,

**Thee alone we worship; and Thine aid
we seek.**

Show us the straight path,

**The path of those on whom Thou hast
bestowed Thy grace,**

Those whose portion is not wrath,

And who go not astray.

– SURAH I, 1-7

God is eternal. He created heaven and earth, and He is all-powerful, all-merciful, and all-just. He is unique. Having no equal, He should have no rivals. From the time of the Prophet himself, the Muslims have reserved their harshest criticism for those who worship so-called

gods, for they veil the ultimate truth *of the one God*. In the early days of Islam, Muhammed and his followers were continually harassed by the worshippers of many gods who feared and detested the revelation that there was but one God. When the Muslims invaded India, the more extreme among them took every opportunity to destroy what they conceived to be the idols of Hinduism and Buddhism, which they found in temples and public places. They scolded the Jews for forgetting the revelation of Abraham that there was but one God, and they reproved the Christians for deifying Christ, for they should know that he was but a prophet, although a great one. That there is but one God, is the eternal foundation of Islam.

Islam teaches that God created man and endowed him with an immortal soul. Each soul is an individual soul. Islam values the individual: it does not, as Hinduism, regard the individual as impermanent or transitory, but as having a permanence that is eternal. Every person is differentiated from every other person by the quality of uniqueness bestowed on him by God. Islam stresses the duty of each individual to work out his own destiny. Each is responsible for his actions. This is not to say that men should not help each other – Islam very emphatically commands its followers to provide others with all possible material and spiritual assistance in their efforts to reach God – but it is to say that, ultimately, it is the decision of each individual whether he follows the will of Allah or not. The Koran points out that “If anyone sins, he alone is responsible for his sin.” (Surah IV, 111)

Islam teaches that there is a life after

death for every person born on earth. Eventually, all must go to one of two places: heaven or hell. The Muslims believe that heaven is an abode of eternal delight where man may live forever together with God in rapturous peace and happiness. God does not dwell in hell, which is a place of eternal sorrow, torment, and despair. There are two paths which a man may walk in life — one is straight and leads to heaven and God, the other is crooked and leads to hell. It is for man to select, for the Koran says: "Whoever strays, he bears the full responsibility for his straying." (Surah X, 103) At the end, God will judge which of the two paths man has chosen to walk.

Islam seeks to guide man through life by encouraging him to undertake good deeds. Essentially, the good life for a Muslim is founded upon the five pillars of Islam.

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The first pillar is the creed, "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammed is His Prophet," which should be recited daily by the faithful. Generally, Muslims say this creed many times in the course of a day, but essentially it is only required to say it with faith and understanding once in a lifetime. The teachings of Islam are based on the fact of one God, and it is necessary for all Muslims to affirm this God with their tongue, at least once, but preferably every day and many times a day. The oneness of God must be indelibly engraved on the minds and hearts of every Muslim.

"... and Muhammed is His Prophet." Muhammed was the man chosen by Allah to reveal His Word to man and

has, therefore, a most honored place in Islam. By the frequent recitation of his name and title Muslims recall that it was under his leadership and direction that Islam was born in the hearts of men and that he merits their esteem and remembrance. But this recitation also recalls to them that he was a prophet only and must not be deified.

The second pillar of Islam is prayer. The Muslim should pray five times daily — before sunrise, at noontime, during the midafternoon, at sunset, and after sunset. Islam permits deviations from this schedule if, for example, adhering to it is likely to bring serious harm to the petitioner. One of the striking human qualities of Islam is the fact that it permits exceptions to many of its requirements under extenuating or abnormal circumstances.

A Muslim can pray anywhere. Although there are thousands of magnificent mosques scattered around the globe, it is not required of a Muslim to pray in a mosque. The whole world is a mosque for him, and he is urged to spread his prayer rug, and pray, wherever he finds himself at the scheduled hour of prayer.

Muslims should pray facing toward Mecca. This practice symbolizes the unity of Islam and is a respectful remembrance of Abraham. Before starting his prayer he should wash himself — his hands, his mouth, his face, behind his ears, his neck, his arms up to the elbows, and his feet up to the ankles. One should be as pure and as clean as possible before approaching his God in prayer. Here, as in other matters, Islam permits an exception, for if there is no water and the Muslim of the desert might often

find it impossible to obtain water, the Koran urges him to go to clean, high ground and rub his face and hands with its earth. The practice of compulsory washing five times a day instills in the Muslim the habit of cleanliness, and it is characteristic of Islam that, in this and other instances, it links together what is good for the body and what is good for the soul.

The Muslim stands with his thumbs touching the lobes of his ears saying three times, "*Allahu akbar*" ("God is most great"). Still standing, but with hands clasped on his chest, he then recites the opening surah of the Koran, followed by a shorter surah of his own selection. An example of a short surah is the CII.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent,
the Merciful.

Proclaim the Allah, the One!

Allah, the Eternal, Absolute.

He begetteth not, nor is He begotten;

There is none that can compare to Him.

He then bows placing his hands on his knees, saying, "Praise be to God, the Most Great." He stands again, praying, "*Allahu akbar*" ("God is most great"). He then kneels down, places his hands and face on the ground, saying, "Praise be to God, the Most Great." He also recites other prayers. He returns to a kneeling position, sits on his heels, and prays again. He repeats this ritual several times always accompanied by prayer. He concludes by turning his head first to the right and then to the left, saying in each position, "May God watch over you and bless you."

The frequent prayers are designed to keep the Muslim ever mindful of his

God and the duties required of him. The ritual is symbolic, but it also serves to keep him alert and conscious of the prayers he is reciting. When he turns his face to the right and to the left at the conclusion of his prayer, he is bestowing the peace of Allah upon his neighbors, whether there be anyone present or not, and thus he is reminded of the brotherhood that must exist within Islam.

Charity is the third pillar of Islam. Muhammed established a graduated tax of two and one-half per cent on the entire holdings of each person, a tax which adds up to one-fortieth of the entire wealth a Muslim possesses. Those who have must give, those who have not are excused. This is a high tax, and far exceeds the taxes which many modern states impose upon their citizens. In a real sense, Muhammed instituted a share-the-wealth plan which incorporates old-age pensions, social security, and other features of the welfare state. The money collected from this tax is used to succor the poor and the needy and to provide for the aged. The tax is also a kind of insurance because it is used to liberate debtors from their debts. In a sense Islam acts like a benevolent aid society, for the tax money is also used to assist wayfarers and to free captives from their bondage. Islam's teaching on charity helps to knit the family and the community more closely together, for it is the responsibility of Muslims to provide for their parents, impoverished kinsfolk, and neighbors. The funds collected are also utilized for religious purposes, such as the building and maintenance of mosques and the spread of Islam. In this use it resembles the tithing system of the Christians. Good Muslims, who faith-

fully and religiously observe the teachings of Islam on charity, do not find it easy to amass wealth.

Observing the month of Ramadan is the fourth pillar of Islam. The ninth month of the Arabic lunar calendar, Ramadan is important because during this month Muhammed received his revelation from God, as embodied in the Koran, and made his momentous *Hijra*, or migration from Mecca to Medina. In memory of these two most significant events, every Muslim, except those who are sick, involved in war, taking a journey, or excused by other exemptions, must fast from sunrise to sunset. No food, drink, smoke, or anything else should pass their lips during this period. After sunset it is permitted to take food and drink. Islam imposes this arduous fast upon man to teach him self-discipline and to remind him that he is in reality a weak creature who constantly requires the sustaining nourishment of his God. It also compels him to experience the searing and sickening pangs of hunger so that he will feel compassion for the hungry ones he meets, or who seek him out, and provide for them.

Pilgrimage to the holy shrine of the Kaaba in Mecca is the fifth pillar of Islam. Every Muslim who can, should visit Mecca and the Kaaba at least once in his lifetime, to renew his faith on the sacred ground which was blessed by Abraham when he erected the original Kaaba to the one God and where Muhammed was born and God first spoke to him. Here, the two sheet-like garments which all pilgrims must wear when approaching the Kaaba hide distinctions of status and wealth and publicly proclaim the equality of all before

God. This same theme of equality and fraternity is evident when the Muslims pray within their mosques, as they usually do on a Friday. There is no reserved place in the mosque for the rich or the powerful. The possession of material goods or earthly power means nothing in the sight of God, and beggar and rich man, peasant and king, pray side by side, paying homage and adoration to their common God. The gathering of Muslims in Mecca from the far corners of the earth is a dramatic expression of the international brotherhood that links Muslim to Muslim within the shelter of Islam.

Because it affords an opportunity for Muslims from many different lands to meet and talk with one another, the pilgrimage to Mecca promotes international understanding within Islam. The unifying factor of one religion permits them to exchange ideas and information with less suspicion and antagonism than if there were no common ideology. Thus, the fifth pillar of Islam not only provides for the spiritual growth of man, but also furthers the concept of international brotherhood and understanding.

CONCLUSION

Islam is an accommodative ideology. It does not try to mold all men into one strict pattern of life, and it allows for individual and cultural differences, provided the basic teachings of Islam are preserved. It realizes that men live in different environments, and it adjusts itself to this diversity without sacrificing basic doctrines. Islam is a complete way of life for all who believe.

(completed)

SOME CULTURAL BACKGROUND TO MUSLIM SLAVE UPRISINGS IN THE 19TH CENTURY BRAZIL

Dennis Walker

Note: Himself a Muslim, Professor Dennis Walker of the University of Melbourne, Australia, is a scholar specialized in Islamic socio-cultural and historical studies particularly where Muslims are in a minority. In the present article, he reveals a page of the Muslim history of which we are not generally aware. — Editor.

Black Brazilians, who constitute 30% of the country's 83 million people can draw on a rich and vital tradition of national identity in the New World that dates from the first years of their enslavement. The establishment of the Republic of Palmares in Northeastern Brazil between 1630 and 1697 was the first violent explosion of black resistance against white tyranny in Brazil. The republic was founded by mainly pagan African refugees from the towns and plantations between Bahia and Pernambuco. Although the forts the refugee black settlers built were levelled three times by the Dutch and the Portuguese, the liberated black people, fighting for their freedom, exhibited remarkable resilience and endurance, producing a complex political and economic entity embracing 20,000 black people and many cities with Cerca Real do Macaco as the capital. J.H. Franklin in *From Slavery to Freedom* sums up Palmares "as a remarkable political and economic achievement for the fugitive slaves of Brazil. The king was assisted by a minister of justice, guards and many military and civil servants. A crude system of law was devised in which murder, rob-

bery and adultery were punishable by death. The Negroes began to trade with the inhabitants of nearby towns. They carried their agricultural products such as beans, cane, and bananas into the villages and changed them for utensils, arms and ammunitions. Each community of huts was a veritable fortress designed specially for defense. The 20,000 inhabitants of Palmares represented an interesting fusion of African elements with western culture to meet the demands of a new experience brought on by dissatisfaction with subjugation."

Professor Franklin describes the last desperate defence of Palmares against the 7000-strong Portuguese host of Governor Bernardo Viera de Mello (1696): "The walled city was besieged in the face of a desperate defence. It was a slow and bitter battle. The audacity, resourcefulness, and courage of the defenders have caused the siege to be described as the "Black Troy". Finally, in 1697, the superior Portuguese soldiers entered the city only to see the leader and his principal assistants hurl themselves from the rocky promontory to certain death. This refusal to surrender caused one

anonymous Portuguese chronicler to remark: "Valour mixed with brutal fury, it revealed a spectacle to our army which inspired the profoundest awe" (1)

But it is the Muslim-led great slave uprisings in 19th century Brazil that most powerfully command our attention and scrutiny as a black attempt not to escape but to overthrow the racist white society holding the African people captive in the Americas, and to build on its ruins an Afro-Islamic state.

The question of Muslim African origins of the slave uprisings is closely connected with that of the origins or provenance of the New World "Negroes". In the same way that the earlier resurrections in Brazil expressed the animist or pagan aspect of African identity, the Muslim uprisings expressed the centrality of Islamic identity and culture of the African consciousness which blacks were attempting to preserve in the New World. Gilberto Freyre has interestingly modified the standard account of the white Brazilian historians have been at pains to establish about the origins of their land's black slave population. The African slaves imported into Brazil were not, insists Freyre, exclusively or even predominantly taken from the Bantu areas of Africa, supposedly inhabited by genetically and culturally inferior(!) tribesman whom the whiteman "favoured" by carrying them off to the "civilizing environment" of the new world slavery. He quotes Nina Rodrigues' description of the Pulbe or Fula as "blacks of the white race, not only purely Fulanis but mestizos from Senegambia, Portuguese Guinea and adjacent coastal regions. These are a reddish-copper-coloured peo-

ple with wavy, almost straight hair. Negroes of this stock were looked upon by some as being superior to the others, from the anthropological point of view, owing to the admixture, in their case, of Hamitic and Arabic blood; . . . Hadden describes the type as being tall, with a yellow or reddish skin, wavy hair, an oval face and prominent nose". Few will suppress a smile at Rodrigues' anxiety to stress, in allegedly colour-blind Brazil, the "superior" Arab and Hamitic blood of the Fulani - but their cultural link to the Middle East and Islam is of course interesting. He continues, describing "the Haussas, who also came in large numbers to Brazil, notably to Bahia, likewise a mixed-blood type, with Hamitic and possibly Berber strains, although the Negro characteristics are predominant in them; and the same is true of the Niam-Niam, the Mangbatus, the Kanembus, the Bagirmis, the Bornus and the Kanuris". Brazil received various contingent of Mandingos who in their turn show traces of Arabic and Taureg blood; while the Yorubas reveal a non-Negro strain that is yet to be identified" (Pp304-5.)

Silvio Romero and Joao Ribeiro in *Compendio de Historia do Literatura Brasileira* . . . 1909 say: "They were not all of them, certainly, on the same rung of the cultural ladder; but as a result of their contact with the Arabians since the seventh century, with the Egyptians and the Berbers, the majority of the tribes had from time immemorial attained a notable degree of advancement.

"The Mandingos . . . converted for the most part to Mohammedanism, intelligent and enterprising; the Yorubas

or Minas, almost all Mohammedans and quite as clever as the Mandingos; the Haussas whose tongue is the most widespread in the Sudan, the Fulani followers of Mohammed. The best organised in the country . . . the Ambaquistas, astute, clever, sophists, fond of written words; in the Ajaus who had had relations for centuries with the Arabs; the Nubians, source of the most intelligent Brazilian slaves imported in small numbers." (Pp313-314)

In relating their feasts to the phases of the moon the two writers say: "It is impossible to separate the Negro who was brought to Brazil from the conditions under which he came. If it is the habit that makes the monk, this is true of the slave; and the African was often times obliged to divest himself of his Male (Muslim) tunic, to don the **tanga** (loin cloth supplied by the white slavers) of the filthy slave ships. He had to put on the **tanga** or a pair of sackcloth trousers and become a bearer of the **tigre** or fecal urn." (P322). It in fact is a sad commentary on Brazilian white racism that any serious research at all into the origin of the country's Negro slaves is almost impossible because the eminent Bahian Councilor, Ray Barbarossa, Minister of the Provisional Government following the proclamation of the republic in 1889, had the archives of slavery burned. His motives ostensibly were "economic" . . .

Freyre gives an absorbing and detailed account of the underground Male Muslim culture of the black slaves and the Islamic slave uprisings it inspired. Because of the subject's inherent, fascinating interest, he merits quotation in full:

From the foregoing description it may be seen that no area of Negro Culture, not even the Bushman, suffers by contrast with the culture of the native peoples of Brazil. It may, however, be stressed that the African colonization of our country was effected chiefly with Bantu and Sudanese elements, with peoples from the agricultural and pastoral areas, well-nourished on milk, meat and vegetables. The Sudanese of the western area made valuable contributions in the way of moral and material culture, some of which were their own, while others had been acquired and assimilated from the Mohammedans.

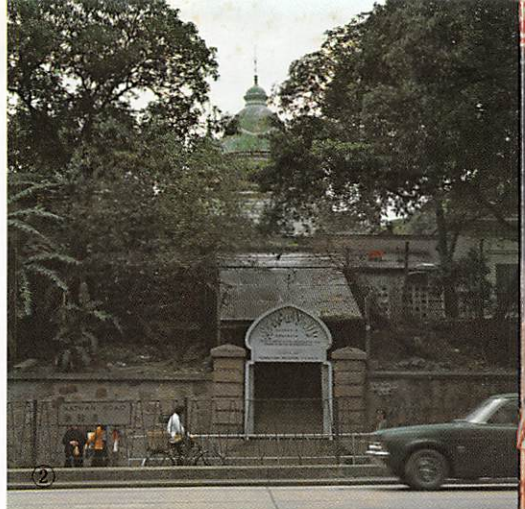
It is to the Sudanese that Nina Rodrigues assigns an "intellectual and social pre-eminence" among the Negroes imported to Brazil; and it seems to him that not only the Bahian movement of 1835 but other slave-hut revolts must have been affiliated with the religious organization of the Sudanese Mohammedans. He attributes a great importance to the influence exercised over the Yorubas (Nagôs) and the Ewes (Gêges) by the Mohammedan Fulâhs and Haussás, who appear to have led the various slave revolts; for they were by way of being the aristocrats of the **senzalus**. They came from the kingdoms of Wurno, Sokotô, and Gandô, which possessed an advanced form of political organization, a well-defined religious literature with native works composed in Arabic characters, and an art that was strong and original, superior to the anemic Portuguese imitations of Moorish models. Slaves such as these could not be expected to conform to the role of mere artistic puppets⁽²⁾ for the Portuguese,



A partial view of the Eid-ul-Azha congregation
at Tokyo Mosque, 1974



①



1. An exterior view of Jamia Mosque, Shelley Street, HK
2. The entrance of Kowloon Mosque, Nathan Road, HK
3. A bird's eye view of the city and port of HK from the Victoria peak



③

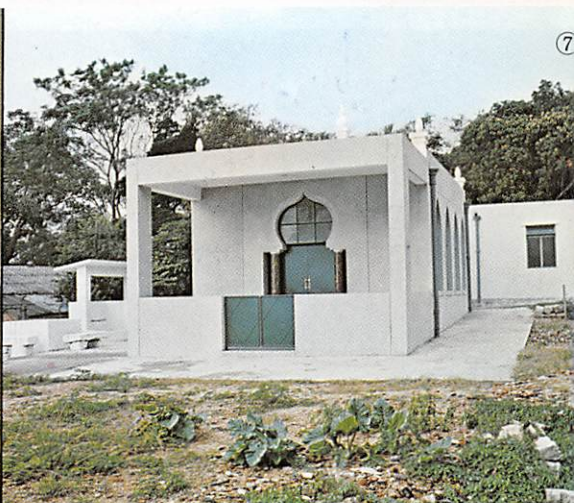
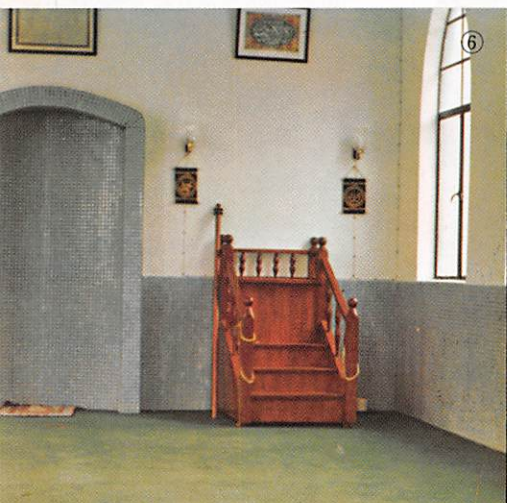
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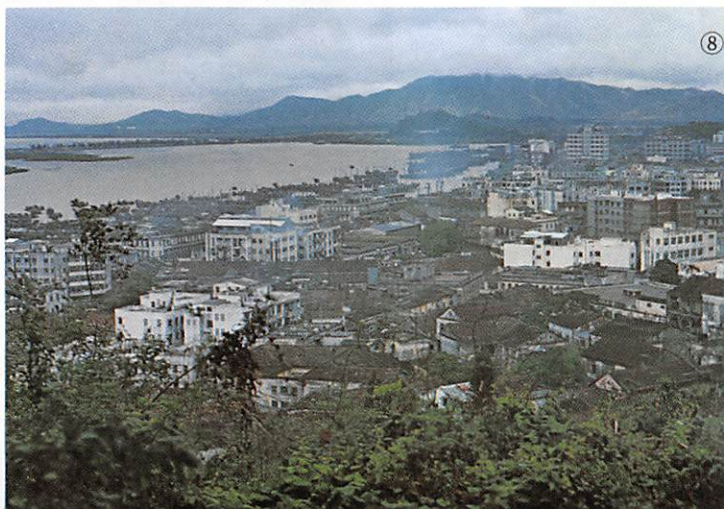
In the Muslim Cemetary Mosque: From left Imam Ahmed Cheung Kwong Yee of Jamia Mosque and Magdom Ismail

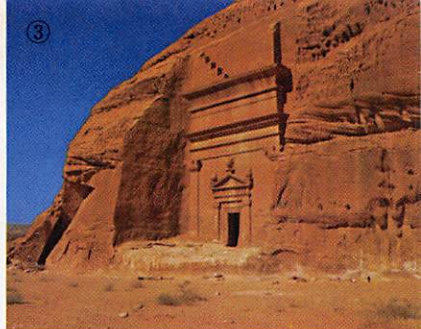
In front of Macao Mosque: Dr. Ghulam Hussain Gill

The Mimbar at Macao Mosque

An exterior view of Macao Mosque

A general view of Macao





[For story, see p. 28]

Photos in this page are by
courtesy of Kajima Productions

1. The Arabian desert from the air
2. Night view of an oilfield in Saudi Arabia
3. Meda'in Saleh: a cavern 640km north of Mecca
4. Another oil prospecting in the brown desert
5. Victory Day in Cairo, 1974: President Sadat, Chairman Arafat of PLO and other Arab leaders reviewing the Victory Day March



nor could the holy water of Christian baptism all of a sudden extinguish the Mohammedan fire that was in them.

The Abbé Étienne noted that Islamism had branched out in Brazil in the form of a powerful sect that flourished in the dark of the slave huts, with teachers and preachers from Africa to give instruction in reading of the holy books of the Koran in the Arabic, and with Mohammedan schools and houses of prayer functioning here.⁽³⁾

The atmosphere that preceded the movement of '35 in Bahia was one of intense religious ardor among the slaves. In Mata-Porcos Lane, on the Praça slope, at St. Francis' Cross, in the very shadow of the Catholic churches and monasteries and the niches of the Virgin Mary and St. Anthony of Lisbon, slaves who were schooled in the Koran preached the religion of the Prophet, setting it over against the religion of Christ that was followed by their white masters, up above in the Big Houses. They propagandized against the Catholic Mass, saying that it was the same as worshipping a stick of wood; and to the Christian rosary with its cross of Our Lord they opposed their own, which was fifty centimeters (nearly twenty inches) long, with ninety-nine wooden beads and with a ball in place of a crucifix on the end.⁽⁴⁾

As a result, Catholicism in Brazil could not but become imbued with Mohammedan influence as it had been with (African) animism . . .

In the case of those Africans who were transported to Brazil from the beginning of the sixteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century, what we should endeavor to do is to discover, in the principal stocks⁽⁵⁾ from which

these immigrants came, not only the degree but the moment of culture that they brought with them. The moment, among the different tribes, varies considerably in the course of the three hundred-odd years of Mohammedan infiltration into black Africa. The degree, in turn, varies notably from the Sudanese to the Bantus. It is important, also, to determine the cultural area in which the slaves originated and to avoid the mistake of seeing in the African the single and indistinct figure of a "piece of Guinea" or the "black man of the coast".

The fact of the matter is that the Mohammedan Negroes brought to Brazil from the African area which had been most deeply penetrated by Islamism were culturally superior not only to the natives, but to the great majority of the white colonists — Portuguese and sons of Portuguese, with almost no education, some of them illiterate, most of them semi-literate. These latter were individuals who could not write a letter or cast an account, unless it was by the hand of the padre schoolmaster or with the brain of some clerk. Almost none of them were able to sign their names, and when they did so, it was in a broken script, like that of a child learning to write.

The Abbé Étienne reveals to us some aspects of the Malé⁽⁶⁾ uprising in Bahia in 1835 that identify this supposed slave revolt as an outbreak or eruption of a more advanced culture downtrodden by another, less noble one.⁽⁷⁾ Let us not romanticize. This was purely a Malé or Mohammedan movement, or a combination of various groups under Musliman leaders.⁽⁸⁾ One thing is certain,

it is to be distinguished from slave revolts in colonial times. It deserves a place, indeed, among the libertarian revolutions of a religious, social, or cultural nature. The report of Dr. Francisco Gonçalves Martins, Chief of Police of the province of Bahia, on the occasion of the uprising, lays emphasis on the fact that all the rebels were able to read and write in unknown characters. Characters that "were like the Arabic", adds the learned commentator, who is naturally astounded at such literary ability on the part of slave. "It is not to be denied that there was a political end in view in connection with these uprisings, for they did not commit robberies nor slay their masters secretly."⁽⁹⁾ The truth is: 'in the slave sheds of Bahia in 1835 there were perhaps more persons who knew how to read and write than up above, in the Big Houses. After ten years of independent life,⁽¹⁰⁾ the nation had just begun to emerge from the state of profound ignorance in which the crown had kept it throughout the eighteenth century and during the first years of the nineteenth, an era when "the simplest rudiments were so little diffused that not frequently wealthy ranchers of the interior would charge their friends of the seaboard to secure for them a son-in-law who, in place of any other dower, should be able to read and write."⁽¹¹⁾

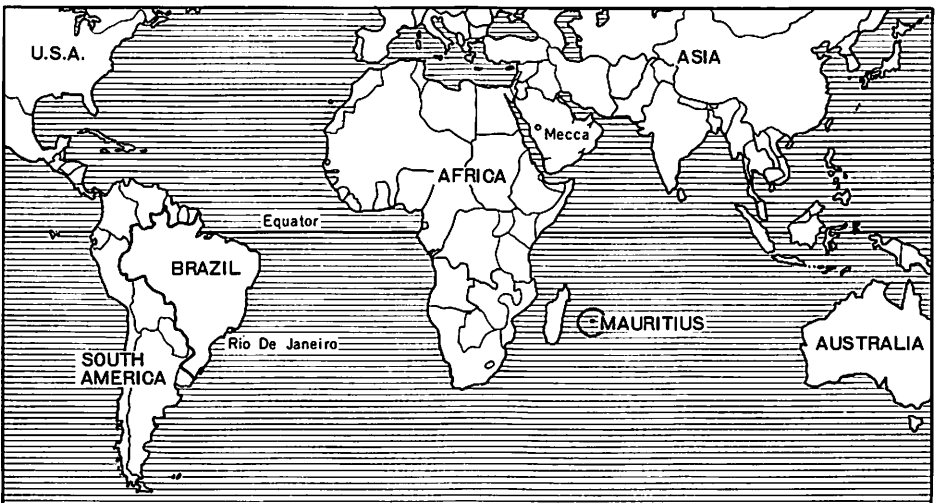
Nineteenth-century historians looked upon the slaves brought to Brazil as coming, all of them, of Bantu stock. This is a point that should be corrected. Slaves were brought in large numbers from other African cultural areas as well, and many of these areas were

superior to that of the Bantus. Brazilian society in the formative stage benefited from the best that African Negro culture had to offer; it absorbed those élite elements, if one put that way, which were lacking in the same proportion in the Southern United States. "I have often thought that slaves of the United States are descended not from the noblest African stock," remarks Fletcher, in contrasting the slaves of the Brazilian *senzalas* with those of the U.S.A.⁽¹²⁾

Freyre writes of the proportion of Muslims among the black slaves of the U.S.A.: Phillips situates the principal sources of slaves for the plantations of his country in the following regions: Sierra Leone or Leoa, the Grain Coast, the Ivory Coast, the Gold Coast, the Slave Coast, Rio de Eleo, Cameroon, Gabon, and Loango. In South Carolina, Negroes from Muslim Gambia, chiefly the Mandingos were the preferred ones, but those from Angola were also quite acceptable. We also meet the references to Senegalese Negroes with their drop of Arabic blood as being favoured for housework by reason of their "greater intelligence". There is no evidence, however, of Fula-Fuloo being brought to the British colonies in America, at least not in the same proportion as to Portuguese America; nor were the representatives of Mohammedan culture so numerous. It was only in Brazil that this culture found repression in schools and houses of prayer and gave rise to movements and organizations that reveal the presence of true Male elite among the African colonists of our country (Brazil)." (Pp307-8)

FOOT-NOTES

- (1) J. H. Franklin: *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of American Negroes*, New York, 1956, Pp. 122-123
- (2) *Manés-gostosos dos portugueses*. *Mané-gostoso* is a term employed in the Brazilian northeast: "character of the *bumba-meu-boi* who appears on stilts to sing verses." - Lima and Barroso. op. cit. The *bumba-meu-boi* ("whack-my-ox"), or *boi-surubi* is defined by Lima and Barroso as a "popular dramatic dance (ballet) in the form of a procession, in which the principal characters are: the ox (*boi*); the sea-horse; Matthew, the physician; etc." It also means a puppet. This will serve to give the rich flavor of the term employed by Freyre, which can be carried over in direct translation. (Translator.)
- (3) Abbé Étienne: "*La Secte Musulmane des Malês du Brésil et leur révolte en 1835*," in *Anthropos*, January-March 1909.
- (4) Nina Rodrigues, op. cit. Manuel Querino: "*A Raça Africana e os Seus Costumes na Baía*" (Loc. cit.)
- (5) Word in English. (Translator.)
- (6) The Malês are Mohammedan Negroes of Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. (Translator.)
- (7) For an account in English of this uprising, see Donald Pierson: *Negroes in Brazil* (op. cit.). Pp. 43-45. See an article by Padre Etienne Ignace Brasil: "*Os Males*" *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*, Vol. LXII, Part II (1909). (Translator.)
- (8) Word in English. (Translator.)
- (9) Abbé Étienne: *ibid*
- (10) Brazilian independence was proclaimed in 1822 and secured by November 1823, under the form of a constitutional monarchy; it was recognized by the United States in 1824, followed by England in 1825. In 1825 Portugal itself granted recognition. (Translator.)
- (11) Handelmmann: *História Do Brasil* (op. cit.). See also Henry Koster: *Travels in Brazil* (op. cit.), which probably afforded Handelmmann his data. - In the 16th and in the first half of the 17th century the intellectual situation with regard to the colonists was better than in the 18th century, thanks to the Jesuit educators and their schools and institutions of higher learning.
- (12) D. P. Kidder and J. C. Fletcher: *Brazil and the Brazilians* (Boston, 1879).



ISLAM IN MAURITIUS

By Correspondents

Mauritius is a tiny island country of 720 square miles off the south-eastern coast of Africa. It was first discovered by Arab navigators who gave it the name of DINA-AL-ARAB. It was later visited by the Dutch and the Portuguese. But it was not habited until the French colonized it early in the 18th century. In 1810, it was lost to the British after a fierce naval battle and remained under British rule until 1968 when it acceded to independence.

It was the French who first imported indentured labour including Muslim peasants from India during the early years of the 18th century to work at the sugarcane fields. Slaves were also brought from the nearby African and Malagasy coastlands. Almost a century later, as has been the tradition throughout the centuries, Muslim traders from India started to come and settle down in Mauritius from around the year 1838. Some Chinese traders also followed suit. With the passage of time, the French and the British descendants integrated themselves wholly into a single, well-knit social class and community, and virtually governed the island under a British governorship until the end of the first-half of the present century.

From the early thirties of the present century, however, political consciousness among the then a quarter million population, the great majority of whom were

the descendants of the former slaves and indentured labourers, began to gather momentum. The Muslim traders were the pioneers in championing the political struggle of the Indo-Muslim population and the arrival of Mahatma Gandhi as a guest of some Muslim traders at the turn of the present century bears ample testimony to this undisputed fact. At the same time, the process of liberation among the descendants of the slaves had assumed the form of trade unionism which soon began to spread among the Indo-Muslim peasants, too. This two-pronged struggle against the White oligarchy and British colonial rule was to bear its first fruits after World War II. From 1948 onwards, political emancipation was gradually but progressively granted to the people until it reached its apex 20 years later when independence was ceremoniously granted in 1968 to this once British colony.

Among the languages of the country, English is still the official language, French the most widely spoken and read, and Creole, a derivation of French, the most popular means of verbal communication among the whole of the population.

Economically, though strangely enough, the Whites are still the economic masters of the country under a Hindu-dominated political regime, and this tacit collaboration is bringing in its wake

more and more foreign capitalists and friends of the two collaborators into the country. Among them Muslim investors are singularly absent. Thus, the collaborators, old and new, are forcing the present government into still more rigid form of a capitalist regime. The resulting new class of upcoming capitalists are in their majority Hindus and Chinese whilst only a few of the Muslims are prepared to lay down their dignity at the altar of mammon, or perhaps they do not have the opportunity to do so. At the bottom of the economic ladder are certainly to be found the Muslims among whom is the greatest incidence of unemployment which affects a population of about 30,000 unemployed of working age. And yet 10 Muslims whose seats are anyway reserved, sit at our Legislative Assembly of 70 members whilst two of them also sit at the 21-member cabinet of ministers. This poor performance of the Muslim leadership has told heavily on the Muslim masses in particular, who number about 140,000 among a total population of over 600,000. It is not strange, therefore, that the Muslim leadership has lost its grip on the Muslim community.

From the start, the Muslim traders segregated themselves from their brother labourers and peasants, but still managed to hold a firm grip on them by playing the benevolent, and helping them to build a few mosques and madrassas here and there whilst they staked all their interests with the Hindu leaders. Their primary concern in the fields of trade and commerce was to pass on their occupation to their sons. Consequently, for a long time, both Muslim traders and peasants failed to avail themselves

of higher education, even of secondary education, which remained, therefore, the monopoly of the powerful White population and their proteges. It was only about the middle of the first-half of the present century that some Muslims, and certainly not the wealthy Muslim traders, first became conscious of the value and importance of education and started sending their sons to U.K. and France for higher education. The wealthy Muslim traders were generous enough to help a few of their Hindu friends in their career, and Dr. Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, the Prime Minister, is commonly said to be one of them. This practice has since then been continuing down to our own days and, nowadays, the less well-to-do Muslims go for higher education to the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent chiefly because university fees and cost of living are becoming more and more prohibitive in the U.K. It is true that there are annually a couple of hundred scholarships which are offered to the Government of Mauritius by the countries of the Commonwealth and other friendly nations and international organizations. But, generally, Muslim candidates have come to realize that it can be painfully frustrating to lay much hope in these scholarships.

However, the overall results of all these efforts and sacrifices by Muslim parents during the past thirty years have been the outturns of a sizable number of professionals and university graduates within the community.

In the meantime, our wealthy Muslim traders have been decreasing in number to such an extent that the once dominant role they used to play in the economic

field has completely been reversed, and it is not surprising, therefore, for even the casual observer to see that all our professionals and university graduates, upon their return to the country, have no other alternative but to line up in unending queues awaiting some government posts. Naturally enough, therefore, from the pedestal of pioneers in the struggle for independence, the Muslim leadership has miserably fallen to the ignominious state of handmaids to the political masters of the day. It is generally felt that the main reasons of this tragic downfall lie in the over-present sectarianism and short-sightedness of the leadership from the beginning down to our own days.

Also unfortunately, the younger generation of Muslims of today have, after realizing the abhorrent game in which they are the pawns, started to revolt against the whole system and to pay allegiance to the new upcoming Communist Party and, in the circumstances, it is a sad reflection on the ulamas that they are not equipped with the intellectual formation necessary to face the deadly venoms of Communism and the prevalent crass materialism. It must be added that the biggest single agglomera-

tion of Muslims is located in the north-eastern part of the city of Port Louis, the capital. This is a densely populated and economically depressed zone where all kinds of miseries and vices are the order of the day. Ironically enough, it was in this region that, at the time of the French rule, the first ever mosque of the country was built with the assistance of the government, and dramatically enough, it is precisely from this region that the Muslim leadership has always been drawing their political power.

We would now wish to make a special appeal to all dynamic Islamic movements throughout the world to seriously consider the feasibility of a common meeting ground to enable similar movements to foster and strengthen the bonds that spiritually bind the Ummah together. We cannot afford any longer, in this age of dynamism and change where the barriers of space and communications are crumbling down and where the conflict of economic ideologies is creating spiritual chaos, to restrict ourselves to our own personal and necessarily strictly limited horizons and spheres. How else would our obligation of Hajj be interpreted.



Documentary Film on Islam

A 16mm 22-minute documentary film in colour (with commentaries in Japanese) entitled "The Holy Places of Islam," produced by Kajima Productions and photography by Hussein Y. Hirashima, is now being distributed in Japan by the TOEI Company. This is an educational production for use in the Japanese schools and social education centres and has been selected as a best educational film in the Educational Film Festival. The main points dealt in the film are: Islam and Mecca, Prophet Muhammad's teachings, Islam in Egypt, expansion of Islamic culture, and the road to Mecca. This is a laudable project with a view to introducing some aspects of Islam on the screen in Japan and in Japanese.

RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT IN JAPAN AND ISLAM

Abu Bakr Morimoto

As reported in the No. 3 issue of Islamic Culture Forum, a new reverberation in the Islamic movement in Japan has been felt recently. This is due to the brisk activities of the newly organized religious legal body "Japan Islamic Congress" led by Dr. Shawqi Futaki. As a result of this movement there has been an unprecedentedly rapid increase in the number of Muslims in Japan with the addition of new converts. Moreover, in recent times, many eminent Muslims from various countries have visited Japan making close contacts with Japanese Muslims and also with leading personalities of various walks of life in Japan irrespective of religion.

At this time, we, the Japanese Muslims should ponder anew about the significance of the expansion of Islam in this country, the religious atmosphere vis-a-vis Islam and its future prospects.

An eminent foreign Muslim who is well-known to the Muslims of Japan wrote in an article after visiting Japan a number of times in which he made a remark that Japan is a land of "religious vacuum." If this remark were made from the point of view that Islam is the only religion in the world, then the prospect so far as Islam in Japan is concerned can be said to be almost zero. Hence,

if we think that there has been no achievement at all socially, there may be truth in it. But, in fact, Islam is not the only religion on earth. There do exist many different religions among different races or regions, and looking from that angle Japan cannot be called a land of religious vacuum for it has so many religious, indigenous or imported. Any foreigner who has travelled across Japan must have seen numerous Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples, Christian churches and prayers halls or sanctuaries of many other new religions all over Japan, whether in cities or in villages. In the early morning of the New Year, millions of adherents of these religions visit their holy places and offer prayers.

If we see the religious statistics of Japan, we can find three main religions in this country – Shintoism, Buddhism and Christianity. According to a survey of the Japanese Ministry of Education published in 1974, the following figures concerning religions and their adherents can be found: 1) Shintoism 87,414,779; 2) Buddhism 84,573,828; 3) Christianity 879,477; and others, total becomes 182,871,070. But, on the other hand, the actual total population of Japan in 1974 was only 109,750,000. The figures shown against each religion above were

based on the reports submitted by the religious legal bodies registered with the Government of Japan. Therefore, it is clear that the figures are not based on any census on the believers of religions. Even so, leaving aside the child population of the present-day Japan, every Japanese adult adheres to at least two different religions, that is, Syncretism. In the eyes of the believers of a single religion, such as the Muslims, this fact may seem impossible or absurd to its extremity, or even despicable. But the figures show a reality of religious relationships in this country. Therefore, the figures may provide a key toward understanding the religious environment in Japan. Judging from this fact, Japan is not at all a land of religious vacuum, it can rather be called a country which has reached the point of saturation religiously.

If so, why then the Japanese people are looked upon by many foreigners as an irreligious "economic animal"? To answer this question it is imperative to explain a few problems. Firstly, the problem as to what kind of characteristics have the religions which have so far been spread among the Japanese people, how are their influencing powers, and secondly, the question of the social environment in which the Japanese people are living today, the relationship between their religious thinking and their religious life have to be looked through.

To deal with the first question, we have to see what is Shintoism which has had a very deep impact upon the life of the whole race throughout the long history of the Japanese people.

From a very ancient time when the Japanese people started their community life as a homogeneous race on this Japanese *Archeipelago*, Shintoism took its root in the life of the people and spontaneously took the form of a natural religion of the race. Sometime animistic, sometime Shamanistic, Shintoism has the vital characteristics of ancestor worship with a very close relationship with the Emperor system and has long played a vital role as the national religion of Japan through a long history. Shintoism has no founder or holy book, the *shrine* is its symbol but has no idol. Its sources are found in the two mytho-historical books *Kojiki*, compiled in 712 A.D. and *Nihon-shoki*, 720 A.D. In course of time, Shintoism was divided into many sects. As a result, elements of any common doctrine is obscure, there is no leadership cult, it is conservative in nature, and sometime played a retreat for the nationalists and perverted patriots. But the Grand Shrine of *Ise*, the head shrine of Shintoism, once the national religion of Japan, played a great role as the place of worship of the Japanese people throughout the long history of Japan and even now also we cannot ignore its great influence upon the people. Some teaching of Shintoism were adopted from confucianism which was introduced to Japan from China in the 5th century.

The second religion that exerted great influence on the life of the Japanese people is Buddhism. As is well-known, Buddhism was taught and spread by Gautama Buddha in India during the 5th century B.C. In a hundred years after the death of Gautama Buddha,

Buddhism was spread to other countries, divided into two major schools. One school, the Hinayana, spread over Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, and so on and even today it is widely practiced in these countries. The other school, the Mahayana, spread toward the Far East through China and Korea and during the 6th century A.D. it entered Japan. In the original teaching of Buddha, there is no mention of God and there is also no existence of any scripture written by himself. Through experiencing himself the truth of Nature, Buddha taught the ethics of life of man and emancipation from various sufferings of human life. In this respect, Buddhism has a sharp difference as compared to the monotheistic teachings of Islam or Christianity. Buddhism may be considered anti-religion or non-religion when considered from the viewpoint of worshipping a single God as taught by the great monotheistic religions of the West. In any case, after entering Japan, Buddhism again split into a number of factions and some of these factions have penetrated into the religious life of the people with their somewhat near-monotheistic doctrines such as *Jodo-Shinshu* sect which emphasises on a single absolute Truth. Early Buddhism in Japan sometimes took the place of the Court religion. In course of time, through the efforts of prominent priests, it spread to the length and breadth of the country and became a people's religion. At the same time, it established a concord with the local Shinto. Through diluting with Shintoism, it took a feature very special to Japan and became a main stream of the Japanese culture and is still cultivated by the Japanese people as a national culture. During the feudal

age, some two hundred years from now, all the people of the country at one place or the other had to belong to a Buddhist temple as parishoner. About one hundred years ago, Japanese people never ate food from the four-legged animals because of Buddhist precept. Even today we cannot ignore the fact that in the hearts of the most of the Japanese people, there exists a Buddhistic religious view of the world.

The third great religious group in Japan is the Christians. The number of Christians as may be found in the present statistics is much smaller than those of the Shintoists and the Buddhists. Christianity was first brought into Japan in 1543. The famous Roman Catholic Jesuit priest Francisco Xavier started his missionary activities in Japan in 1549. At the beginning, the feudal lords of the time received the Christians quite well. Some feudal lords also accepted Christianity and through their patronization the number of Christians, for a time, increased with great speed. It is said that their number reached upto a million, that is, about 4% of the total Japanese population of 25 million in those days. But the interest of these feudal lords was not the religion itself, their main interests were the European civilization and the trade, specially weapons, that flourished along with the importation of the Christian religion. At a later stage when the rulers saw that religious preaching of the Christians was only a camouflage for conquering lands in various part of Asia by the European countries like Portugal, Spain and others, their policy made an absolute turn. They imposed a total ban on the Christian

missionary works and persecuted the missionaries as well as the believers of Christianity. For a time, it appeared at least on the surface that there was not a single Christian in the land. The persecution of the Christian missionaries and martyrdom of the Japanese Christians give ample proof of the sincere and strong belief of the Japanese people in religion.

The ban on Christianity continued until 1873 when Japan was undergoing a revolutionary change in the wake of *Meiji* Restoration on the ruins of feudalism. But during those 300 years, a number of Christians secretly maintained their faith even under suppression. When Japan adopted the policy of modernization, Western culture, science and other modernistic elements entered Japan in a rapid pace and along with them Christianity also made its way into Japan in great stride. This time not only Catholicism, but also other Christian denominations including Protestantism were added and all of them together marked a great influence on the modernization of this country.

At present, the Christian population in Japan is only a little over one million in a country of nearly 101 million people. Although their number is not great, the number of the Bible printed from Japan has steadily continued to rise — the 1975 figure being 6.2 million copies. It means either there is a latent influence of Christianity in this country or its propagation is nonetheless in great scale. Or at least it can be said that “consumption” of the Bible is great.

But there has been a controversy on the limit of the Christian approach

toward Japan. The most vital point of this problem is that there is fundamental gap between the Japanese people's attitude toward the world and life generated from their Syncretistic religious faith as mentioned earlier and the attitude of a monotheistic religion toward the universe. This is a problem of Christianity and Islam alike so far as Japan is concerned.

In modern Japan, aside from the above-mentioned three great religions, there are also many other new religions which have millions of adherents and whom we cannot overlook. In many cases, these new religions are affiliated as Shinto or Buddhist religious streams or factions, but they are usually founded and led by some kind of charismatic people who promise their adherents of relieving them of their poverty. Particularly during the great confusion after World War II, most of these new religions sprang up with the promise of overcoming poverty or relieving diseases, and so on, taking advantage of unhappiness of the individuals. The aspects of sublimity of religious philosophy or pure and spiritual devotion as well as of humanism has little to do with their thinking and approach regarding others. The most representative example of the new religions is the Congress of *Sokagakkai*. This new religion has taken *Mandara*, written by *Nichiren*, the founder of a Buddhist sect about 700 years ago, as their object of worship and through dashing activities has increased its membership to as many as 7.65 million households among the total of 28 millions, which means about 27% of the whole Japanese households.

Going through the facts given above, our readers may have understood that Japan has passed through a long history of complicated impact of religious relationships and that even today the country is passing through an atmosphere of religious melting. If so, we cannot say that the Japanese people are religious in their social life or in their individual thought and action. It is extremely difficult to recognize the religious base or the fruits of religious morality in their way of thinking and action. In spite of that the Japanese society is not unjust or reckless because it is aptly controlled by the constitution of the State as well as by their highly developed educational culture. But the base of morality here is human and temporal. Therefore, we feel that this morality is weak and not dependable because it is not based on the eternal foundation of the truth of God. Even though science and culture may make progress and people's material life may become prosperous, but the special feature of this morality is that it has no religious backbone and in the flux of the present world such a morality without an eternal, spiritual backbone cannot last long.

Today, the Japanese people are yearning for some new guiding principles. One of such new guiding principles may be a new religion. But the conventional religions which have existed through history in Japan are not able to satisfy this new urge. People are not satisfied with the performances of these religions and do not trust them. A hundred years ago Japan changed greatly through looking forward to its modernization. But Christianity, which flowed into Japan

with all the elements of modernism, on which great expectations were laid, therefore, failed to build itself as a pillar of the Japanese culture. Now there is no prospect of its increasing the number of its believers. Any religion which may want to provide the spiritual vitality to Japan, has no possibility of meeting a success through its conventional approach or exactly in the same way as in the past or in other places of the world. There is no exception in it, whether it is Shintoism, Buddhism, Christianity or Islam. In the case of Islam, if it comes to Japan in its original form and principle, leaving aside the peculiar manners and customs as may be found deep-rooted in the Muslim countries mixed with the local traditions which are their national ones, then Japan is a rich soil for the culture of Islam.

Unfortunately, Islam was not generally very much welcome in Japan in the past. Nor is it now upto the expectations. One of the reasons for it in the past was that Islam was almost unknown to the Japanese people until about sixty years ago. Moreover, the modern culture which is mostly Western came into Japan almost wholly from the Christian world. Therefore, the bits of knowledge about Islam that found their way through this channel were greatly distorted for obvious reasons. For example, the image of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) portrated in the "Divine Comedy" of Dante or the picture of Islam drawn in the writings of the Japanese Christians like Kanzo Uchimura (1861 ~ 1930) were taken blindly by the Japanese intellectuals as well as the laymen to be the real face of Islam. Similarly, in recent times also, a

great many Japanese people identify Islam with the guerilla activities or plane-hijacks with which Muslims are associated.

One such example, quite unpleasant to the Japanese Muslims, is the labelling of the events in Mindanao island as the acts of "Kaikyoto (Muslim) Rebels" in contemptuous sneer by the Japanese press. And the common Japanese people are prone to believe the press. These Japanese people never see these incidents from historical perspectives, their simple notion is that these incidents represent the volatility of Islam.

Again, as may be seen from the case of economic development of Japan, the Japanese society takes extremely great interest in money and material. In this respect, the society is open-door. But towards poverty the society is hard-cold, it guards itself from it shutting all the doors. There is no exception about it in this society – whether individual, enterprise or even the government. They show a great deal of interest towards the prosperity of the oil-producing countries of the Muslim world, but never think even about the poverty-stricken Muslim countries.

They make enormous profits through trade with the Arab and other Muslim countries, but never spare a farthing as contribution to the Islamic activities in Japan because they look upon it as a taboo.

Keeping in mind this unfortunate reality of the Japanese society, I think one can amply understand that Islamic preaching in this country is not easy

any way. Then what kind of conditions and postures are necessary to overcome this situation? In our opinion, the most fundamental condition required for this purpose is that the preacher, whether a Japanese or a foreigner, must possess a very strong character both in faith and morality. He must be a personality who is loved, trusted and respected by any body that he may come across in this country through his mission. Added to this is that a foreigner who wants to engage himself in the Islamic activities in Japan must be well-equipped with the Japanese language, a knowledge which can be called a passport to enter the people's heart.

Recently, a foreign brother said that because Islam was revealed through Arabic and because understanding of Islam has to be done through Arabic by mastering it, there is no necessity of reading a khutba in English or Japanese and that not knowing Arabic language and Islamic manners the "so-called" embracing of Islam by a few hundred Japanese is just a "nonsense."

Will such comments help understanding and spreading of Islam in a place where Arabic is not spoken?

The Japanese people, throughout their history, borrowed and absorbed many foreign cultures and also materials accompanying them, and cultivated them as their national cultures. Even today the Japanese people show avarice towards any valuable things, both physical and metaphysical, which are considered useful to them. Therefore, in matters of religions also there is ample room for borrowing and absorbing. In that respect, it can be called an endless vacuum.

ISLAM IN THE BROADCASTS IN JAPAN-IV

(1) Radio Japan

In the last three issues of ICF we tried to give our readers some information about the television broadcasts concerning various aspects of Islam and the Muslim world. Today we shall try to shed some lights on the radio broadcasts on the same subject. While the former's object is to cater to the Japanese viewers, the latter's object is the overseas listeners of the radio broadcasts from Japan.

When we deal with the overseas radio broadcasts from Japan, the only name that comes to our mind is Radio Japan, the overseas radio broadcasting service of Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK). Radio Japan started its service in 1935 with a view to promoting international goodwill and understanding. Its finance is borne partly by the Japanese Government and partly by its parent organization, the NHK.

Radio Japan has continued its service all along since its inception except for a brief intervention during World War II. Now it broadcasts a total of 37 hours of daily programmes in 21 languages of the world through its General and Regional services. Its programmes include news-casts, commentaries, information, introducing Japanese culture including Japanese language, social and economic conditions of Japan as well as music and entertainments of varieties from different cultures of the world.

Now let us see to its broadcasts beamed at the Muslim world. But one thing we must not forget is that it does not broadcast a programme of any particular religious nature or for religious purpose. As an autonomous organization it cannot do so according to the Japanese constitution which forbids any religious programme of propaganda nature by the State or a State-controlled body. But Radio Japan broadcasts programmes in languages including those which most Muslims use.

Among those languages are Arabic, Bengali, Indonesian, Malay, Swahili and Urdu. In Radio Japan, these languages are covered by its three regional services: 1) Southeast Asian Service, 2) South Asian & African Service, and 3) Middle-east & North African Service. Their time, frequencies, meterbands and contents of programmes are shown in the following charts languagewise (April 1975 – March 1976):

Radio Japan receives hundreds of letters from its overseas listeners. The largest number comes from Indonesia, about 800 a month on an average, followed by Bengali listeners, about 600. From Southwest Asia, the Middleeastern and African countries the number is much less, countrywise.

It also sponsors an essay contest among its overseas listeners every year.

ARABIC

LOCAL STANDARD TIME				SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.		
Tunis 2045	Cairo, Beirut 2145	Bagh- dad 2245	Tehe- ran 2315	News								
2055	2155	2255	2325	Disk Jockey	Commentary	Current Affairs	Commentary	Commentary	Music	Tokyo Report		
2100	2200	2300	2330		One in a 100 Million	Music Time	Japan Today	The Industrial Scene	Let's Learn Japanese			
2105	2205	2305	2335									
Frequency 9700 kHz 11705				Meterband 31 25		30 minutes						

BENGALI

LOCAL STANDARD TIME				SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.		
Braz- zaville 1530	Nai- robi 1730	New Delhi 2000	Dacca 2030	News								
1540	1740	2010	2040	Disk Jockey	Commentary	Current Affairs	Commentary	Melodies of Asia	Commentary	Tokyo Report		
1545	1745	2015	2045		One in a 100 Million	Music Time	Japan Today	The Industrial Scene	Let's Learn Japanese			
1550	1750	2020	2050									
Frequency 9670 kHz 11705				Meterband 31 25		30 minutes						

INDONESIAN

LOCAL STANDARD TIME				SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.		
Jakarta 1745	Kuala Lumpur 1815	Manila 1845		News								
I 1755	1825	1855		Disk Jockey	Commentary	Current Affairs	Commentary	Music Time	Commentary	Tokyo Report		
1800	1830	1900			One in a 100 Million	Music Time	Japan Today	The Industrial Scene	Let's Learn Japanese			
1805	1835	1905										
Ran- goon 2000	Ja- karta 2030	Singa- pore 2100	Manila 2130	News								
II 2010	2040	2110	2140	Disk Jockey	Commentary	Current Affairs	Commentary	Music Time	Commentary	Tokyo Report		
2015	2045	2115	2145		One in a 100 Million	Music Time	Japan Today	The Industrial Scene	Let's Learn Japanese			
2020	2050	2120	2150									
Frequency (I) 11875 kHz 9675 (II) 11840 11780 9525				Meterband 25 31 25 25 31		One hour (I & II together)						

MALAY

LOCAL STANDARD TIME				SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.		
Jakarta 1845	Kuala Lumpur 1915	Manila 1945		News								
1855	1925	1955		Disk Jockey	Commentary	Current Affairs	Commentary	Melodies of Asia	Commentary	Tokyo Report		
1900	1930	2000			One in a 100 Million	Music Time	Japan Today	The Industrial Scene	Let's Learn Japanese			
1905	1935	2005										
Frequency 11875 kHz 9675				Meterband 25 31		30 minutes						

SWAHILI

LOCAL STANDARD TIME				SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.
Braz-zaville 1700	Nai-robi 1900	Kara-chi 2100	New Delhi 2130	News						
1710	1910	2110	2140	Disk Jockey	Commentary	Current Affairs	Music	Commentary	Music	Tokyo Report
1715	1915	2115	2145		Music Time	The Industrial Scene	Japan Today	Melodies of Asia	Let's Learn Japanese	
1720	1920	2120	2150							

Frequency 9670 kHz
11705

Meterband 31
25

30 minutes

URDU

LOCAL STANDARD TIME				SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.
Braz-zaville 1630	Nai-robi 1830	Kara-chi 2030	New Delhi 2100	News						
1640	1840	2040	2110	Disk Jockey	Commentary	Current Affairs	Commentary	Commentary	Music	Tokyo Report
1645	1845	2045	2115		One in a 100 Million	Music Time	Japan Today	The Industrial Scene	Let's Learn Japanese	
1650	1850	2050	2120							

Frequency 9670 kHz
11705

Meterband 31
25

30 minutes

The top contestants are awarded a free return ticket to visit Japan and their tour expenses in Japan are also borne by Radio Japan. This year a Kuwaiti radio journalist has been selected a top contestant. He recently completed his visit to Japan including the Ocean Exposition at Okinawa.

Broadcasting of the recitation from the Holy Quran cannot be expected of Radio Japan because of the reason stated earlier. But various programmes on special religious occasions such as Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Azha, and the like are broadcast as cultural programmes. There were also special features including recitation from the Holy Quran on the death of King Faisal. When dignitaries from Islamic countries visit Japan, many of them are invited to Radio Japan and their interviews are broadcast on suitable occasions. Music from various Muslim countries also find places in the programme schedule.

In sum, Radio Japan is playing a significant role in promoting goodwill and understanding between Japan and the Muslim world.

(2) Music of the Muslim Countries in the NHK FM Radio Broadcasts

While describing Radio Japan, we said about its overseas services beamed at the foreign countries. Here we want to deal with the national FM radio service of the NHK which introduces foreign culture to the Japanese people over radio programmes. In this respect, our main topic is the music from the Muslim countries, which are broadcast by the NHK FM radio service.

This music programme was first started in April 1965 with the theme of "Folk Music of the World". The programme is broadcast every Tuesday from 10:20 P.M. to 11:00 P.M. conducted

by Prof. Fumio Koizumi of Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku (Tokyo University of Arts). Prof. Koizumi travelled to various countries of the world and collected the masterpieces of music of those countries. Those masterpieces are broadcast in this programme. He specially took note of the countries of Asia and Africa which had hitherto been ignored by the Japanese music world. Prof. Koizumi studied not only the music of the Muslim countries but also the cultural aspects of Islam and has a deep understanding of it. Based on this understanding he is making efforts to promote goodwill and friendship between the Japanese people and others through this programme prepared by the NHK FM radio service.

Recently, the FM service broadcast a special programme called "Islamic Music" in two installments. In this programme, along with various kinds of masterpiece music from many Muslim countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Turkey, Syria, Afghanistan, In-

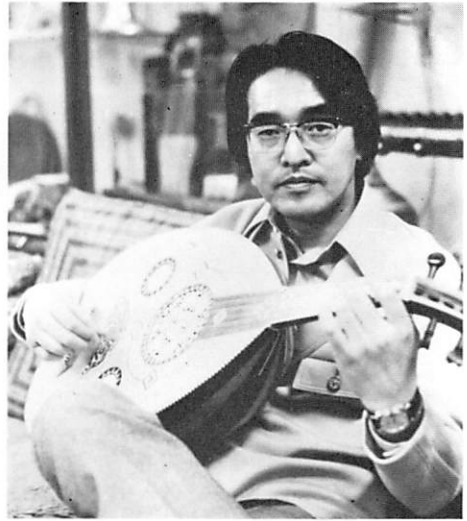


Photo: Prof. Fumio Koizumi, playing on his favourite musical instrument "el-Ud".

onesia, etc., recitation from the Holy Quran including Sura Al-Fatiha as well as Azan and other aspects of Islamic culture were also broadcast accompanied by necessary commentaries.

The Arabic translation of Japan Muslim Association President Abdul Munir Watanabe's (left photo) Message broadcast by Radio Japan's Arabic service on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, 7 October 1975.



الى اخواننا المسلمين في جميع انحاء العالم ، كل عام وانتم بخير .
 انه لما يسرن ويشرقت ان تسبح لى الفرصة كى اقدم التهانى الطيبة
 عبر راديو اليابان من هذا البلد فى اقصى الشرق .
 فاعتقنا ان الوقت قد حان لكي يعمل ابناء البشر على تكوين علاقات
 انسانية جديدة عن طريق التفاهم لمساعدة بعضهم البعض والتعاون سويا
 بعيدا عن اسباب اناثية .
 اننا نحن معشر المسلمين يجب ان نتعهد سويا تحت لواء تعاليم الاسلام
 ونكافح باسم الله لنحقق السلام والرخاء لبنى البشر اجمعين .
 لقد كان يقال فى الماضى ان اليابان ليس لها نبي* بالاسلام ولكننى ارى
 فى اليابان اليوم مزيدا من الجهود التى يبذلها المسلمون ونحن تأمل جميعا
 فى ان تكون وحدة واحدة مع اخواننا المسلمين .
 ومرة اخرى ابعث اليكم بتحيةة عيد الفطر المبارك وكل عام وانتم جميعا بخير
 والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته .

READERS FORUM

Why I accepted Islam

I am very happy in writing this small article to tell you how and why I solemnly embraced Islam on the 17 Rabi al-Awwal 1395H in the Brussels Mosque (Belgium). A strange coincidence was that it was perhaps the day but surely the month in which the Prophet (Allah's peace be on him) was born.

By birth (in 1921 A.D.) I was a Roman Catholic Christian. With ups and downs I remained during 45 years a true member of that Church. For many reasons I don't intend to develop here why I became dissatisfied and lost that Faith, with the result that some years ago I had no spiritual life any more.

I have to relate two facts apparently without importance. However, they had influenced me later on. The first one, as a hobby I had learned Arabic and Islamic Culture. The second one was that there are some Muslims in Belgium e.g. a few students and mainly workers coming from North Africa. In 1974, after some years of misfortune of many kinds and disgusted with the accidental way of living, I felt the need of searching the Truth. Both the facts mentioned above had their effect. I turned my eyes towards Islam. I abandoned the occidental orientalist and tried to get Islamic literature of Muslim origin. I wrote to many Muslim institutions throughout the Islamic world. I have been acquainted with some Muslims living in Brussels. I received letters and books from Tonga and Singapore, from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

My conversion was not like a flash. Long months of studies and reasoning were necessary with the help of Muslim friends who sustained me and whom I thank you very much.

I passed through different stages. The first one was when I became convinced of the oneness of Allah with His Attributes and His 99 Names. The second one, when I was convinced that Muhammad (peace be on him) really was the last of prophets, the true Messenger of Allah. The third, when I have been convinced that the Holy Qur'an was revealed by Allah to the Messenger as the Divine Guidance on the Straight Path. The fourth, when I have been

convinced that the Holy Qur'an we now read is just the same, unchanged for 14 centuries.

At this stage, I knew that Islam was the only true Religion and Way of Life for all mankind and for all times. I became really Muslim minded, but not yet satisfied with myself. The stages that followed were quite different. I had to put my faith into practice, to perform the precepts and to avoid the forbidden. I had to change my own way of life. I did it little by little till the day came when I became a Muslim, and changed my name. Now, I am a member of the Ummah, the Brotherhood of Islam.

It is not an end but the start of a new life in the way of Allah. With all my brethren in Islam, I pray to Allah to help and guide us in the fulfilment of His Will: SALAT. Fast, Zakat, Jajj and Jihad.



Abdul Rehman

*Formerly
G. Loop, Brussels.*

My main purpose of writing this letter is to congratulate you, your other editors and the people aligned with the publication of the great magazine the Islamic Culture Forum.

I read the ICF No. 2 which gave me information about the Muslims in Japan, which I had not thought about, and also other information in it was of great importance to the joint advancement of the Muslim world. The continuous publication of the magazine will be to the advantage of all Muslims.

Ndola, Zambia

R.A. Burhani

The publication of your magazine is timely as now prevails among the Muslims a thirst for learning with regard to their religion, and from the numerous reviews I have so far read of your magazine it seems "ISLAMIC CULTURE FORUM" has all the ingredients to satisfy this thirst. I wish "ISLAMIC CULTURE FORUM" turns out to be a magazine

better than the "Readers' Digest" which our Muslim brothers prefer and which spends a certain percentage of its profits to Christian missionary activities. I hope "ISLAMIC CULTURE FORUM" will carry articles on various topics - geography, history, jurisprudence, travel, science, book section, reviews (all pertaining to Islam), etc. and sold all over the world.

Colombo, Sri Lanka **M.K. Mohammed
Zubair**

(Brother Zubair has bestowed upon us too great a compliment which we do not deserve. Nor do we have any idea of comparing or competing with any other magazine. We are simply making our humble efforts, with most meagre resources, to achieve some understanding between man and man concerning Islam. Regarding publication of features on topics as suggested by Brother Zubair, we shall highly appreciate articles from our readers on those topics pertaining to Islam. - Editor)

Your quarterly magazine of the Islamic Culture Society (Japan) called "Islamic Culture Forum" has extremely stimulated my spiritual curiosity and interest in Islam and its movement in Japan. Alhamdulillah, I was delighted to have read such a journal of informative nature. Furthermore, I take this opportunity to convey my personal appreciation and warm compliments to your diligent efforts in publishing it.

Certainly, your divine aim is to promote mutual understanding and goodwill of Islam among Muslim friends in Japan and the Islamic world.

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate, the Almighty, I sincerely hope that may Allah always give His Eternal Blessing for your righteous deeds.

Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia

Muhammad Shariff Ahmad

Read Islamic Culture Forum yourself and also let others read. If you have not filled in the membership card, please do it now. If you have already done, then please pass on the card to your friend to fill in and send to us.

ANSWER

In the number three issue of ICF we put a few questions to our readers regarding training of the new Japanese Muslims in Islam. The following answers have been forwarded by Prof. Tharick Chehab from Indonesia. We express our deep thanks to Prof. Chehab for the enlightening answers. We would appreciate more answers from our other readers also, if possible, in more detail.

Prof. Chehab's answers:

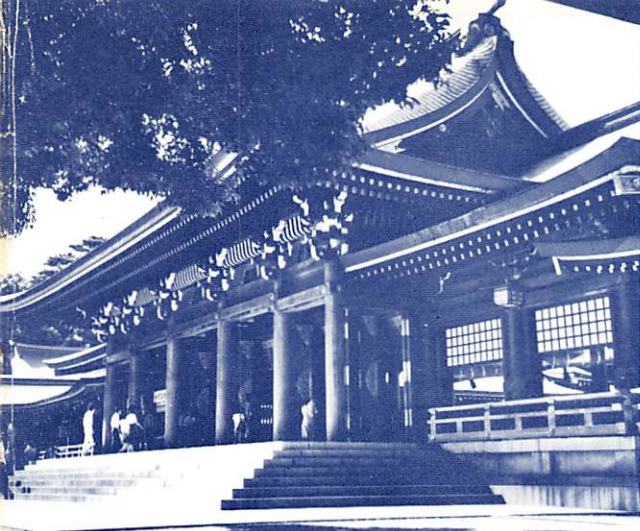
1. The most unavoidable conditions that are to be fulfilled by the NEW MULSIMS in Japan, are the five times daily obligatory prayers (salat), either congregational or alone.
2. The NEW MULSIMS can mould their life in relation to the modern culture and scientific civilization, specially in a predominantly non-Islamic society, so far as such a moulding does not exceed the bounds established by the Holy Quran and the Canonical Sayings of our Prophet (SA).
3. The solution of Muslim women's problems in a non-Islamic society is to be approached by the women themselves within the frame of Islam.
4. The basic problems that are to be solved regarding the development of the structure of a Muslim community, are first of all, education in the full sense of the word.
5. More extensive information could be found in The Journal of Rabitat al-Alam al-Islami (Muslim World League, Mecca) No. 9 of July 1975.

There can be no two opinions regarding the basic points of Prof. Chehab's answers. We not only agree fully with him but also have been making our best efforts to achieve the goals that he has mentioned, from the very start of our Islamic call movement in this country. There is no doubt that our approach has been inadequate because, ourselves being "new" Muslims (i.e. not born-Muslim), we lack the advantages of the knowledges and habits that the born-Muslims have. Therefore, we need constant guidance from our brothers all over the world.

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Typical religious edifices in Japan

(For story, see page 25-30)



- ←
1. The *Meiji Jingu Shrine* in Tokyo. Built in 1920, a wooden structure, it is a symbol of Shintoism dedicated to Emperor Meiji (died, 1912).



- ←
2. *Tōdaiji*, the great Buddhist temple of Nara. Originally constructed in 752 and reconstructed in 1708, this wooden structure is said to be the largest temple of the world.

3. *Shō-Hondo*, the Grand Main Temple of the neo-religion Sōka-Gakkai at the foothill of Mt. Fuji in Shizuoka Prefecture. Completed in 1972, this is a most modern stone structure studded with marbles at a cost of about US\$117 million with a sitting accommodation for six thousand worshippers.

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Photo: by courtesy of the International Bureau, The Soka-gakkai.

