
Islam is a universal religion that seeks to restore the condition in which all of humankind testifies to its submission to Allah. To achieve this goal of life on the straight path, Muslims must strive hard (*jihād*) to establish a political order on earth. This obligation is expressed by the Qur'ānic phrase *al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa'l-nahy 'an al-munkar* which is loosely translated as “enjoining the good and forbidding the evil” (3:104, 110, 114). This basic obligation of Muslims to pursue what is now popularly known as Islamization is expounded in the theological and legal discourses of Islam.

In *Islam: the Fear and the Hope*, Habib Boulares explores the ways in which the effort to transform the Islamic message into a political programme may turn out to be counterproductive and do damage to the message itself. His preferred term for these efforts is “Islamism” defined as “an action carried out by militant Muslims so that their concept of religion penetrates the state and society” (p. x). The book, as the author claims, is “both a report of actual events and an essay. Islam is its subject and Islamism its province” (p. x). The subject, however, is conceived from a “progressive” Muslim perspective and the province is portrayed through a somewhat narrow-angle lens. In twelve chapters, with eye-catching titles like “The Sword and Destiny”, “The Fear of Islam”, and “The Shipwrecked Mullarchy”, the author surveys “truly the actual situation” in “all the Muslim countries”. In covering such wide historical and ideational spectrum, the work ends up being synoptic in some parts and sketchy in others.

Habib Boulares argues that the sudden resurgence of “religiosity” is due to a crisis of values provoked by the technological advances which have assigned man an obsolete place with respect to the matter. He is sympathetic to the idea that the multiple crises of contemporary Muslim society have led the Islamists to the kind of violence which characterizes their views. He notes the signs of disarray and imbalance in the society as well as political intolerance and police brutality perpetrated by the various regimes upon the Muslim activists. Citing these examples, Boulares deduces “a theorem”: “all situations of social crisis in Muslim countries are accompanied by religious movements of seditious character. . . . The more they [the despotic
leadership] treat people harshly, the more the revolution swells to the point of explosion” (p. 18). Here Boulares is simply reechoing the classic Western explanation which is based upon the neo-orientalist school of Middle Eastern studies. Muslim scholarship would generally prefer the alternative explanation given by John Esposito which looks at Islam as “a faith in history” and analyses Islamic re-awakening as the product of a dynamic changing process “in which the word of revelation is mediated through human discourse in response to specific socio-historical contexts”.

The greater part of the book is devoted to the examination of the nature of Islam, Islamism and its contemporary development. Boulares laments that the West, engulfed in its self-created image of the Muslim as a swordsman and a fatalist, does not understand Islam and its seductiveness to the Muslim. “Islam”, he explains, “is a faith, an ethos, a cosmogony, a cult, and a way of life” (p. 44). The message Boulares imparts through this explanation is four-fold: that Islam is universal; that the Muslim ethic in its fundamental aspect does not differ from Christian morality; that millions of Muslims cavalierly ignore the Islamic vision of life and have reduced Islam to a soulless skeleton of obligatory prayers; and, finally, that there is necessary flexibility in every aspect of Islamic belief system. “The latitude left to man is so great that one cannot know with precision where it ends” (p. 47).

Boulares has brought together a vast body of material in order to buttress his case for “liberalism”. He is well-informed about the history of Muslim religious and political thinking and examines its development to the present day. However, one must take serious note of the book’s ideological constraints, for these detract from its objectivity and its reliability as a guide to action. Ever conscious of his “socialist and humanist convictions” (p. 88), Boulares works on the premise of the universality of culture as expressed in the West and adopts its definitions of rationality and legitimacy to advocate “protestant reformation” (p. 131) within Islam. His is a call for a “return to the Qur’ân” and the adaptation of its precepts to the needs of “the age of computer and international communications”. His heroes, among the scholars, are the Muslim modernists like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis and, among the politicians, Muammar al-Qadhdhafi, “who rejected the Sunnah”, and Habib Bourguiba, who never hesitated to use the words “the adaptation to Western ways” (p. 109). His venomous attacks are reserved for the “shipwrecked Mullahs” like Shaykh Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, Sayyid Abul A’lā Mawdudi and Ayatullah Ruhollah Khomeini.

The Islamists who demand a radical transformation of the contemporary sociopolitical, legal and economic realities of the Muslim world, Boulares argues, do so under the banner of pure Islam. They do not pause to consider
Islam in its historical dimension as interpreted through the centuries by generations of Muslim jurists and thinkers. They present an Islam which is static and lacks the dimension of internal evolution. Boulares concedes that the 'ulamā' had performed a herculean task of keeping the faith alive during the most trying period of Muslim history. Without these discredited body of men, the small flame that remained lit in the midst of shadows would have been extinguished'' (pp. 68–69). Yet, the same 'ulamā' are guilty of closing the door of ijtihād. They are bent upon maintaining intact the whole of one's heritage and thereby withdraw into the sophisms of false justifications. The traditionalism they preach is "hybrid and sectarian" as they appeal to the arguments of the reformists without following the logic of reformism to its culmination and as they cast anathema on others.

Presenting himself as a person committed to the humanist universalism, Boulares has persuaded himself that nothing that the leaders of contemporary Islamic movements ever propagated could merit credit. They are accused of exposing the darker side of the belief; of twisting the meaning of the terms like jihad and qiṣāṣ; and, of circumventing Qur'ānic and Sunnaic texts in order to establish a basis for irrefutable contemporary argument.

Boulares cites carefully selected passages from the works of Muslim personages like Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and Mawdudi to highlight their lapses. Facts and accounts likely to weaken his verdict are conveniently overlooked or lightly brushed aside. The Jamā'at and Ikhwān leaders have their lapses and they might have made mistakes, but their writings and activities helped millions of Muslims to affirm their beliefs in a positive and constructive way. They are the source of knowledge and inspiration to many and even those who differed with their methods and movements do not question the value of their contribution. To subject them all to a summary condemnation without reference to the text and the context which made their views possible, leads to a judgement which is one-sided and misleading.

Islamism, to Boulares, is a politicized truth. Their activism is political in its motivation and in the tension that characterizes it. In contradistinction to the Islamists, Boulares proclaims Islam to be a flexible, dynamic system that was and should always be reinterpreted to accommodate the sociopolitical and economic changes of the age. From this vantage point, allegiance to a territorial state, a unified, complex and modern system of justice and the equality of the sexes are among the features of the Islamic order. What separates Boulares and those of his ilk from the Islamists is that the former desire to work towards a development of the Islamic order through the processes of rational reinterpretation of the general Islamic directives.

Rational reinterpretation is limitless. Boulares appreciates the "in-
comparable faculty of Islamic adaptation” which took place in the Soviet
Union (p. 135). There, the number of prayers have been reduced to one or
two per day instead of five, the Ramādān fast has been dispensed with but
for the iftar (the breaking of the fast) at the prescribed hour, and the pilgrim-
age to Makkah is replaced with visits to the holy places. The purified hearts
of the individual believers could not but revolt in disdain against the type
of Islamic dynamism Boulares advocates. Boulares demands further that
“Muslims, all Muslims, provided that they know how to read”, must have
easy access to the Qurʾān and to its interpretation without the benefit of
traditionalism. The ‘ulamāʾ would have no quarrel with the knowledgeable
pondering over the meaning of the Qurʾān, they would, however, suggest
necessary caution. Joining the rat-race will not suit everyone, nor indeed is
it desirable.

His most scathing criticism is reserved for those Islamists who back
up their interpretation of the faith with force: “khomeinism is to the Shariʿah
what stalinism is to Marxism” (p. 84). Violence is the handmaiden of an
impatient minority and the disease of the age. His heartfelt cry is that “the
day Islam causes fear will be the day that the religion is finished” (p. 137).
This exhibits his unease, as a Muslim, at the presentation or, what he per-
ceives it to be, misrepresentation of Islam in France where he now resides.
His fear is that the majority of Muslims will not oppose the vocal and the
visible minority of the Islamists. He ends with a rather naive hope that his
brand of dynamic Islam, of protestantism within Islam, will eventually
prevail.

*Islam: The Fear and The Hope* may at best be credited for providing
a critique of contemporary Islamic movements' commonplace errors. It is
certainly not a cheap polemical tract produced by a semi-literate author but
a well-written and cogently argued study. Boulares presents his case with
considerable skill and dexterity. The book, however, reads more like yet
another sophisticated Western retort to the activities of the contemporary
Islamic movements. As an attempt to recast Islamic history and Muslim
community's key symbols and categories in terms of Western rationality and
legitimacy, the book will be appreciated by non-Muslims and neo-orientalists.

Abdul Rashid Moten

This book, written by a well-known political sociologist settled in London, has been offered to the readers as “a text of Islamic sociological theory and methodology”. From the epithet “Islamic” one may tend to count it along with earlier books like *Islamic Sociology* (1985), and *Towards An Islamic Anthropology* (1988), written in the wake of ‘Islamisation of Knowledge’ movement, *Beyond Islamic Fundamentalism*, however, differs from those books, in its content, as well as in its approach. It is also critical of the products of that school of thought. The author has reviewed the various approaches of the Muslim sociologists, the problem areas of Islamic sociology, and the current trends.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part deals with the theoretical problems of Islamic sociology. The second part discusses social change, and the third part analyses the discussions regarding Islamic culture. In the theoretical part, Asaf Hussain has focussed on three sociological approaches, i.e. those of Ibn Khaldun, Shari’ati and Ba Yunus and has concluded that a more radical approach is needed to make Islamic sociology relevant to modern Muslim societies. He has particularly chosen the framework of ‘development’ for a sociological study of the two most basic Muslim social organizations: state and society. According to his analysis, the Muslim state began in the caliphal mode of development in its early history, transformed into Sultanate mode in the classical period, fell victim to colonial mode in the pre-modern times and is, at present, functioning in a munāfiq (double-standard) mode, that oscillates between Islamic and colonial or Sultanate directions. Hussain discerns following characteristics of a munāfiq state: concentration of power in the centre, secularisation, alliance with anti-Islamic states, and tyranny and oppression. Consequently the development of Muslim society is in crisis in the areas of power, state,
knowledge, values and justice. The various theories of development, including Islamisation, have failed to grasp the real problem.

Analysing the problem of social change in Muslim societies, Asaf Hussain studies it on individual (behaviour), society (balance between individual and state), and community (ummah) level, and concludes that sociology of Islam is the sociology of ummah which is the basic unit of Muslim 'Society'. The role and identity of an individual, social groups and state are defined from the point of view of ummah. Unlike other societies where religion may or may not be a part of their culture, Islamic sociology regards culture as part of religion. The three basic Muslim social institutions (Family, Mosque, and School) generate the core values of culture, strengthening the Ummah.

According to Asaf Hussain, the frame of reference for these social institutions and the value structure is provided by ṭmān-'amal paradigm. ṭmān provides the motive and conviction, and 'amal provides the foundation and growth of these institutions. Islamic civilization is not static or mechanical, its dynamism lies in the principle of ijtihād (independent reasoning) “which can challenge and grapple with the problems of post-modernism”.

The last chapter of the book projects the parameters of the future Islamic order and analyses the various current trends in the Muslim World: Orientalist, sectarian, modernist, idealist and fundamentalist. The treatment of fundamental Islam is longer, thus perhaps justifying the title of the book that calls for going beyond fundamentalism.

The term “fundamentalism” has been used uncritically by its opponents as well as by proponents. Asaf Hussain’s analysis helps explain the reasons why fundamentalism has led Muslim society to the present confusion and crisis. He finds that fundamentalist Islam is distinct from other trends because of its focus on politics. However its weakness lies in its failure to fully grasp the current issues and social realities. It posed right questions but has failed to find answers. Its basic flaw has been that it is reactionary, it looks back to the past and not into the future. The leadership of the fundamentalist movements—modern educated middle class professionals—developed its political ideas, attitudes and theories continuously in reaction to state. It did not emanate from inside, hence it was not dynamic, constant or wholesome. It was ad hoc, sectarian, obscure and thus totally reactionary.

Beyond Islamic Fundamentalism offers a stimulating critique of fundamentalism as well as of other approaches to the development of an Islamic society. It is a welcome addition to the young field of Islamic sociology. The book nevertheless suffers from a weakness, that is common to other texts
on Islamic sociology, as well as books written under the influence of Islamisation of knowledge approach. The book talks more about how a society ought to be rather than how it is. The basic questions in social sciences, on the other hand are: what a society is, how is it organized and how and why certain changes take place in a society? Why certain ideas of social change succeed and others do not? An attempt to find answers to these questions and to find explanations for social change (i.e. like Ibn Khaldun’s explanation) would bring it closer to becoming a science. Only then it would help in looking into the future. Until then a text of Islamic sociology would tend to read more like a book of *fiqh* and a guide for social morality.

Muhammad Khalid Masud
REVIEW ARTICLE

SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF
A HERMENEUTICS OF THE QUR'ĀN:
THE CASE OF BOSNIA

ANTO KNEŽEVIĆ


If von Clausewitz’s definition of war as the continuation of policy by other means is assumed true, then any study of the current genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina demands an analytic view of the political and cultural background of the war.¹ The book *Hermeneutika Kur’āna* by Enes Karić is first and foremost an excellent scholarly interpretation of the Qur’ān, but Karić’s work—written immediately before the first democratic elections in the then little-known republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina²—can also be read as a hermeneutical *signum temporis* of the very complex political relations in the former socialist Yugoslavia.³

Discussing the Qur’ān, Karić, an Associate Professor in the Islamic Theological College in Sarajevo, refers to relevant literature in Arabic as well as in English, German and French, and gives many technical terms in Latin. He cites the most respected authors, from those publishing in Makkah, Cairo, Beirut, Istanbul, Baghdad, Tehran and Lahore, to the Western expert in hermeneutics, Hans-Georg Gadamer. *Hermeneutika Kur’āna* provides a useful selective bibliography from the literature in several languages, a five-page summary in English, and an index of names. The text is accompanied by more than fifty fragments of the Qur’ān in Arabic script.

Karić examines in detail several problems in translating the Qur’ān:
the vocalization and the consonants of the Qur'anic archetype; broad "stylizations" of the Qur'an; the Qur'anic Weltanschauung and the Qur'anic language. Besides that, he analyses "some philosophical problems" of "reading" the Qur'an and gives a review of traditional and contemporary hermeneutics of the Qur'an in light of more recent theories of reception.

The book as a whole focuses on the following questions: Must a translation of the Qur'an convey the words of its original, or the ideas of the original? Must a translation of the Qur'an reflect the style of the original, or the style of the translator? Should one read a translation of the Qur'an as its original? Or as a translation? Should the Qur'an be translated in prose or in poetry? Although Karić states modestly that the title of his book "does not connote a solution but only a posing of the problem", and that he "do[es] not offer any final answers" (pp. 14–15), he nevertheless offers some conclusions or directions towards the answers. The Holy Book of the Muslims is "equally [Qur'anic] in its meaning, in its style, in its sound" (p. 206; all italics are Karić's). While some ideas of the Arabic original (e.g., one God) "can be conveyed without many difficulties into many languages", no single translation can transfer the "essential intentions" of the original words because of religious, political, mythological, cultural and other conventions in understanding and "reading" the Qur'an in the Arabic language and the Islamic world. "Therefore we cannot make final demands of a translation", concludes Karić (p. 220). A translation of the Qur'an cannot be read as the original; it should be read rather as a translation, which is always the result of a "dialogue" between the Qur'an and the translator's concrete historical situation. A translation can hardly convey the rhythm, beauty, and rhyme of the original. Therefore, the translation necessarily reflects the translator's style. "The Qur'anic archetype (without vocals, without diacritical marks, without interpunctuation) is a book which leads one to silence" (p. 218).4 Probably the only "final" answer Karić offers is apparently contradictory and itself almost untranslatable: "Kur'an nije moguće prevesti, Kur'an se mora prevoditi" (p. 86; see also pp. 15, 39, 221). Karić's conclusion seems to be contradictory because both the Slavic verbs (prevesti, prevoditi) mean the same—"to translate"—but the former is a perfective one and the latter imperfective: The Qur'an cannot be translated [once and forever]; the Qur'an must be translated [many times, as a process].5

The corpus of the Qur'an can be (and has been) interpreted not only as a holy text but also as a literary, legal, rhetoric, allegorical, economic, social, political... and even an apocalyptic text. In his Introduction, Karić emphasises that over the centuries the reception of the Qur'an has been marked by three "arts": the art of reciting or the reception of the Qur'an by ear; the art of writing and translating the Qur'an for the eye and the human imagination in general; and the art of interpretation of the Qur'an,
by its hermeneutics and exegesis, ta'wil and tafsir. Karić finds that reception of the Qur'an by hearing is "undoubtedly the most ancient and originates from the dawn of Islam" (p. 17).

Karić notes that the Qur'an does not contain the central philosophical term Being (wujūd), but the Holy Book speaks about the world, God, life, death, man, soul, time, eternity, cosmos, and these topics are "common objects of religion, philosophy, higher poetry and the arts" (p. 198). On the basis of concrete examples Karić shows that philologically-oriented hermeneutics is congruent with philosophical hermeneutics of the Qur'an. If, for instance, insān has the connotation of a "being of forgetfulness," then its translation by čovjek "man/person" (as the "being of time") is not faithful to the intentions of the original. Numerous Qur'anic expressions for time are often substituted by a few temporal words of ours rather than translated in a terminologically appropriate way. Fortunately for the translator of the Qur'an, the Slavic language of the Sunni Bosnian Muslims took over (through Turkish) many Arabic words in their original meaning: "Even the Arabism vakat ["atoms of time; temporal beings"] in the Serbo-Croatian language preserves its Qur'anic intention" (p. 203).

Each interpretation of the Qur'an is a "translation of the Qur'an into history" (p. 30) and vice versa: every translation into a language (including contemporary Arabic) is a historically marked interpretation. Referring to some modish approaches to the Qur'an (from the viewpoints of Darwinism, psychoanalysis, existentialism, Marxism, etc.), Karić correctly notes a "certain reductionism applied to the Qur'anic message" (p. 36).

The fact that the original text of the Qur'an was not vocalized and that there were seven, ten or even fourteen vocalizations contributes to the high untranslatability of the Holy Book. As Karić points out, "Time vocalizes the Qur'an. Time reads out its 'eternal' meanings, never transferring them completely" (p. 263). But even though the transferred is not the complete Qur'an, it is the Qur'an too.

Thousands and thousands of translations of the Qur'an testify to the Sisyphean task of "finding the real meaning of this text" (p. 106; italics are Karić's). Even attempts at reconstructing the primordial meaning from the circumstances of the first recipients of the Qur'an can hardly be fruitful because "a reconstruction is always a reconstruction of someone's past from someone's present, which is foreign to that past" (p. 106).

The chapter entitled "Resistance to Translating the Qur'an into the Serbo-Croatian Language" is—from a socio-political viewpoint—probably the most interesting part of Karić's book. Study of "Serbo-Croatian" trans-
lations is especially promising if one keeps in mind the fact that the native language of the Slavic Muslims has also developed two different non-Islamic theological terminologies, one Orthodox Christian (Serbian) and the other Roman Catholic (Croatian). Karić's analysis implies that lexical interrelations between Serbian, Croatian and Turkish (including Arabic and Persian) vocabulary in these translations correspond with the respective political positions (pro-Serbian, pro-Croatian, pro-Muslim) of the translators or publishers.

The first sentence of the chapter on “Serbo-Croatian” translations has a strong political message: “In the beginning it is necessary to state the following: Islam does not know linguistic nationalism; one reads in the Qur’an about God who directs his message to all peoples in their own languages” (p. 43; italics are Karić's). Nevertheless, Arabic as the “language of paradise” is inseparable from the Qur’an. Karić points out that there is a “minimal part of the Qur’an that the Indonesian, Pakistani, Syrian, Azerbaijani or Bosnian Muslims know by heart, regardless of whether they know what it really means” (p. 46). The language of the Muslim Holy Book is lingua sacra and this sacredness led to a “sacralization of the very letters of the Qur’an” (p. 47). Some Bosnians, predominantly Muslims, used the Arabic alphabet to write texts even in their own Slavic language.

Karić writes that some fragments of the Qur’an were translated into Latin by Hermannus Dalmata (from the Croatian province of Dalmatia) as early as the twelfth century. However, “this first translation of the Qur’an in the West” was “intentionally deformed and adapted with the goal to refute Islam”, according to Muhamed Hadžijahić's evaluation of Hermannus's translation (p. 58).

There have been more than a dozen Serbian and Croatian translations of the Qur’an, but many of them are either incomplete or unpublished. The first complete translation of the Qur’an into “Serbo-Croatian” was printed in the Serbian Cyrillic alphabet in Belgrade in 1895. This translation provoked many controversies. The Serbian translator Mićo Ljubibratić was, according to Hadžijahić, a voice “in favor of brotherly collaboration of the Serbs and the Bosnian Muslims” (p. 59). Immediately after mentioning Hadžijahić's portrayal of Ljubibratić's “brotherly” relations to the Bosnian Muslims, Karić notes (in the same sentence) that Ljubibratić's translation was perceived by the Muslims, and especially ‘ulama’, as an “anti-Islamic move par excellence”. Karić then describes the comments of the Sarajevo newspaper Bosnjak [The Bosnian] and other Muslim publications of the time on Ljubibratić's translation. Karić's scholarly explanation is written in an Aesopian-diplomatic language which in itself demands a new hermeneutics. He writes:
The newspaper *Bošnjak* [in 1896] more warns than informs its readers on the new [Ljubibratić] translation of the Qur'ān in this way:

*Carigradski glasnik* [The Istanbul Herald] in its latest issue brings the news that the Ćupić Foundation in Belgrade has published a translation of the Qur'ān and that it [the Foundation] represents the official newspaper of the Shkodër wilāyet [today's Albania], which says that the translation would not be correct, because it is not everyone’s job to translate the Qur’ān and to establish its basic tenets.

The inclinations of *Bošnjak* are on the side of the Shkodër wilāyet's newspaper, and they may be interpreted in part by the pro-Croatian policy which this newspaper mainly conducted. However, according to Hadžižahić, the idea of translating the Qur'ān into Serbo-Croatian has its roots as early as 1868: "According to all [the facts], it seems that this undertaking [Ljubibratić’s translation] was motivated primarily by political reasons, with the intention to achieve certain national-political effects among the Bosnian Muslims through an edition of the translation of the Qur'ān. . . ." According to the same author [Hadžižahić], the newspapers *Srbija* [Serbia] and *Vila* [The Fairy] informed their readers about that undertaking. [Serbian literary critic Jovan] Skerlić, in his work *Omladina i njena književnost* [Young People and Their Literature], refers to *Srbija*, which had written that some “learned and honest Serbian priest is translating the Qur'ān into Serbian”. *Vila* again suggested to the [pan-Serbian organization] “United Serbian Youth” that they print that translation and “in that way it [Serbian Youth] would demonstrate most clearly its opinion about its [Serbian Youth’s] Turkicized brothers” (pp. 59–60).

The fragment quoted above may demonstrate how Karić tries (successfully) to create a balance in a scholarly-theological discussion with far-reaching political consequences. First he himself, as a Muslim, emphasises the “pro-Croatian policy” of some critics of Ljubibratić’s translation. After that—trying to maintain the balance—he quotes another Muslim scholar, Hadžižahić from Sarajevo, who speaks about the pro-Serbian policy of Ljubibratić’s “undertaking”. The portrayal of Ljubibratić’s “brotherly” relations towards the Muslims sounds somewhat ironic if one knows that many Serbs have looked upon the Bosnian Muslims as Turkicized Serbs, that is, linguistically or by origin potential Serbs but confessionally real Turks. Ljubibratić himself was the “Serbian government’s commissioner who worked on preparing an uprising in Herzegovina. He participated in the 1875 Herzegovinian uprising as one of its leaders.” Of course, this anti-Turkish uprising was *eo ipso* an anti-Muslim act.
Karić also notes that, besides the newspapers mentioned, many other Muslim publications were critical of Ljubibratić’s translation. Karić shows that Muslim criticism of the Serbian translation was based not only on an allegedly “pro-Croatian policy” but also on scholarly facts. The journal Hikjemet from the northern Bosnian town of Tuzla described Ljubibratić’s translation metaphorically as a watery “soup of a soup’s soup” (ćorbe čorba) because Ljubibratić translated the Qur’an “from Russian”, and the Russian translation had in its turn been “translated from French” (p. 60). The leader of an anti-Turkish uprising, Ljubibratić “did not know Arabic” (p. 92), but as a Serbian Orthodox priest he did know the Bible very well. He introduced “purely Christian words or words very characteristic of the Christian liturgy” into his Serbian version of the Qur’an (p. 211). Ljubibratić’s translation contains Biblical forms of the Qur’anic names and is written in a Biblical style (e.g., use of archaic and markedly Orthodox Christian words such as vaistinu “in truth”). Such a Christianization of the Qur’an is especially striking in a culture which already has a well-developed Islamic (linguistic) tradition.9

Despite these and numerous other shortcomings of Ljubibratić’s translation, Karić does not reject it. Just the opposite—Karić writes that the “value of Ljubibratić’s translation rests precisely in the fact that it is one of many Christian receptions of the Qur’an” (p. 212). Moreover, Karić mentions “praise of the style of Ljubibratić’s translation” (p. 61). To be sure, Ljubibratić’s style is good, but it is a good Biblical, not Qur’anic style. It seems that Karić here makes a subtle politically balanced concession for the sake of “peace in Yugoslavia”. Praising Ljubibratić’s style, Karić in fact repeats the statement of Belgrade Professor Darko Tanasković, who describes Ljubibratić’s work as “linguistically and stylistically the best” “Serbo-Croatian” translation of the Qur’an (p. 59). Karić’s book is based primarily on his doctoral dissertation, which he defended in Belgrade in 1989. Tanasković was one of three members of the committee for Karić’s dissertation. Karić must have had compelling reasons for defending his dissertation precisely in Belgrade, rather than in Sarajevo—where he had studied—or somewhere abroad. It seems to me that he chose Belgrade precisely because during the late 1980’s the Serbian media were waging a fierce anti-Muslim propaganda campaign, and some of the best-known Serbian orientalist scholars were leading this anti-Islamic action. For example, Dr Miroljub Jevtić, justly portrayed by the Belgrade magazine Duga [Rainbow] as one of the “best Yugoslav experts on Islamic currents in the world”, declared in an interview that “the local Muslims [in Yugoslavia] have been perpetrators of genocide, from the ‘cutting of the princes’ [by Turkish janissaries, in the beginning of the nineteenth century] to the present day”.10 Some Serbian scholars developed theories of racial inferiority of the non-Serbian nations of the former Yugoslavia, stressing especially the Slavic and Albanian Mus-
lims as "perpetrators of genocide" against the Serbian people. These theories are not so different from the pronouncements of the psychiatrist Dr Jovan Rašković, former leader of Croatia's Serbs:

The Croats, feminized by the Catholic religion, suffer from a castration complex. . . . As to the Muslims of Bosnia-Hercegovina and neighboring regions, they are victims, as Freud might have said, of anal frustrations which incite them to amass wealth and to seek refuge in fanatic attitudes. Finally, the Serbs, Orthodox, an oedipal people which tends to liberate itself from the authority of the father."12

In short, the anti-Muslim attitudes freely expressed in the Serbian press in the late 1980's made it especially important for Karić's dissertation to be defended there, to respond implicitly to the theories on their own ground.

However, an anti-Muslim position is characteristic not only of Serbian chauvinistic leaders like Rašković. What is more, even the most pronounced Serbian critics of Great-Serbian genocide against Christian Croats demonstrate some anti-Muslim prejudices.13 These prejudices are a product of Serbian national consciousness, which is determined by mutually dependent ideological, religious and mythological factors.14

Karić criticises Western portrayals of Bosnia and this resembles his implicit criticism of some former Yugoslavs' less-than-objective description of the Bosnian Muslims. When Karić reveals some inaccuracies (in the description of a translation of the Qur'an by two Bosnian Muslims) in the new edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam (p. 64), he criticises implicitly the Encyclopedia as a whole. Unlike the first edition, the new edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam offers an unbalanced and very biased text about Bosnia-Herzegovina. The author of the new text, Professor Branislav Djurdjev of Sarajevo, offers a revised, pro-Serbian version of Bosnian history.15 Describing Bosnia, Djurdjev often compares it to Serbia and mentions even a medieval "attempt to unite the Kingdom of Bosnia and the Despotate of Serbia" (p. 1263). Djurdjev describes pre-WWI non-Serbian historical works on Bosnia as "out of date" (p. 1269) and refers instead to two books printed in Serbia. Unlike Krcsmárík, who in the first edition of the Encyclopaedia of Islam wrote about Bosnia's historical-cultural ties with Serbia and Croatia, Djurdjev does not mention Bosnian-Croatian relationships. The period from 1941 to 1945 is not examined at all in Djurdjev's text, perhaps because it marked such a low point in Muslim-Serbian relations. In several places Djurdjev writes that the heretical Bosnian (Bogumil) Church—the hypothetical Slavic substrate of the eventual Bosnian Muslims—was persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church (pp. 1263, 1264, 1266), passing
in silence over the fact that the Serbian Orthodox rulers too persecuted
members of the Bosnian Church, a fact noted in the first edition of the
Encyclopaedia of Islam (p. 755). Probably most disturbing, Djurdjev relies
on works by some Serbian advocates of genocide against the Muslims in
pre-WWII Serbian-dominated Royal Yugoslavia. For example, Djurdjev
portrays the Serbian Academician Vasa Ćubrilović as a respected “Yugoslav
historian” (p. 1264) and refers to Ćubrilović’s works (pp. 1269–1270). Ćubrilović
was a member of the terrorist group “Young Bosnia” which carried out
the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in
1914, the event that provoked World War I. Ćubrilović is also the author
of one of the most famous Great Serbian (anti-Muslim) political programmes,
“Expulsion of the Albanians” (1937).16 It is also worth pointing out that
Djurdjev’s text, published in 1960, had by 1989 been representing Bosnian Muslims to the world for nearly thirty years. This more than explains why
Karić might be critical of the Encyclopaedia of Islam.

Hermendeutika Kur’āna sends a deep symbolical-political message.
Karić’s book is dedicated to Hilmo Neimarlija, Karić’s Muslim friend from
Sarajevo, Bosnia’s capital; the book was printed in Zagreb, Croatia’s capital;17
and it was defended as a doctoral dissertation in Belgrade, Serbia’s capital. Karić’s choice of a Muslim “middle” political way between Belgrade
and Zagreb is reflected even in his vocabulary. Karić uses both Serbian and
Croatian terminology. For example, he writes first in Serbian, Hrist “Christ”
and hrićanin “a Christian” (pp. 156, 211), and after that, on the same
pages, in Croatian, Krist “Christ” and kršćanski “Christian” (pp. 156, 211).
He even alternates using the Serbian phonological orthography of foreign
names (e.g., Zevs, Avgustin, Mirča Elijade, Tomas Karlaji) along with the
Croatian morphological (etymological) orthography (e.g., Izutsu Toshihiko,
de Saussure, Shelabear, Tibawi).

Karić’s work is a sad monument of an attempt to maintain a European Muslim culture through peaceful coexistence of people in multiethnic Bos-

nie.18 Written by an erudite specialist, Hermendeutika Kur’āna deserves to be translated into English or Arabic. Such a translation, perhaps accom-
panied by a scholarly explanation of the social background of Karić’s book,
would be a great contribution both to Islamic studies and to study of the
culture of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which is threatened by Ser-

bian aggression and Western indifference.19 (The consequences of the West’s betrayal of Bosnia are not all yet clear.20)
1. I refer to the Order of the International Court of Justice of April 8, 1993, concerning Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Bosnia and Herzegovina v. Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)), Security Council document S/25868, dated April 29, 1993. The World Court ordered Yugoslavia "to ensure that any military, paramilitary or irregular armed units" under its command, control or influence "do not commit any acts of genocide" in the neighbouring Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. A well-documented account of mass murder and rape in Bosnia, accompanied by photographs, is given in Roy Gutman’s book, A Witness to Genocide New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993). On September 17, 1993, the United Nations General Assembly selected eleven judges for a U.N. war crimes tribunal established to hear charges of atrocities in the “Balkan fighting.” The judges are from Australia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Italy, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the United States. “Although Muslims have been the victims of many of the atrocities committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, none of the members of the tribunal are Muslim.” (“War Crimes Panel Chosen”, The New York Times, September 19, 1993, p. 6.) Misinformation about Bosnia, including the Bosnian Muslims, is so widespread that it has become locus communis. For instance, in the end of the nineteenth century, János de Asboth published An Official Tour through Bosnia and Herzegovina (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1890). Asboth’s work contains “twenty traditional songs of Bosnian Mahamendans [sic],” as the representative bibliography of the 1967 Literatures of the World in English Translation notes. And precisely these Muslim songs are listed under “Serbian Literature” in the same bibliography. [The Literatures of the World in English Translation: A Bibliography, vol. II, The Slavic Literatures, compiled by Richard C. Lewanski (New York: The New York Public Library et al., 1967), p. 405.] Another example: Monica and Robert Beckinsale in their book Southern Europe (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1975) state that Bosnia-Herzegovina is “the only [Yugoslav] republic that is not established on a nationality basis although nearly half its population is Serb, and one quarter are Croats. Most of the remainder are of Turkish descent [sic]. The Serbs are mainly Orthodox by religion, the Croats Roman Catholic, and the Turks [sic] Moslem” (p. 280). According to the last official census of 1991, Bosnia-Herzegovina’s population was 43.7 percent Muslims, 31.3 percent Serbs, and 17.3 percent Croats. (See Anto Valenta, Podjela Bosne i borba za celovitost | Partition of Bosnia and Struggle for Its Integrity | (Vitez, Bosnia: Napredak, 1991), p. 17.) Many misrepresentations of Bosnia have been analysed in the weekly Euro Bosna, edited by Ibrahim Halilović in Germany (see, for example, No. 14. of June 25, 1993). The author of this review approaches Hermeneutika Kur’ana as a philosopher and Bosnian citizen whose intellectual formation has been in a significant part influenced by Muslim cultural heritage, although he himself is not a Muslim.

2. Here Karić uses the Croatian noun sanja (equivalent to the Serbian duanje) meaning not “absence of any sounds or noises” but rather “a person’s conscious refraining from speech”. Or, “One cannot (completely) translate the Qur’an; one has to be (occupied with) translating it”.

3. Karić’s “necessary” statement that Islam does not know (linguistic) nationalism attempts to neutralize Belgrade propaganda claims of the “dangers of Muslim nationalism and fundamentalism” in the former Yugoslavia. In the second sentence Karić admits that Islamic theology through the centuries has contained such a nationalism. He does not elaborate how it can be possible that Islam does not know (linguistic) nationalism if Islamic theology based on the Qur’an contains it. This logical contradiction is the price of the politically “necessary” statement. Of course, Belgrade has gone on to use claims of alleged fundamentalism in attempting to justify genocide against the Bosnian Muslims. However, as the well-informed Jerusalem Post pointed out, such claims were baseless: “Serbian propaganda is replete with dark hints that the hitherto harmless and peaceful Moslems of Bosnia were planning some sort of fundamentalist Middle East-style Islamic dictatorship. There is no evidence for this.”
I. Allegations of the genocidal nature of Yugoslav Muslims were evidently in part created to deflect attention from acts of genocide committed by Serbs against the Muslims in Serbia (since 1804), Macedonia (during the Balkan Wars, 1912–1913, and during the Serbian-dominated royal Yugoslavia, 1918–1941), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sandžak and Montenegro (1941–1945). During World War II, between 80,000 and 103,000 Muslims died, or about seven percent of their population. (See Bogoljub Kočović, Žrve drugog svetskog rata u Jugoslaviji [World War II Victims in Yugoslavia] (London: Veritas Foundation Press, 1985), pp. 107–109; Vladimír Žerjavík, "The Losses of Yugoslav Population in the Second World War", Geographical Papers, vol. 8, Geopolitical and Demographical Issues of Croatia (Zagreb: University of Zagreb, Department of Geography, 1991), p. 96.) Most of the Muslim victims were killed by Serbian Chetniks, who openly collaborated with the German Nazis and Italian Fascists. (See Vladimir Dedijer, Antun Miletić, Genocid nad Musliminima, 1941–1945. Zbornik dokumenata i svjedočanstava [Genocide Against the Muslims, 1941–1945. A Collection of Documents and Testimonies] (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1990.) The Chetnik terror against the Muslims as well as other non-Serbian nationalities was so appalling that even some Fascist commanders strongly protested against it. Italian Army General Mario Roatta warned the Chetnik officer Ilija Trifunović in October of 1942:

If the Chetnik violence [in Herzegovina, western Bosnia, and southern Croatia]
against the Croatian and Muslim population is not immediately stopped, we will stop supplying food and daily wages to those formations whose members are perpetrators of the violence. If this criminal situation is prolonged, more severe measures will be undertaken. (J. Popović, M. Lolić, Bk. Latas, Pop izdaje [Treachery] Orthodox Priest) (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1988), p. 174.)

12. Mark Burdman, "New light on Serbia's Nazi psychiatric mafia. Profile: Dr Jovan Rašković", Executive Intelligence Review, February 26, 1993, pp. 43–44. Here Burdman quotes and comments on Rašković's statements according to the French weekly L'Express. Rašković announced in Belgrade in May of 1990 that the Serb nation may make war against the other nations of former Yugoslavia, but that this would be to the benefit (!) of the other nations: "However stupid that might appear: the Serb nation, according to the state of things today, will go on carrying out, if not wars, then that liberating thought which will be directed towards other nations, as a contribution to them and for their own good." (See "42 aplauza za Jovana Raškovića" [42 rounds of applause for Jovan Rašković], Duga, May 26–June 8, 1990, p. 20.)

13. Professor Mirko Djordjević from Belgrade is one of these critics. Djordjević sent his manuscript (written in French) to a colleague of his in Moscow to be published. His colleague translated it into Russian. However, the text was not printed in any newspaper in Russia but rather in Paris, in Russkaia mysł [Russian Thought], the weekly of the Russian emigrant community of France. Djordjević writes:

Our [Serbian Orthodox] Church hesitates before the face of the state which attempts to adapt the Gospel with its own [the Serbian state's] goals. Christ waits. . . . Mirko Jović, leader of the political party SNO—Serbian National Defence—comes forward: "I am for genocide of the Croatian nation." Entirely openly. But now it [genocide] is called a cleansing operation. (Mirko Dzordzhevich, "Otryvki o nashem bezumi" [Fragments About Our Madness], Russkaia mysł, October 23, 1992, p. 11.)

However, Djordjević writes,

I recalled a forgotten book by Bertrand Russell, Practice and Theory of Bolshevism, which was published in a French translation in Paris back in 1921. "Among the religions", writes Russell, "Bolshevism should be assigned to the religion of Muhammad rather than to Christianity or Buddhism." There is something really Turkish [sic] in our heads! The war is right next door, in Bosnia, in Croatia, and we are the occupiers. We, Serbo-national-communists. . . . (M. Dzordzhevich, "Otryvki o nashem bezumi" Russkaia mysł, October 16, 1992, p. 16.)

If one accepts this kind of logic, then genocidal Spanish conquistadors, Nazis, etc., etc., also had "something really Turkish," i.e. Muslim, in their Christian heads.

14. Serbian scholar Radomir Konstantinović in his book Filozofija palanke [Small-Town Philosophy], 3rd edition (Belgrade: Nolit, 1981) offers a well-founded psychosocial analysis of Serbian national consciousness. According to Konstantinović, the spiritual place of Serbian national consciousness is the small town (palanka). The essential characteristics of Serbian small-town existence are infantilism (p. 10), will for annihilation ("the will for destruction, which is here undoubted," p. 39), "searching for the culprit outside" (p. 32), "violence which is brutality taken to its extreme" (pp. 87, 88), "sensual animality" (p. 139), tribal consciousness ("Acceptable in my tribe, and by my tribe, possible as a Serb I am now impossible as a person", p. 237), the medieval Serbian Orthodox Christian "Nemanjić tradition" as "authentic monstrosity" (p. 249) and faith in the defied Serbian nation (p. 375).

All these components end in Serbian Nazism: "Serbian Nazism is not an 'import' from the German National Socialism, which it served and imitated, but rather the extreme expression of the spirit of the small town" (p. 366). For more details, see also A. Knežević, An Analysis of Serbian Propaganda (Zagreb: Domovinatt, 1992), pp. 209–221.
During World War II, Serbia had two pro-Nazi governments, the short-lived “Council of Commissars” of Milan Acimović (April 30–August 29, 1941) and General Milan Nedić’s government (August 29, 1941—October 1944). From December 1941 on, Nedić advocated the formation of a Great Serbia. That was one of the main issues during Nedić’s meeting with Hitler and von Ribbentrop (September 18, 1943). Even before Nedić’s visit to Hitler, the Serbian ideologue Milošević, in his *Deutsch-serbische Verständigung* (1943), advocated a Great Serbia formed from the “former Serbia [including Macedonia and predominantly Muslim provinces of Kosovo and Sandžak], Vojvodina, Srem, Slavonia [in Croatia], Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dalmatia [in Croatia], Montenegro, with the cities of Skopje [in Albania] and Thessalonica [in Greece],” including of course a “solemn declaration of the gratitude and respect of the Serbian people towards the Führer.” (Mladen Stefanović, *Zbor Dimitrije Ljotića 1934–1945* [Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1984], pp. 230–231.) In 1943, Nedić requested “organization of the Serbian people on the National Socialist [Nazi] basis”, but Germans delayed any discussion until after the war. However, German military leadership, including Hitler, approved a proposal for a “Great Serbian Federation which would encompass Serbia, Montenegro, and Sandžak,” elaborated by Nedić and German Plenipotentiary in Serbia Hermann Neubacher. (Milošević’s Yugoslavia consists precisely of these three regions, although largely Muslim Sandžak does not have any autonomous status.) Similarities between the two Serbias, Nedić’s and Milošević’s are obvious in both their tactical means and their strategic goal. In both cases the goal is creation of a Great Serbia with Serbian military forces under foreign protection in a “new world order”. And in both cases the means are the same: ethnic cleansing and concentration camps.


16. This document is deposited in the Military-Historical Institute of the Yugoslav People’s Army in Belgrade (Archive of the Royal Yugoslav Army, No. 2, Fasc. 4, Box 69). I cite the text of the “Expulsion of the Albanians” from *Izvori velikosrpske agresije* [Sources of Great Serbian Aggression], ed. Bože Ćović (Zagreb: August Cesarea and Školtska knjiga, 1991), pp. 106–123. According to Ćubriković, Royal Yugoslavia could achieve political stability through two parallel processes: Serbian colonization of lands with non-Serbian population and destruction or expulsion of some nationalities from the country. The Serbian Academician saw the predominantly Muslim Albanians as the most dangerous nationality who should be expelled to Albania and Turkey. The expulsion of the Albanians would solve at the same time the problem of another “dangerous” nationality, Slavic Muslims: “With the removal of the Albanians, the last link between our Muslims in Bosnia and Novi Pazar [Sandžak] and the rest of the Muslim world is cut” (p. 110).

17. At that time (1990) in Croatia there was quite a bit of talk about a desirable “anti-Serb” coalition (consisting of the Slovenes, Croats, Muslims, Albanians and Macedonians), but the idea was entirely unrealistic because no one of these nationalities (except to some degree the Slovenes) had enough arms to resist the eventual Great Serbian aggression. On February 29, 1992, an internationally monitored referendum for independence was held in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Most Serbs boycotted the referendum but Bosnian Muslims and Croats voted. “Overall, 63% of eligible Bosnians vote, 99.4% of whom choose independence.” (See *Breakdown in the Balkans: A Chronicle of Events. January, 1989 to May, 1993*. Compiled by Samantha Power (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1993), p. 36.) Croatia was among the first countries which recognised the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Facing the same aggressor, in June of 1992, Croatia and Bosnia formed a short-lived alliance “against the common enemy”, Serbia. Later the Presidents of Bosnia and Croatia issued several “joint communiques.” (See *Breakdown in the Balkans*, pp. 47, 67.) The anti-Muslim sentiments that began to appear in Croatia in 1992 resulted in part from the arrival in Croatia of hundreds of thousands of Bosnian Muslim refugees escaping Serbian ethnic cleansing, in part from the widespread opinion that Serbia intended to destabilize Croatia and change the ethnic structure of the two-thirds of Croatian territory not
occupied by Serbs, by driving the Muslims in that direction. Muslim-Croatian military conflicts in central Bosnia and Croatian-Muslim fighting in Herzegovina intensified in 1993 with enormous losses on both sides. These conflicts appeared after the Serbs had already captured about 70% of Bosnian territory, when it became absolutely clear that the international community would not militarily intervene against the Serbian aggressor. So the 61% majority of the Bosnian population, Muslims and Croats, started to fight each other for the 30% of Bosnian territory which had not been occupied by the Serbs. The upper hierarchy of the Catholic Church in both Bosnia and Croatia has appealed to stop the Croatian-Muslim fighting. The Croatian “Cardinal Kuharic issued a statement in May [1993] that was clearly aimed at the Herzegovinian Croatian leadership. In it he refused to take its side against the Muslims and implied that the Croats might be responsible for the violence and for war crimes.” (Patrick Moore, “Endgame in Bosnia and Herzegovina?”, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Report, vol. 2, no. 32 (August 13, 1993) p. 23.) Several months later, the Croatian opposition parties issued a statement rejecting the internationally-sponsored destruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They declared inter alia: “We reject the partition of Bosnia-Herzegovina as demanded by the Geneva peace plan.” (“Opposition Grows Against Croat Policies”, The Croatian Voice, September 27, 1993, p. 4.)

18. Branka Magaš, a Croatian historian from London, concludes her article criticising official Croatian policy towards Bosnia (“Croat Catholics Divided”, The Tablet, July 17, 1993, p. 910) with the following words:

The last word here must go to Mustafa Cerić, head of the Bosnian Islamic community, who recently appealed to Muslim imams, Christian clergy, Jewish rabbis and Buddhist monks throughout the world, to help “open up a path to Sarajevo and thus save hope and belief in the dignity of man and universal divine and human values”. In his message, the Naibu Reis appealed to “all of you who have God in your hearts, who are able to distinguish truth from lies, good from evil, joy from grief, love from hatred, sincere humanity from shameful religious discrimination” to come to Sarajevo “to halt the evil which spread its shadow over my people.” Who can refuse his call? For, as the imam says, “If we turn a deaf ear to our consciences, every human creature and the very spirit of all God’s words will be the victim. Our voice of faith against faithlessness, of love against hatred and of justice against violence, must be most powerful here and now in Sarajevo, city of mosques, cathedrals, churches and synagogues, in which an oath is sworn of fidelity to one and the same God.” [The Naibu Reis] say[s] that “alive or dead we remain loyal to God’s words and loyal to our Bosnia, and it is up to you to decide whether you will help us live or watch us die . . . .”

19. Moreover, one could state that the international community has allowed the ongoing destruction of Bosnia and especially its Muslim majority. As a Sarajevo official said in a recent interview to the American National Public Radio, “Our tragedy is that we are too European to be helped by Muslim countries, and too Muslim to be helped by Western countries. But we are not going to apologize to anyone because of our Muslim faith.” (I paraphrase him according to my memory.) The presence of United Nations soldiers in Bosnia has not prevented the genocide, but it has served as an argument against international military intervention. Moreover, there is growing “evidence of UN profiteering and drug-smuggling in war-torn Sarajevo”, a recent report from the Bosnian capital says. (Maggie O’Kane, “The soldiers out of control: they are feasting on a dying city”, Guardian Weekly, September 5, 1993, p. 4.) U.N. soldiers stationed in Sarajevo are from two European (Christian) countries, France and Ukraine, and from one African (Islamic) country, Egypt. The cited report notes that the Europeans are involved in criminal activities: “The Ukrainians are the masters, trading in cigarettes, cars, petrol, alcohol and women”, while “The French specialise in wine, Coca-Cola, gold and sex”. Although the report says that “The Egyptians operate on a small scale”, not one example of Egyptians’ wrongdoing is mentioned. “So far, 22 UN soldiers—19 Ukrainians and 3 French—have been sent home for war profiteering”, though apparently not a single Egyptian. Unfortunately, no deeper analysis is offered of possible
reasons for the behaviour of U.N. soldiers. Do the Egyptian soldiers abstain from criminal activity because they are much richer than their colleagues from Ukraine and France who must "trade" in order to survive in the dying city? Or because of the Egyptians' compassion with the suffering citizens of the largely Muslim city of Sarajevo? Do distinct Islamic moral attitudes towards women, alcohol and drugs play any role in the behaviour of the Egyptian soldiers?

20. Two Croatian scholars, Slaven Letica and Stjepan G. Mestrovic ("War-watching in the Balkans", The Croatian Voice, September 27, 1993, p. 17) write about that:

We have listened regularly to Muslim sermons at Friday prayer services at the mosque in Zagreb. Most of the listeners were refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina. The sermons convey a straightforward message: Muslims are oppressed all over the world simply because they are Muslims. Is all this suffering merely God's punishment? No, Islam is called to be the conscience of the West, that cultured, technologically advanced and mighty West that is full of hate, decadence, and evil. Islam is fighting for its survival. It is the West that opened the door to Jihad. When Europe allowed the first Muslim virgin to be raped by a Serb, and did nothing about it, it showed its desire to eliminate Islam. 1993 is [the year] 622. Islam must respond with faith, and it must win.

The Islamic world is not yet unified politically, but it is beginning to draw the conclusion that it is being oppressed by the entire, postmodern West: in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Palestine, and now Bosnia. So, soon after the end of the Cold War, it seems that Islam will take the place of the "Evil Empire" [the former Soviet Union] as the object of Western fear and animosity. If this "unintended" consequence (at least consciously unintended) comes to pass, the West will have brought it on itself. It is still not too late to avert this dangerous scenario, which leads ultimately to world War III.
BINDING WITH RECIPROCALS AND REFLEXIVES: A SEMANTICO-SYNTACTIC STUDY

HAMZA M.J. KHESHAIFATY

This paper focuses on the syntactic as well as the semantic aspects of binding with reciprocals and reflexives in Hijazi Arabic (a dialect spoken in Western Saudi Arabia). It is through syntactic structures that we arrive at semantic interpretations with which we are concerned in this study. The ensuing discussion is confined to the aspects of semantic interpretations in two types of syntactic structures. First, the paper analyses the coreferential reciprocal form /baṣ D/ “each other”. [see Abbreviations and Symbols Table at the end.] In constructions where it is used with two conflicting referents. Second, the analysis is extended to the type of structure in which the coreferential third person reflexive forms are employed in syntactic structures comprising two competing antecedents. Furthermore, the paper attempts to describe the basic properties of binding conditions of reflexives.

INTRODUCTION

In terms of inflectional morphology, reciprocals in Hijazi Arabic (for short H.A.) are suffixed with /-ha/ as well as with /-hum/. In addition in terms of semantic interpretation, there is the most problematic unsuffixed form /baṣ D/. It is problematic because it can be coindexed with both animate inanimate nouns in syntactic structures consisting of two conflicting antecedents.

With regard to inflectional morphology, reflexives are inflected for first, second and third person pronouns, both singular and plural. The problematic reflexive forms (in terms of their semantic interpretations) are the third person reflexive forms suffixed with /-u/ for “himself”, with /-ha/ for herself and with /-hum/ for themselves. These forms are the focus of our analysis in this study.

Reciprocals and reflexives exhibit binding (or coindexing) relations
between two main elements, namely a binder and a bindee, in certain syntactic structures. The term binder is used in this study to refer to a referent or an antecedent in coreferential relations. The term bindee, however, is used to refer to an anaphoric element of a reciprocal or a reflexive which requires an antecedent. An anaphoric element is the part of syntactic structure which requires an antecedent.

In the following sections an attempt is made to consider the problem of representing coreference and to lay out binding conditions for H.A. on morphologically and semantically based considerations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

By reviewing the literature, it appears that grammarians\(^1\) have discussed coreferential relations of reciprocals within the framework of government and binding. Radford\(^2\) devoted most of his discussion to binding relations. He discussed the semantic interpretations of certain syntactic structures in which the reciprocals as well as the reflexives seem to be exhibiting problems in terms of their interpretations. Radford\(^3\) illustrates the problem of representing reciprocal coreference by providing the example, “They shot the arrows at each other”. In this context, the problem lies in having the same reciprocal form coindexed with either of the two antecedents i.e., the subject antecedent “they” or the object antecedent “arrows”.

Radford\(^4\) discusses the coreferential relations of reflexives and points out the binding conditions. The main binding condition stated by Radford stipulates that an anaphor must be bound in its governing category. In other words, a reflexive anaphor must be coindexed with its referent in the same clause, just as in the example “He hurt himself”. Both coreferential elements are in the same clause. Radford\(^5\) also states the Matching Condition of reflexives i.e., they must be of the same gender, number and person.

In Arabic the term /ba\$ D/ does not always function as a reciprocal element. On the one hand, it may function as a partitive form as in /xa: Taba ba\$ D-u t-ta\$ a:mi:o mu\$ a:m\$ a/ “some of the pupils addressed Muhammad”.\(^6\) Wright\(^7\) states that if the term /ba\$ D/ is to be used as a correlative, no pronominal suffix is added to it. This is explained by saying, /ba\$ d-u\$ / “some evils are easier to be borne than others”. In the two examples mentioned above the term /ba\$ D/ is used as a partitive.

On the other hand, /ba\$ D/ may function as a reciprocal form which may or may not be suffixed with either the third person feminine singular pronoun /−ha/ or the masculine plural pronoun /−hum/. Wright,\(^8\) cites an
example in which the suffixed reciprocal form /-hum/ is used: /Z-Za: limu:na ba § Da-hum ba § Da-hum uru:ra:/ “the unjust (people) make to one another (or each other) only vain (or deceitful) promises”. This construction clearly shows that the reciprocal form /ba § Da-hum/ “each other them” refers back to the masculine plural animate noun /Za:limu:na/, “unjust people”.

In another context, Wright\(^9\) cites an example of reciprocal coreferential relations in which the reciprocal form is suffixed by /-ha/: /Zulum-\-a:t-un ba § Da-ha fawga ba § Da/ “darknesses one upon another (i.e., darkness upon darkness)”. The semantic interpretation indicates that the reciprocal form /ba § Da-ha/ refers back to the plural inanimate noun /Zulum-\-a:t/ On the basis of these examples, one may deduce the concept of reciprocity, i.e. when the reciprocal form /ba § Da/ is suffixed by /-hum/ then the referent (or the binder according to our terminology) is a plural animate noun, whereas if it is suffixed with /-ha/ then the binder is an inanimate plural. Needless to say, /-ha/ is used as a feminine singular suffix in Arabic (both classical and dialectal varieties) as is clearly stated in grammar books.\(^10\)

In light of the previous discussion, it seems that the Binding Conditions of reciprocal coreferential relations, holding between a binder and a reciprocal bindee in Classical Arabic, is governed by the gender, number, person and animacy features of the binder. That is to say, if the binder is, for example, a plural animate noun then the bindee has to be suffixed with the animate plural suffix /-hum/, while if it is an inanimate plural noun, then the bindee is suffixed with /-ha/. This indicates that there has to be matching conditions between both coreferentially related elements. In the following sections we shall analyse the syntactic structures in H.A., in which such reciprocal forms are used, to see if the binding conditions of reciprocols in Classical Arabic are captured.

The discussion which follows is an attempt to implement the binding conditions in Classical Arabic (as cited by Wright)\(^11\) to fiijazi Arabic. The coreferential elements in this study (including reciprocals and reflexives) are indicated by the device of identical indices, whereas non-coreferential elements have different indices.

**BINDING OF RECIPROCALS**

The reciprocal forms, which shall be discussed in this section are: the unsuffixed form /ba § Da/ and the suffixed forms /-hum/ and /-ha/. These are the most widely used reciprocals in fiijazi Arabic. We may begin our discussion by analysing the syntactic structures whereby the unsuffixed reciprocal form
refers back to either of two conflicting antecedents, as in the following example:

1. /al-buzu:ra 1 ramu l-fiawa:y¥¥ 2 § ala ba§ D 1/2/
   (The children threw the clothes at each other.)

This syntactic structure is problematic in terms of its interpretation. This is because two likely interpretations may be deduced: (a) The children threw the clothes at one another, and (b) The children put the clothes on each other (one over the other). In the first interpretation, the referent or the binder is the animate subject (i.e., children), while in the second interpretation the binder is the inanimate object (i.e., clothes). This representative example illustrates clearly the problem of semantic interpretation that occurs as a result of the use of the unsuffixed reciprocal form in a structure that has two conflicting binders. This kind of syntactic structure is widely used in hijazi Arabic, as illustrated by the following example:

2. /al-kanna:si:n 1 haTTu l-gama:yim 2 fo:g ba§ D 1/2/
   (The sweepers put the garbage on each other.)

Just as we have seen in example (1), there are two semantic interpretations which can be deduced from example (2). The first interpretation is, “the sweepers put the garbage on other sweepers”. The second is “the sweepers put the garbage on top of other garbage”. So, the ambiguity is due to the use of the unsuffixed bindee /ba§ D/, which can be interpreted to be in coreferential relations with either of the two binders: the animate subject “sweepers” or the inanimate object “garbage”. Similar cases are found in these examples:

3. /al-awla:d 1 jama§ ul fulu:s 2 ma§ a ba§ D 1/2/
   (The boys gathered the money with each other.)

4. /al-bana:t 2 j a: lu j -j ina: 2 ma § a ba § D 1/2/
   (The girls put the bags with each other.)

That is to say, the binders of the unsuffixed bindee /ba § D/, in these two examples can either be the animate subject or the inanimate object depending on the way the hearer interprets the constructions. Such dual interpretations create a semantic ambiguity in these syntactic structures. However, the ambiguity can be explained by positing two underlying structures for the two different interpretations of the constructions.

**RESOLUTIONS FOR RECIPROCAL BINDING**

We propose the following resolutions for reciprocal binding relations in Arabic.
1. A reciprocal bindee must be annexed with the animate suffix /-hum/ in its underlying form, only if the intended referent (of the speaker) is an animate noun, in a structure that has two conflicting binders.

2. A reciprocal bindee must be annexed with the inanimate suffix /-ha/ in its underlying form, only if the speaker is referring to an inanimate noun, in a structure that has two conflicting binders.

Regarding the semantic interpretation, if the animate bindee /ba § Da-hum/ “each other them” is postulated as the underlying form, then the only possible interpretation will coindex the suffixed bindee /-hum/ with the animate binder, and hence there will not be any semantic ambiguity. These two resolutions of reciprocal binding conditions in H.A. agree with the binding conditions of Classical Arabic mentioned earlier.

By comparing Classical and Hijazi Arabic, it becomes clear (on the basis of the examples of Classical Arabic provided by Wright earlier in this paper and the examples of Hijazi Arabic) that both varieties of Arabic share certain semantic as well as syntactic features with regard to reciprocals. In terms of morphological aspects, the same reciprocal forms, suffixed and unsuffixed, are used in both varieties of Arabic. As for the syntactic features, there are certain differences regarding case marking (the nominative, accusative and genitive), which does not exist in most if not all dialects of Arabic. Also, the word order in Hijazi Arabic is nominal as can be seen in the following example.

1-a /al-buzu:ra1 ramu l-fiawa:yi § 2 § ala § Da-hum 1/
(The children threw the clothes at each other (them).)

The word order of the example above is: subject + verb + object. The identical indices in example (1-a) indicate that the animate bindee /ba § Da-hum/ (each other them) can only be in coreferential relation with the animate binder /buzu:ra/ (children). So, the semantic ambiguity is eliminated by the postulation of the underlying structure.

By applying the same principle we arrive at the same conclusion. That is to say, if the inanimate bindee /ba § Da-ha/ is made the underlying form of the construction, then the only likely binder in such a context is an inanimate noun. In this case, the semantic interpretation of the bindee is confined to an inanimate binder only. This point is illustrated in the example below:

1-b al-buzu:ra1 ramu l-fiawa:yi § 2 § ala § Da-ha 2/
(The children put the clothes on each other.)
As can be clearly seen, the /-ha/ suffixed bindee (which is indexed with 2) can only be in coreferential relations with the inanimate noun “clothes”.

In light of the elaborated analysis, we may say that reciprocal binding in hijazi Arabic exhibits two types of coreferential relations. First, animate reciprocal binding relations occurs when the suffix /-hum/ is annexed to the reciprocal form. Second, an inanimate reciprocal binding is exhibited when the suffix /-ha/ is used.

As a result, one may add that in this kind of coreferentiality, a partial semantic identity of the binder (i.e., being animate or inanimate) overrules the binding conditions, and hence dictates a morphological identity (i.e., to be suffixed with either /-hum/ or /-ha/) of the reciprocal bindee.

**Reflexives**

The reflexives are attached pronouns combined with either the singular noun /nafs/ “self”, or the plural forms of nouns /? anfus/ and /nufus/: “selves”. In hijazi Arabic, the singular noun /nafs/ is attached to the plural pronoun just as it is attached to the singular pronoun. Thus, one can say /nafs-u/ “himself” and /nafsa-hum/ “themselves”. In addition, there are two more plural forms of reflexives, which have the combined elements (i.e., the nouns and the attached pronoun) in the plural form, e.g., /nufusa-hum/ and /? anfus-hum/ both meaning “themselves”. However, from the syntactic aspects, the plural reflexive forms have more than one function. That is to say, the plural reflexive forms /nafsa-hum/ and /? anfus-hum/ are, generally speaking, used as subjective complements (i.e., qualifying and referring back to the subject in the same clause) as in:

5  /? albuzu:ra jjarafiu nafsa-hum /? anfus-hum/
(The boys hurt themselves.)
Also, they can be used intensively for emphasis:

6.  /albuzu:ra bi-nafsa-hum anjara? u/
(The boys themselves were hurt.)

In example (6), the reflexive form has the preposition /bi/ “by” to denote emphasis and immediately follows the subject. So, the reflexives (in constructions 5 and 6) do not only have different functions (i.e., as a subject complement and for emphasis) but they also have different word order. In construction (5) the reflexive follows the verb, while in (6) it precedes the verb. It is worth noting, in passing, that the word order in such constructions is insignificant because the reflexive form can always precede or follow the verb.
Reflexives in Hijazi Arabic are inflected for gender and number in first, second and third person pronouns. However, in this part of the study we are concerned only with three forms of third person reflexive pronouns, each of which shall be termed a “reflexive bindee”. These are: nafs-u/“himself”, /nafs-a-ha/ “herself”, and /nafs-a-hum/ “themselves”. This part of the study examines the possible semantic interpretations of these reflexives in certain syntactic structures. Also, we shall analyse the Binding Conditions in H.A in relation to Chomsky’s binding conditions.

Before we proceed with the analysis, we find it beneficial to review the relevant literature and see how reflexives were dealt with in Classical Arabic. Haywood and Nahmad reveal that reflexives are mainly used for emphasis, as in /kataba l-mu l-allimu l-kita:ba nafsa-hu/ “the teacher wrote the book himself”. Al-Basha adds that pronouns (both attached and detached) must agree with their antecedents in terms of gender and number. Al-Hashimi reveals that /al- ʕa: ʕa/ “any anaphoric pronoun including reflexives”, relates the anaphoric pronoun (or in our terminology the reflexive bindee) to its antecedent (or the binder) in the same clause. No elaboration of this point has been provided by Al-Hashimi.

In English, however, Palmer discusses the dichotomy of personal and reflexive pronouns, and points out that the latter are generally used for coreference within the same clause. That is to say, reflexives are, unlike other pronouns, bound to their referents in the same clause. Palmer adds that the reflexive “himself” in such a structure as “He hurt himself” can only refer back to one referent, i.e., the subject antecedent “He”, which is in the same clause as the reflexive bindee. Huddleston agrees with Palmer that both coreferentially related elements must have the same gender and number.

The following discussion elaborates the binding conditions of reflexives in Hijazi Arabic. Also, the basic properties of reflexives in H.A., in relation to Bouchard’s view of reflexives in English, shall be examined. Furthermore, the discussion includes global relating of reflexives in a structure that has two competing antecedents.

BASIC PROPERTIES OF REFLEXIVES

The focus in this section is on the reflexive bindees “himself”, “herself” and “themselves”. The limitation of the analysis to these reflexives is due to their semantic aspects which permit them to be coindexed with more than one antecedent in the same syntactic structure.

Before we proceed with the analysis of such a syntactic structure in
Hijazi Arabic (where there are two antecedents), we shall state the basic properties of reflexives as enumerated by Bouchard. He lists the four basic properties in the formulation of binding as:

1. Obligatoriness of the antecedent; (2) a one-to-one relation between antecedent and anaphor; (3) locality of the relation; (4) a structural condition on the relation. \(^8\)

Let us now see if Bouchard's Basic Properties of reflexives are applicable to Hijazi Arabic. The following example is an illustration:

7. Sami ﮏ اًوار نافس-ع
   (Sami hurt himself.)

The underlying structure of example (7) is: /Sami (NP1) ﮏ اًوار Sami (NP2)/. Let us now implement Bouchard’s four Basic Properties to example (7) and see if it satisfies the semantic and the syntactic properties. First, with regard to the obligatoriness of the antecedent, the example shows that it is met. That is to say, the reflexivised NP2 (i.e., nafs-u) is coindexed with an antecedent, and in this example it is coreferential with NP1 “Sami”, the subject of the structure. So, having a binder for a reflexive bindee is an obligatory syntactic property of reflexives in Arabic. Second, it is a one-to-one coreferential relation. In other words, the bindee can have a coreferential relation with one binder only. This feature is also satisfied in Arabic. According to example (7), which shows one-to-one coreferential relation between both elements “Sami” and “nafs-u”. Third, the example concerned shows an in-clause coreferential relation, and this in turn satisfies the locality of the relation between the two elements. This property is also satisfied because the reflexive bindee in sentence (7) functions as an object of the verb. It can be noted in this regard, that there are two main structural positions where a reflexive bindee can occur in Hijazi Arabic. These are: 1- the object of a verb (as in example (7) in which “himself” is an object of the verb “ﬁ اًوار”), and 2- the object of a preposition (e.g., “الوالد ﮏ اًلى نافس-ع/ “the boy wet on himself”). The reflexive “himself” in this example is part of a prepositional phrase and it functions as an object of the preposition “on”.

The conclusion that emerges from the above discussion is that reflexive binding conditions in H.A. are in compliance with Bouchard’s basic properties mentioned earlier. As a confirmation of what we have stated earlier, that a reflexive bindee in H.A. can only have one binder, we present the following example.

8. ﮏ اًوار سامي السحاب-ع / السحاب نافس-ع
Islamic Studies, 32:2 (1993)

(Ali 1 showed Sami 2 their pictures / pictures of themselves 1/2.)

Example (8) is written with two alternative bindees; one is interpretable and the other is uninterpretable. These two are the interpretable plural pronoun /suwar-hum/ “their pictures”, and the uninterpretable plural reflexive /nafsa-hum/ “themselves”. The reflexive “themselves” is uninterpretable because it is bound to both antecedents, namely, the subject “Ali” and the object “Sami”. The binding conditions, in this syntactic structure, are breached because the reflexive bindee does not have a unique binder. Since a bindee can only be coindexed with one binder, it can not possibly be interpreted.

In light of the above analysis about the binding relations of reflexives, the following definition is deduced.

**Binding Definition:**

A reflexive bindee can be coindexed with a binder only if such coreferential relation has satisfied the following four basic properties: obligatoriness of the binder, uniqueness of the binder, locality of both coreferential elements, and structural condition of the bindee.

**GLOBAL RELATING IN REFLEXIVE BINDING**

The present discussion focuses on global relating in reflexive binding in certain syntactic structures. It is worth noting that there are certain verbs which exhibit such global relating. Some of these verbs are; /Tamman/ “ap-pease”, /sawwaf/ “scare”, /nasafi/ “advise”, /wa SSal/ “to give a lift”, / $a $arraf/ “introduce”. Examples are given below:

9. Sa:mi Tamman $ ali $ala nafs-u
   (Sa:mi 1 appeased Ali 2 about himself 1/2.)

10. Sa:mi naSafi $ ali bi-nafs-u
    (Sami 1 advised Ali 2 by himself 1/2.)

By examining the syntactic structure of these two examples and their semantic implications, it appears that there are interesting aspects. As far as syntax is concerned, it seems that each of these two representative examples has a preposition preceding the reflexive bindee “himself”. What is peculiar about such structures is that they contain two competing binders; the first binder functions as the subject of the verb, while the second acts as an object of the same verb. Following the object of the verb is a prepositional phrase, which begins with a preposition and ends with the reflexive
bindee. This bindee functions as an object of the preceding preposition.

With regard to semantics, one notice that the structures concerned exhibit global relating between the reflexive bindee, on the one hand, and each of the two competing binders on the other hand. That is to say, two possible interpretations can be given for each construction. The first interpretation relates the reflexive bindee /nafs-u/ “himself” (in both examples) to the first binder, which functions as the subject of the clause. The second interpretation, however, coindexes the same bindee with the second binder.

This global binding relations (with both binders) are based on one-to-one coreferential relation within the same clause. Consequently, we may state that the earlier stated Bouchard’s binding conditions are satisfied in the syntactic structure concerned.

CONCLUSION

As the emphasis in this article has been on binding relations in certain syntactic structures of reciprocals and reflexives, the findings propose two main resolutions for the semantic problems of the unsuffixed reciprocal bindee /ba $\&$ D/ when used with two conflicting animate and inanimate binders. The proposed resolutions associate an underlying structure having the suffix /-hum/ with one interpretation refering to an animate noun, and another underlying structure having the suffix /-ha/ with the other interpretation refering to an inanimate noun.

In the case of reflexive binding, the study proved that Bouchard’s Basic Properties are not breached, and are, therefore, applicable to hijazi Arabic. Furthermore, the study revealed that in certain syntactic structures (where there are two competing animate binders) the reflexive bindee can be globally related to either the subject or the object of the same clause.\footnote{19}

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

\begin{itemize}
\item $?$ A glottal stop
\item $\&$ A voiced pharyngeal fricative
\item $\$A voiceless pharyngeal fricative
\item $\&$ A voiced velar /uvular fricative
\end{itemize}
A voiceless velar/uvular fricative

A voiced alveo-palatal stop

A voiceless alveo-palatal fricative

A voiceless alveo-dental emphatic fricative

A voiced alveo-dental emphatic fricative

A voiceless alveo-dental emphatic stop

A voiced alveo-dental emphatic stop

A voiceless Pharyngeal Fricative

NOTES AND REFERENCES


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.


7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.


11. Wright, Grammar.


14. Al-Hashimi, al-Qaw\'id


18. Ibid. p. 25.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

ISLAM IN ITALY AND IN ITS LIBYAN COLONY
(720–1992)

ATAULLAH BOGDAN KOPANSKI

Benito Mussolini swore that the Muslims would never build a mosque in Rome as long as a church is not erected at Makkah. After the conquest of Cyrenaica, the Italian dictator declared himself “the Sword of Islam”. The Roman Catholic Church had been opposing the idea of mosque in Rome for centuries. Osmanli sultan Muhammed II Fatih dreamt of the house of Allah in the First Rome, after the conquest of the Second Rome i.e. Constantinople (later Islampol, Istanbul). The first mosque in Rome is near completion at a cost of forty millions U.S. dollars, on the green hillside, two kilometers across Rome from the Vatican.

Holding prayers in a proper mosque in Rome would be the culmination of decades of struggle for Italy’s fast-growing Muslim community. Thirty-one years ago, when A. Qayyum Khan emigrated from his native Pakistan, there was no place for Muslims to attend weekly Jumu‘ah congregational prayer. Then, with the help of Muslim donations, he and the Syrian-born imām of Rome managed to buy a small villa in the heart of the Italian metropolis, where he now runs the Islamic Cultural Centre. No census based on religion has ever been conducted in Rome, but most estimates put the size of the city’s Muslim community at between 15,000 and 30,000 many of whom have immigrated from pre-war Italian colonial territories in Africa (Somaliland, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya). Muslim Italians make up a tiny fraction of Italy's fifty-seven million highly secularized population, and the numbers pale in comparison to France and Germany, each of which has more than two million Muslims. But the fact that such a small community commands the political clout and organizational skills to construct a huge mosque in the capital of the Catholic popes and the stronghold of “Euro-Communism” is an index of the sweeping changes in Europe these years.
The Catholic clergy dropped their long-standing objections. The seven and a half acre site is in the Parioli district, where most of the diplomats live. It is removed from most public transit lines and the Muslims had to pay for a kilometer access road and a bridge over a nearby railway line. The cost and inflation have put the project behind schedule and over budget. Begun in 1984, the mosque and an adjoining cultural centre originally were scheduled for completion in January 1989 at a cost of U.S. $30 million. Funding come from private contributions and twenty-one Muslim countries. Saudi Arabia and Iraq donated U.S. $7 million each.

Islam crossed the Mediterranean Sea in the second Hijrah century, when Muslim navy and land troops invaded Sicily, Sardinia and southern Italy. Muslim forces twice attacked and burned down the city of Rome. Islam remained the dominant religion in the southern Italy and Sicily for three hundred and fifty years and a great majority of the Sicilians embraced Islam. By the year CE 906, the Muslim army from al-Andalus and southern France had crossed the Alpine valleys and had made themselves masters of the northern Italy (Lombardia). In Turin, Muslim prisoners of war captured by the Christian troops broke their chains and set fire to the monastery of St. Andrew where they had been imprisoned. The fire destroyed a large part of the town. In CE 911, the Bishop of Narbonne was called to Rome for emergency meeting because the Muslims had occupied all the passes of the Alpine mountains. In 940, the Muslim army penetrated Switzerland and seized St. Bernard Pass, Piedmont and Montferrat, but they lost in 942, after the invasion of the Gulf of St. Tropes by the powerful Byzantinian fleet. Many Arab warriors settled down in the town of Nice, where even today there is a part of the town called the Saracen Quarter. The Muslim settlers were driven out of Grenoble in 965. In 975, the Christians from Frankonia recaptured the Muslim colonies in France, northern Italy and Switzerland.

Sicily was used as a base by the Byzantines or Greeks (Rūmîs) for their attacks against the Islamic countries in North Africa, in 681–682. In the act of retaliation the Arab forces under the command of Bishr ibn Ṣafwān raided Sicily in 727. Three years later, ‘Abd Allâh ibn Zayâd made an incursion into Sardinia. The Umayyads of Spain and the Idrisids of Morocco raided Corsica and Sardinia during the period 806–821. In Qayrawan (Tunisia) the Aghlabid amir Ziyadat Allâh appointed the famous qâdî, Asad ibn al-Furât, as leader of the Muslim expedition to Sicily which was still under Greek control. Asad was a disciple of Abû Hanifah’s two most renowned disciples, Abû Yûsuf Muhammad and Ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybâni. The Muslim marines were composed of several ethnic elements including Arabs, Berbers, Spanish Muslims, new converts from Crete and some Iranians. In June 827, Asad with his 10,000 troops sailed for Sicily, where in
Mazara they defeated a huge army of the Byzántinians. The first mosque of Sicily was built in 859 by victorious ‘Abbás ibn Faḍl in the Greek capital of Sicily, Castrogiovanni. In 868, the Muslim army of Muḥammad Khafajah inflicted a crushing defeat on the strong naval force of the emperor Basileus near Syracuse. One year later, the island of Malta was conquered by Aghlabid amir of Afriqiyyah, Aḥmad ibn ‘Umar. In 909 the Aghlabid rule came to an end with the Fatimid Isma‘ili-Shi‘ite revolution. Thirty years later, Banū Ṭabarī, the tribe of Persian origin, founded a semi-independent dynasty of the Kalbite which ruled the Sicily for over ninety years. In 1009 the Arab troops invaded Calabria and Apulia. The entire southern Italy came under Islamic control. With the exception of the Kalbite rulers, who were Isma‘ilis, the Muslim population of Italy and Sicily adhered to the Hanafi and Maliki legal schools of fiqh. The Sicilian Muslims were experts in growing root and green vegetables. The Arabs brought to Italy, the knowledge of cultivating sugar-cane and crushing it in mills. The Arabs and Iranians also introduced mulberries, silk-worms, papyrus, the sumac tree for tanning and dye as well as dates and nuts like pistachio. Persian hydraulic techniques were imported from Mosopotamia, and the agriculture was sustained by an excellent irrigation system. The Muslims developed mining industries which included gold, silver, lead, mercury, sulphur, naphtha, vitriol, antimony and alum. According to the Arab traveller Ibn Ḥawqal who visited Sicily in 872/73, there were more mosques in Palermo, than in any other Muslim city visited by him. Famous geographer al-Muqaddisi reported that in Sicily the two feasts, ‘Id al-Fitr and ‘Id al-Adhā were celebrated with more splendour than anywhere else in the Islamic world. The population of the Muslim Sicily was international. Apart from Arabs, Greeks and native Sicilians, there were Berbers, Germans, Slavs, Iranians, Jews, Turks and “Fusci” Black Africans. The Muslim visitors from Caliphate complained that the Sicilian Muslims were corrupted, dull and lazy, inclined more towards vice than virtue. Only numerous mosques were the centres of the intellectual and religious activities.

Among the early Qur‘ānic scholars was Muhammad ibn Khurāsān, who died in Sicily, in 996. Sicilian authority on Qur‘ānic recitation was Ismā‘īl ibn Khalāf, who wrote famous Kitāb Alīf-al-Qira‘āt. He died in 1063. Outstanding scholar of hadith, Abū’l ‘Abbās, a teacher of traditionist Abū Dā‘ud and historian Ṭabarī, was probably of Calabrian (South Italy) origin. Other famous ‘ālim and shaykh al-hadith from Sicily was Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ḥibrīm at-Ṭamīmī, who was a murid (disciple) of the great Sufi sage Junayd. Several books on Madhhab Mālikiyah were written in Aghlabid Sicily by Yahyā ibn ‘Umar (d. 903). In kalām theology, the Sicilian ‘ulamā‘ followed the orthodox Sunni Ash‘arite teachings. A Sicilian scholar ‘Abd Allāh translated Dioscorides’s treatise on Botany for ‘Abd al-Raḥmān III, the Umayyad caliph of al-Andalus.
In 1059, the Nordic sea-warriors from Scandinavia, the Normans, were reconciled with the Pope Nicholas II, who gave them the investiture for the duchy of Apulia, Calabria and Sicily. The Norman chieftain Robert Guiscard and his 2,000 tough Vikings took the Muslim fortress of Messina in February 1061. The demoralized Muslim garrison fled from battlefield, and thousands of Muslim women and children fell to the Normans. In January 1072, Palermo surrendered and its Muslim population was given assurances of protection of life, religion, and laws. Heroic resistance led by Sicilian Muslim called Benarvet or Benavert was broken during a terrible famine of 1076. In 1086 Benavert was martyred and Syracuse was taken by Roger's pillaging gangs. Hammūd, an emir of Castrogiovanni surrendered to Roger, and became a Christian. He was given a land-grant in Calabria. In 1091, Noto, the last stronghold of the Muslims was captured, and the Norman conquest of Sicily was complete. The Muslim Sicily revolted in 1098, but Roger’s Muslim mercenaries easily suppressed their own nation. Arabs fought against Arabs and other Muslims under command of the Christian Norman kings of Sicily who assumed Arabic titles. Roger II called himself al-Muʿāṭṭaz bīllāh; William I was al-Hāḍī bi Amrīllāh, and William II was al-Mustaʿīzz bīllāh. All Norman kings of Sicily used for themselves the Arabic title Nāṣir al-Nāṣrāniyyah (Defender of Christianity).

Islamic civilization remained alive even among the Christian population of Sicily. The Christian women of Palermo followed the fashions of the Muslim women, wrapped their hijabs around them, they veiled faces and put henna on their fingers. The Arab military engineers worked for the Norman masters and manufactured mobile siege towers and mangonels used by the Normans against the Muslim towns in the North Africa. Under the rule of Roger I, the Sicilian converts to Islam with Muslim names like Ahmad ibn Roma or ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn Francu enjoyed some religious tolerance. But later Roman Catholic priests persecuted them. The colonization of Sicily by the Christian Lombards and Germans continued throughout the Norman period. The Christian colonists perpetrated all kinds of atrocities against the Muslims. During the reign of William I, the treatment of Muslims by the Christian barons was horrible. To escape massacres, many Muslims fled to the forests and mountains and organized armed guerrilla bands called “mafias”. Ibn Jubayr who visited Sicily in 1184–5, during the reign of William II, described the situation of crypto-Muslims. The Friday prayers were banned. Mosques of Palermo had been converted into churches. The pious Muslim intellectuals saw the only solution to their religious identity in migration to other Muslim lands. Trapani was the principal port of Muslim hijrah (migration) to Andalusia and Maghreb. The Catholic priests forced Shaykh Ibn Zur'ah to accept Christian religion. In 1189, the Muslims of Palermo were massacred. Qāḍī Abū’l Qā’im ibn Ḥammūd was accused of being supporter of the Almoheds or Maghrebian “fundamentalists” and
brutally persecuted. In 1199, Pope Innocent III declared the Muslims of Sicily and Apulia “hostile elements” in “the Christian Italy”. Discrimination and massacres of those who resisted Christianization resulted in Muslim uprisings and mass emigration to the Islamic Spain and North Africa. After the Norman conquest of Śiqiliyyah (Sicily), thousands of Arab and Italian Muslims migrated to Egypt, Syria, Morocco, al-Andalus, Algiers, and Tunis. Sicilian Muslim scholars, ulama' and savants chose to migrate also. Among them were the famous Sicilian "muqri", 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Atiq (Ibn al-Fahhām), Abū Tāhir al-Siqilli (author of al-'Unwān fi Qir'at) and outstanding 'ālim Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Tamīmī of Mazara. Al-Tamīmī was a renowned Maliki traditionist and teacher of the famous founder of the Almohed revivalist movement, Ibn Tumart. Other well-known Sicilian 'ālim Abū' Hasan 'Ali was appointed a qādī of Makkah. Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad, who was Sicilian Shaykh al-Ḥadīth taught in Granada and Hijaz, and died in Cairo.


With the conquest of Sicily by the German emperor Henry VI in 1194, the Islamic civilization declined in Śiqiliyyah. In 1197, the Sicilian Muslims rose against intolerance and Christian terror. They re-captured several towns and fortresses. Jihād continued in Sicily during the reign of pro-Muslim Frederick II Barbarossa. The Germans had the support of the Sicilian Muslims. The Normans had the support of the Pope. In 1219, the Muslims had sacked the Spedale di San Giovani de' Leprosi, and had taken bishop of Girgenti as a prisoner of war. The Sicilian Muslims were commanded by Legendary Amir Ibn 'Abbād “Mirabetto” from Banū Abs. For twenty years, thirty thousand Muslim fighters controlled the western Sicily. "Mirabetto's Muslim troops seized fortresses of Entella and Giato near Palermo. In April 1222, the Pope postponed the Crusade against Muslims of Palestine due to the victories of the Sicilian Muslims. Several months later Ibn 'Abbād "Mirabetto" was taken prisoner with his Christian allies William Porco (Swine) and Hughes de Fer (Iron). Ibn 'Abbād was murdered by Fredericks' troops. His daughter committed suicide to save her honour.
Her supporters killed 300 Christian knights in the fierce battle. Despite martyrdom of Ibn ‘Abbād, Ḥijād continued till 1224. Several military campaigns against Muslim fighters failed. They took refuge in Sicilian mountains where they organized the secret society of “Mafia”.

The Muslims were eventually forced to surrender under vicious pressure of the Christian crusaders. “Pro-Muslim” Frederick II liquidated the Muslims in Sicily by adopting the policy of religious cleansing and deportations. 16,000 Sicilian Muslims who surrendered were deported to Lucera in the Southern Italy. Mujāhidin in Sicily were supported by North African Muslim states, but Frederick’s navy invaded Jerba and kidnaped its population. Jerba’s Muslim prisoners were transported to Lucera, Girofaleo and Nocera (Apulia). Christian terror did not stop the Muslim resistance in Sicily. Small pockets of mujāhidin were able to rise in 1244.

Sultan al-Kāmil Ayyubid allied himself with Frederick II and Pope Honorius III against his own brother al-Mu'azzam and Jalāl al-Dīn of Khawarazm (Khorezm). Al-Kāmil offered Jerusalem, Nazareth and Jaffa to Frederick’s Crusaders. The sultan’s treason raised a violent protest in the Islamic world. A sea storm destroyed the Crusader Navy, reducing Frederick’s army to a pitiful band of starved vagabonds. The liberal Frederick’s policy towards the Muslim tyrants in the Middle East was coordinated with brutal anti-Muslim crackdown in Sicily. The Christian emperor sent envoys to the Isma‘īlī headquarters of Assissin (Alawites) at Alamut. The Syrian chief of an obscure terrorist sect received his gifts. Frederick II continued to exchange cultural embassies with corrupt despots of the Muslim world. The sultan of Damascus sent him a tent planetarium in which golden stars and jeweled planets were moved by a hidden machine. Al-Kāmil proposed an evacuation of the Sicilian Muslims to Egypt, but Pope Gregory IX rejected the idea. In 1243, the tiny remnants of the Sicilian Muslim community rose once again in the final Ḥijād. For three years, they heroically fought against the armies of the Pope and the Emperor. They were encouraged by the great news from al-Shām. In 1244 Jerusalem was totally liberated by the Muslim forces. Frederick II died in 1250 and was buried in a mosque which had been converted into a church. His illegitimate son Manfred, the last Hohenstaufen king of Sicily was sympathetic to the Sicilian Muslims. He was denounced by the Pope as “the Sultan of Lucera” and “Emir of Saracens”. Manfred was killed by Charles d’Anjou in 1266. Islam was totally exiled from “Siqiliyyah”.

The Christianization of the Muslim deportees in Italian colony of Lucera was a goal of Anjou kings. Apostates like Giovanni Sarracono were appointed as custodians. Finally, in August 1300, the Muslim community of Lucera was massacred and forcibly converted to Roman Catholic religion by the order of Charles II Anjou.
In 1477, after victorious march across Albania, Turkish sultan Mehmed II Fatih, conqueror of Constantinople (Istanbul) turned his army northwards and attacked the city of Friuli situated at the head of the Italian peninsula. His Muslim Turks, Bosnians and Serbs sacked towns in the valleys of the Isonzo and the Tagliamento. They defeated the Venetian army in battle near Venice and reached the banks of the Piave river, where their campfires were seen by the Christian senators from the St. Mark Church's belfries. In following year, the Turkish akyndjy and thousands of Bosnian Muslim irregulars spread panic in Rome and Vatican. Sultan Mehmed's warriors attacked the Christian towns with war-cry: Allāh Akbar! Muḥammad! Roma! Roma!" In England there was concern for the collapse of Christianity in Italy. “When the Grand Turk is at the gates of Italy and so powerful, as everyone knows”, wrote an English chronicler. Venetians surrendered Albanian port Scutari, Croia, and the islands of Lemnos and Negropont, together with the Mani and the Morea to the Muslims. Osmanli fleet under the command of Gedik Ahmed Pasha seized the Ionian islands as a naval base for a further invasion of Italy. In 1480, Turkish squadron of sipāhīs was transported by warships and took by surprise the port of Otranto, in the heel of the Italian peninsula. Eight hundred of its Christian defenders were killed in skirmishes. They were canonized by the Pope for “refusing conversion to Islam”. Invasion and occupation of the southern Italy by the Muslim Osmanlis terrified Vatican. Pope escaped from Rome to his French haven in the city of Avignon, where he called for help from the Christian kings of Spain, Portugal and Genoa. In Italy many oppressed Christians turned their hearts towards the victorious Turks in the hope that as their subjects they might enjoy the freedom and tolerance which they were deprived under the Christian rulers. Ioannis Ludovici wrote in his De conditione vitae Christianorum sub Turca:

Alli speciem sibi quandam cofixerunt stultam liberatis . . . quod quum sub Christiano consequeturos se desperant, ideo vel Turcam mallent. quasi is benignior sit in largienda libertate hac quam Christianus . . . Quidam obganniunt liberam esse sub Turca fidem. 27

In Venice of 1587, there was a small Muslim colony of Albanians (Argonauts), Turks, and Bosnian Slavs (Bosniaks). Several Italian noblemen wrote letters to the Sultan expressing their hope of quick Muslim victory in Italy. But Turkish sultan switched his attention eastwards to the island of Rhodes, the dangerous and heavy fortified nest of the Hospitaller Knights, members of the former Order of St. John's Crusaders.

In 1911, the Italian army defeated the Turks in Tripolitiania (Libya). Turkish soldiers were completely abandoned by their government. The Italians declared war against the shrinking Osmanli Empire on 29 September,
1911. Libyan port of Tobruk was invaded by 35,000 Italian troops commanded by Gen. Carlo Canvey. Tripoli and Benghazi were bombarded by the Italian warship. After the humiliating defeat, the angered Muslim masses in Istanbul removed from power the regime of Ibrahim Hakki, who was a former Turkish ambassador in Rome.

On May 16, 1913, the Italian troops led by General Mambretti attacked the stronghold of the Turco-Arab forces at Sidi ‘Aziz. Muslim forces had three antiquated canons and six machine-guns against the Italian three batteries of modern field guns, and machine-gun sections, and 5,000 "carabinieri". Despite superiority of firepower, the Italians fled in disorder leaving behind ten dead officers, and sixty soldiers and 400 wounded and prisoners. The next battle of Sidi al-Qarba, called yawm al-juma’ah was a victory of the Sanussi Order led by Shaykh Sayyid Aḥmad and the Turkish ghāżīs, members of the League of Fatherland’s Saviours (Halaskaran-i Millet Cemiyeti) and Hizb-i Cedid. The Italian army lost one hundred of its soldiers. The so-called “Second Italo-Sanussi War” had become a true guerra di partigiani (a low intensity war). The Christian troops fought against a high-spirited Musulmani ribelli. But in 1912, the Turkish government surrendered Cirenaica and Tripolitania to the Italians. After the Peace Treaty of Losanna, the Turkish troops were defeated by Colonel Antonio Miani. But Arabs continued jihād, and in the summer of 1914, the brilliant Sanussi Amir al-Mujahidin, Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn, the youngest brother of Ghāzi Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf, had taken command of the Sanussi jihād against Italian invaders. Colonel A. Miani’s troops were decisively defeated at Qasr bu Hādi, on April 29, 1915. The Sanussi mujāhidin received arms and ammunition from Turkey and Germany delivered by submarines. When Italy entered World War I, the victorious Sayyid Ṣafī al-Dīn liberated the Old Tripolitania, the Libyan Coast. The Sanussi Order kept the Italian troops behind so-called khatt al-ndr(line of fire). During the second Turco-Italian War of 1915–1918, demoralized and besieged Italian army in Libya was rescued by its British ally operating against the Turks, Germans and Sanussi guerrillas from its Egyptian colony. In the end of 1915, Sayyid Muḥammad Idrīs, Cousin of heroic Sayyid Aḥmad, betrayed the Sanussi jihād and contacted the British officials in Cairo under the pretext of pilgrimage to Makkah. A small army of Sayyid Aḥmad’s desert warriors was attacked by three colonial European Powers, the Great Britain, France and Italy. Hundreds of armoured cars were used against the camel cavalry. Additionally, the grandson of the Grand Sanussi, Sayyid Hilāl abandoned jihād and joined the Italians in March 1916. Ghāzī Sayyid Aḥmad al-Sharīf came out of the Sahara’s hide-outs and embarked for Turkey in September 1918 in a German submarine. He was one of the foremost Muslim leaders of his time, who courageously waged jihād with his few followers against three mighty Powers. In April 1921, he was declared the ruler of Iraq by the Turkish Assembly at Ankara, but the
British-supported Faysal was in a stronger position after the defeat of Turkey. Sayyid Ahmad emigrated to Damascus, but the new French masters of Syria expelled him in 1924. He died in Madinah on March 10, 1933.33

In Libya, the fighting units of the Sanusi tariqah, or adwârs continued the resistance against Italians, who controlled “an Arab republic of Tripoli” (Jumhûriyyah al-Ṭrabulsiiyyah), a quasi-state led by pro-Italian Ramadan al-Sâhîy Tawfîq and pro-Soviet Muhammad Khalîl al-Qarqâni. Italian colonialists also subsidized the tribal leadership of Sayyid Idris, pro-Italian among “moderate” factions of the Sanussi Order.

The second Italo-Sanussi War broke out in 1923, after division of Libya into the zones of influence of the “Coastal Party” (Ṣaf al-Bahr) and the Desert Party (Ṣaf al-Fawqi). The Italians called the Coastal collaborators “the sottmessi” and the resisting Bedouins “the ribelli”. The Muslim modernist collaborators of the Italians were called mtalyanin (the Italianized) by the mujahidin. In 1930, several heroic shaykhs of the militant wing of the Sanussiyyah declared a total jiḥâd against the Italian occupation. ‘Umar Mukhtar was a leading figure among ghâzîs like Shâli‘ Lataywish, ‘Abd al-Ḥamîd al-‘Abbâr, Saffat and Muḥammad ibn Farwah, Ḥusayn al-Juwâyi, Ibrâhîm al-Fâlîh, Fâdîl al-Mahashash, Qtayt ibn Mûsâ, Yûsuf ibn Rahîl, Khalîl al-Ḥumri, Sharîf al-Maylûd, ‘Abd al-Qâdir Farkash, Fâdîl ibn ‘Umar, Shâli‘ al-‘Awâmî, and Muḥammad ibn Majwah al-Masmari.

‘Umar al-Mukhtâr, the most powerful leader of adwâr was declared by the mujahidin, al-Nâ‘îb al-Āmm of the Sanussi Order. His hit-and-run war against Graziani’s planes and armoured cars never involved more than 700 guerrillas. Each unit of Mukhtar’s mujahidin had a commander or qa‘îmaqâm, a qa‘îd and an intelligence officer. Italian fascist generals waged a very cruel war against the Muslim civilians. Whole clans and oases were concentrated in the cages or “reticolati” of Marsa Susa and Shahhat. “With sickening cruelty general Badoglio ordered Graziani, who had replaced Sici-liani as Vice-Governor of Cyrenaica from 13 March 1930, to follow the caravans without quarter, and they were systematically bombed and machine-gunned to make them abandon food and water”.34 The Italian military courts (tribunale volante) sentenced to death thousands of suspected mujahidin. In spite of Graziani’s policy of genocide, ‘Umar al-Mukhtâr’s men did not surrender. On September 11, 1931, Sidi ‘Umar, pinned down by his horse and seriously wounded, was captured. He was hanged in front of 20,000 Muslim Libyans in Cyrenaica. His murderer, General Graziani died in prison as a war-criminal after the end of World War II. Libya regained independence from the defeated Italy in 1945.

Twenty years after the end of World War II, a new Muslim era began
in Italy. In order to obtain education or job, Muslim students and job-seekers from former Italian colonies (Libya, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia) and the Middle East entered Italian soil and established the first modest places of Islamic worship. The Union of Muslim Students was formed in the city of Peruja, and later the Islamic Centre at Milan. The Muslim students made considerable attempts to protect Muslim immigrants from the devastating effects of westernization and demoralization. Today, the activities of the Islamic movements and Jamā'at Tabligh are so expanded that the Muslim circles operate dozens of mosques in the largest cities throughout Italy. Muslim da'wah workers have translated several books on Islam into Italian. They distribute the copies of the Qurān and audio-cassettes among non-Muslim population. The Muslim Student Union and its fifteen branches are very active in every Italian university campus. Muslims of Italy publish al-Sabil magazine and operate a network of ḥalāl (permitted) food shops in various cities. About 15,000 Muslims live in Milan alone. This city ranks second after Rome politically and first in the Italian industry. The majority of the Muslims in Milan works in handicraft workshops. But there are also Muslim physicians and businessmen. The Islamic Centre of Milan was established in 1976. Da'wah workers from the Islamic Centre (IC) of Milan vigorously propagate Islam to the Italian Christians and non-believers. The Islamic Centre is located in the basement of a building.

The statistics of Muslim population in Italy are as follows:

- Bologna 5000
- Torino 10,000
- Peruja 2000
- Rome 30,000
- Palermo 10,000
- Marsala 50,000

Italy is one of those countries in Europe where the Muslim population is growing rapidly. In 1971, the total population of Italy was 54.134 million including 50,000 Muslims (0.1% of the total population). In 1990, the total population increased to 57.576 million including 700,000 Muslims (0.9% of the total population).35

Although the unemployment rate among the Muslims of Italy is very low, 80% of them hold poorly-paid positions. Included among them are the well-educated and university graduates. They suffer "hidden" discrimination. Many Christian priests and missionaries openly attack Islam in their ceremonies. In spite of the Christian hostility the numbers of the Christians and post-Christians who have converted to Islam are growing daily.
Rosario Pasquini was a typical Italian, who drank wine and smoked fifty cigarettes a day. As a prosperous lawyer in Milan he was tormented by the stressing career. It was twenty years ago. Today, fifty-years old Pasquini does not drink or smoke and calls himself Rabdumullah. He is now editor of *Il Messaggero del'Islam* (The Messenger of Islam), eight-page newspaper for the Italian Muslim readers. There are estimated 5000-7000 Muslim Italians, who rejected Christianity or atheism. “Every day, people come in wanting to know more about Islam and process of conversion. Yesterday it was one, today there were two. They came from all over, from different classes and backgrounds, and they all have different reason for doing it.” Said Pasquini to western reporter Clare Pedrick. Italians who have decided to accept Islam include engineers, artists, intellectuals, students, Catholic priests and even a nun. Their final decision has almost always been accompanied by the rejection of western way of life and consumerism. There is a large number of crypto-Muslims, mostly school students, who have converted in secret scared by the reaction of Christian parents.36

Pasquini himself is a lucky believer, he received support from his own family. Like many European Muslims, Pasquini learned Qur'anic Arabic and now teaches the Qur'an to the neophytes. He cooperates with Jordanian-born director of the Milan Islamic Centre, Ali Abu Shwaima. His wife is also Italian convert to Islam, she changed her name from Paola Moretti to Khadija and wears the veil.

Guisepina, now Fatima, was a Catholic nun, studying theology and living in a convent in Modena. She began reading the Holy Qur'an, and found the Eternal Truth. After a difficult period of soul-searching, she renounced her vows and whole-heartedly embraced Islam. Today, she is married to a fellow Italian Muslim Omar (former Franco) Leccessi. He is a forty-two years old artist from Naples.37 In Rome, the number of newly converted Italians is estimated to be between 300 and 400. Since the last spring they have started prayers in their own magnificent Djamia Masjid with seventeen domes, which accommodates 2000 worshippers at a time. The Mosque of Rome was designed by Italian architect Paolo Portoghesi and Syrian architect Sami Mussawi. The land on the pine-clad hills of picturesque Monte Antenne, one of the most beautiful areas of Rome, was donated by the City Council. Islam has reached the city of the crusading popes. The road to Makkah has opened for the Muslim Italians.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In the medieval chronicles of the Osmanli Caliphate frequently appears a name of the Christian city: Kyzyyl-Alma (the Red Apple). The name was probably derived from an appearance of the copper-clad dome on a huge cathedral. The city of legendary “Kyzyyl Alma” was an ultimate goal of Jihad, and its conquest would mark the end of Christianity and the final victory of Islam over the kuffar. Historians identified the Red Apple City with the Old Rome. Constantinople (Istanbul) was declared “the New Rome” by Orthodox Greek Church. The Russian Pan-Slavic Christians described Moscow as “the Third and Final Rome”.

2. In CE 846 during the reign of Caliph Wathiq, the Muslim Arab troops sacked Rome and damaged the Vatican. They destroyed Venetian fleet. Earlier, between CE 720—732, the Muslim settlers penetrated Sardina and Southern France. In 827, the Muslims settled down in Sicily and Southern Italy.


10. Ibid. p. 86.


17. Ahmad, Islamic Sicily, pp. 76—81.


23. Jerusalem, the city of the First Qiblah, was liberated on October 2, 1187, by Ghazi Salah al-Din Ayyubi after inflicting crushing defeat on 25,000 Christian crusaders of the Hospitaller and the Templar Orders led by Raymond of Tripoli and Reynold of Chatillon in the Battle
of Hitit (June 30, 1187). Salah al-Din's 16,000 light-armoured troops captured or killed 10,000 crusaders. Salah al-Din personally beheaded Reynold of Chatillon, who had murdered hundreds of hajj pilgrims on their way to Makkah. In liberated al-Quds (Jerusalem), victorious Muslims threw down from the dome of Al-Sakhra Mosque a huge cross installed by Templars after the Christian conquest of the city. To avenge the loss of Jerusalem, Richard, the Lion Hearted, Anglo-Saxon king-crusader personally massacred 3000 Muslim hostages and civilians in the port of Acre (see Bahá’ al-Din Yaruf ibn Shaddád, al-Nawdúr al-suldtaniyyah wa’l Malakhí al-Yarufiyyah. English tran. W. Conder, The Life of Saladin (London, 1897), p. 11.

Salah al-Din's sons and later Ayyubids lost the political control over Jerusalem due to their diplomatic failures and internal unrest. In 1264, Jerusalem was totally liberated from the Crusader's yoke (see Ibn al-Abir, al-Kalam, XI, in; F. Gabrieli, Arab Historians of the Crusades, ed. Dorset (New York, 1989), pp. 115–131.

24. Ibn Wasi (1207–1298), the Muslim Arab explorer of Italy noted in his travel book: "Near the place where I lived there was a city called Lucera, the inhabitants are all Muslims of Sicilian origin. The Friday prayer is observed there and the Muslim religion openly professed. This has been so since the time of Manfred's father, the Emperor... Manfred began to build a house of science there, for the cultivation of all branches of speculative sciences. I found that most of his intimates, who attend to his personal affairs, are Muslims, and in his camp the call to prayer and the prayer itself are open and public... The pope excommunicated Manfred because of his sympathy for the Muslims." (Ibn Wakiš, Muľarrir al-kuršūf fi Akh Narri Bani Ayyub, ed. M. Rable, Cairo, 1979), chapter 4, pp. 246–249.


King Roger II's courtier, the apostate Philip of al-Mahdiyyah, the chamberlain and admiral, who in 1153 was accused of secretly remaining faithful Muslim, and of praying near "the tomb of Magumethi" (Muhammad, Mahommed?), was burned alive at stake together with his associates (Romanu s Salernitani chronicon, ed. C.A. Garufi (1914–1935), in RIS 7, 1: 234–236. And M. Amari, Biblioteca Arabo-Sicule, vol. 1, pp. 479–480. Ibn Jubayr reported about a desperate Muslim Sicilian, who attempted to marry his young daughter to a passenger leaving for a Muslim country, and to protect her from apostasy (Ibn Jubayr, Riyalah, pp. 357–360). Norman ruler of Sicily, Roger II endeavoured at the end of his life to convert "Saracens by all methods". (See D. Schack, Die Araber im Reich Roger II, Berlin, 1969, p. 149. In 1199, the Pope Innocent III called for severe punishment against "baptized Saracens, who reverted to their old religion of Islam". (See B. Z. Kedar, Crusade and Mission. European Approaches toward the Muslims, Princeton University Press, 1988, p. 52).

26. Tursun, The History of Mehmed the Conqueror, ed. and tran. H. Inalcik and R. Murphy (Minneapolis-Chicago, 1978), p. 156. Tursun wrote in his chronicle: "In the year 884 [H]. Gedik Ahmed Pasha sailed with a mighty fleet to the peninsula of Apulia. Arriving there, with help of Allah Merciful, and concern of the sultan, the shadow of God, he stormed the fortress of Apulia which resembles the fortress of Constantinople. He conquered much territory. The temples of idols become mosques of Islam and the five-fold prayer which is the watch call of Muhammed upon him be peace, was sounded." Ibid. p. 156.
33. Ibid. p. 133.
34. Ibid. pp. 190–199.
37. Ibid. p. 82.
THE ALGERIAN PERSPECTIVES:
ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

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Considered separately, the two concepts do not pose any problem. Each has its own trail in the events that mark our era. But, together, they pose the problem of the implicit relationship that one establishes between the two by uniting them in the very title of this exposition. One is obliged, therefore, to proceed to their respective identification to see how far there exists, or does not exist, any relationship between the two.

Hence, we must ask: (1) What is Islam? and (2) What is democracy? Here we are confronted with a preliminary verification: each of these two terms, according to a general linguistic rule, must have been a neologism at a given moment. We know quite precisely the date of the appearance of the term 'Islam' in the Arabic language. It certainly dates from the Qur'anic era since the Qur'ân textually attributes the formation of the term 'Musulmân' to the oracle of ancestor Abraham who would designate under this term the future followers of the religion of his descendant, Muhammad. By contrast, the history of the term 'Democracy' as a neologism of the Arabic language, is less well-known. In any case, it is evident that it belongs to the modern era since it was not known to the Arabic language till Ibn Khaldûn. The very morphology of the word attests that it does not belong to it.

However, if one goes back to its genealogy in its parent language, Greek, one would find it mentioned for the first time in an address of Pericles to the Athenians—at least, if one counts on Thucydides, the historian of ancient Greek civilisation. This initial linguistic identification of the two terms permits us to judge, on the whole, the distances that apparently exist between them, that is to say, in the final analysis, between the two concepts that they represent.

Besides, when a term is so charged with history, as is the case with
the two terms in question, it is normal that there should be a certain ambiguity, giving them a polyvalent character. In such a case, one is obliged to fix one's choice on a precise meaning, in order to remove this ambiguity. Islam and democracy indicate, each on its side, too many things at the same time. One must reduce them to their simplest expression for making the rapprochement that could be effected between the two following such a simplification.

What is democracy in its simplest expression? In this instance, a dictionary of the French language would indicate to us the etymological sense of the word. The latter denotes "the power of the population" or as one terms it today, of the masses.

On the other hand, what is Islam in its simplest expression? One cannot, surely, answer the question better than by borrowing the response made by the Prophet himself when it was posed to him, in circumstances transmitted to us in a celebrated hadith related by the highest authorities on tradition—Muslim,⁴ Tirmidhi,⁵ Imām Aḥmad⁶ and Bukhārī⁷—with certain variations. Here is the text of the hadith as related by Abū Hurayrah:⁸

One day the Prophet was with certain persons when a man came to him and inquired: "What is faith?" The Prophet answered: "Faith is that you believe in God, in His angels, in your return to Him, in His Messengers, and that you believe in Life after Death." The man said: "What is Islam?" the Prophet replied: "Islam consists in that you believe in God without associating (anything) with Him, that you offer the prayers, that you pay the obligatory tithe (zakāh), that you fast during the month of Ramāḍān.

We shall leave aside the rest of the hadith that does not directly concern our subject.

So, we are now in possession of the most authoritative answer to the question posed above: Islam is exclusive faith in God, practice of the prayers, payment of zakāh and the observance of the fasts.

There we have, all things considered, the two elements of the problem. It remains to be seen if a rapprochement could be made between the two after this systematic simplification. In its simplified sense, Islam clearly designates an ensemble of the ‘duties’ of the individual, while the term democracy designates an ensemble of his ‘rights’, apparently leading to an antithesis, where one term seems the negation of the other, a negation that expressed itself, besides, in the French Revolution by the celebrated device: neither God, nor master.
There is then a certain difficulty in bringing the terms closer to each other. However, it does not result from their respective content but from the manner of expressing it. We had, in fact, chosen the literal meaning of democracy, that is to say, that corresponding to the common sense of a simple dictionary, inevitably inspired by the French democratic tradition and of a neologism which was itself the linguistic product of that tradition in the Arabic language. As a matter of fact, we should make an attempt to define democracy, independently of all linguistic formulations and all *à priori* relationship between it and any concept whatsoever, such as Islam.

One must try to consider democracy according to an ontological plan. For that, one must establish the framework of its generalities. In such a framework whose legitimacy would become apparent by the sequel of this paper, democracy must be considered from a triple point of view:

(a) As a sentiment towards oneself.

(b) As a sentiment towards the other.

(c) As an ensemble of political and social conditions necessary for the formation and development of such sentiments in the individual.

It is, in fact, evident that democracy cannot realise itself as a political fact, for example, as a 'the power of the masses', if it is not first stamped on his 'ME', on the structure of his personality, if it does not exist in society as an ensemble of conventions, habits, customs and traditions. It is within this framework of generalities, it seems to me, that the problem is found to be posed with the greatest clarity.

The democratic sentiment is not inherent in any moral and social conditions, whatsoever. Contrary to what the romantic philosophy of the era of J.J. Rousseau thought, democracy is not inherent in the natural order. It is the outcome of a culture, the crowning of a humanism, that is to say, of a certain valuation of man, on his personal level as well as the level of others. The democratic sentiment is the result of this double valuation.

In his history of Europe dating from the end of Roman empire to the French Revolution, Guizot allows us to follow precisely the process of democratization and the formation of the democratic consciousness in Europe. This historian who shows us how at once remote and modest are the origins of Western democracy, shows us, at the same time, how slowly this democratic sentiment that would finally burst forth in the famous declaration of the rights of man and of citizen, the mystical and political crowning
of the French Revolution, took shape. Besides, it is this consciousness still in a confused state, that already found expression in the two great movements,—the Reformation and the Renaissance, the first two affirmations of the European man on the plane of the spirit and on that of art and reason. To be sure, in this lesson of European history that Guizot gives us, the sociological facts are marked and enveloped by facts peculiar to the Western society, like the Reformation or the Renaissance. But the intrinsic reality of the democratic sentiment, even though somewhat masked, here, by European factors that cannot be repeated in the history of other races, appears, nevertheless, under this cover when the facts are no longer expressed in terms of history or politics, but, in terms of psychology and sociology.

The democratic consciousness in Europe was the normal culmination of double cultural currents, the outcome of a liberation of spirit by the Reformation and of reason and taste by the Renaissance. There lies its historical significance, that is to say, the significance which is not transposable outside the European history.

But in every process of democratisation, in or outside Europe, the democratic sentiment is a certain psychological limit, below which appears the sentiment of the slave and above which appears that of the despot. The free man—the citizen of a democracy—is an affirmation between these two negations. That is the intrinsic reality to which one can refer any process of democratisation whatsoever. And it fits into two other realities which border it and in some manner constitute its 'negatives' as one save at the photographer's, that is to say, the negation of the 'me' at the slave's and of the 'other' at the despot's.

The process of democratisation must eliminate all these anti-democratic tendencies by reducing in the one, the propensities to servility, and in the other, the propensities towards despotism. Robespierre is the man who had vanquished the nature of the serf, and Mirabeau is the man who had vanquished the prejudices of his caste, in the same historical context, the outcome of the Reformation and the Renaissance. But the 'negatives' of the democratic sentiments do not disappear spontaneously. History and literature swarm with them. And it may not be futile for our exposition to furnish two among them: the psychological image of a slave and that of a despot.

In The Man Who Laughs of Victor Hugo, the advice that the character, Ursus, gives to Gwynplaine, is the advice of a slave.

There is in fact, one rule for the great: to do nothing; and one rule for the small: to say nothing. The poor has but one friend, the silence.
He must pronounce only one syllable: yes. To confess and to consent, is the only right he enjoys. Yes, to the judge, yes to the king. The great, if it pleases them, bestow on us blows of stick. I have received them. It is their prerogative and they do not lose any of their greatness in breaking our bones.

One sees that for Ursus the best course of action is to agree and say, 'yes' to everything. But we see how the 'yes' in his mouth expresses the 'negation' of himself, that is to say, the negation of the very foundation of democracy in the human being. One can also find a portrait of the despot. It can be found in the Qurʾān itself, in the celebrated dialogue of the Pharaoh and Moses. The former poses the question: "And who is your Lord, O Moses?" And Moses replies: "Our Lord is He who hath given to everything its form and then guideth it aright" (20:49–50).

We see how the question is that of a despot anxious for his prerogatives. The scene that follows brings out in relief this aspect of the despot. The latter, in fact, organises a sort of magic championship for confounding his adversary to whom he throws the challenge of his magicians assembled on an appointed day. However, vanquished by the power of the Prophet, "the magicians fell prostrate and said: 'We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses.' " But the Pharaoh says: "Believe ye in him ere I give you leave? He, in sooth, is your Master who hath taught you magic. I will therefore cut off your hands and feet on opposite sides and I will crucify you on the trunks of the palm, and assuredly shall ye learn which of us is severest in punishing and who is the more abiding" (20:70–71).

We need not pursue this quotation much further, for we have seen how perfectly Pharaoh expresses the sentiments of the despot as his anger rises to a crescendo. Here, it is not the negation of oneself that finds expression, but of the others. Anyhow, it is a negation of the democratic foundation in another direction.

One could find, sometimes, the two negations combined in a single episode. The history of Imperial Russia furnishes us with such a case. It was, I believe, Tsar Alexander who wishing to prove his absolute authority over the Russian people to a Western guest, beckoned with his finger a soldier posted as a sentinel on the terrace around a fortress, overlooking an abyss. This gesture sufficed for the soldier to hurl himself immediately into the abyss below. In this scene, we find both the despot and the slave, that is to say, a double negation of the democratic sentiment.

One could cite quite a few other examples of this sort, as that of the master of Assassins (The Old Man of the Mountain) Ḥasan al-Ṣabbāḥ who
dealt with his disciples as a despot does with his slaves. At his bidding, the disciples threw themselves into a moral abyss, without a moment's hesitation.

We have, anyhow, traced above an adequate framework of generalities to which it is possible to refer our proposed subject as to a general criteria. So talking of democracy in Islam is, after all, to make sure that there exists in Islam a source for the three elements of the problem listed above. In other words, one must ask if Islam can augment the sentiment towards oneself and towards others compatible with the foundation of democracy in the psychology of the individual, and if it can create the general social conditions favourable to the maintenance and development, as well as the efficacy, of the democratic sentiment.

Consequently, before answering the question whether Islam produces the democratic sentiment, it is necessary to ask at first if Islam effectively reduces the sum and compass of the negative sentiments, the anti-democratic tendencies that manifest themselves equally in the despot's and in the slave's.

It is necessary, therefore, to consider every enterprise of democratisation and, above all, its origin, as an enterprise of education on the level of an entire population, and on a general plane—psychological, moral, social and political. Hence, democracy is not, according to an etymological definition of the word, a simple transfer of power to the masses, to a people proclaimed 'sovereign' by virtue of a constitutional text. Besides, the text itself could make default, or nearly so, in a country, or it could be abolished by a despot seizing power, without causing democracy to lose its foundation in the sentiments, usages and conventions that assure its perpetuation in the country. In England, it is not a constitutional text—text being relatively non-existent—which guarantees the rights and liberties of the English people, but the long British democratic tradition, that is to say in the final analysis, the British spirit itself.

Democratisation is not, therefore, a simple transmission of power between two parties, for example, between a king and a people, but the formation of sentiments, reflexes and criteria that constitute the foundations of a democracy in the consciousness and traditions of a people. A democratic constitution is, in general, the result of an enterprise of democratisation. It is the authentic expression of a democracy only insofar as it precedes the enterprise of democratisation. One can, thereby, perceive the superficial character of the constitutional borrowings currently being made by young countries wishing to build a new order, from countries of old democratic tradition. Such borrowings are perhaps necessary, but they are certainly insufficient, if they are not accompanied by proper measures to infuse them in the psychology of the people borrowing them.
Howsoever that may be, if there exists a democratic Islamic tradition, it must not be sought in the letter of a constitutional text, strictly speaking, but rather in the spirit of Islam, in a general manner. In particular, from the point of view concerning us, Islam must not be considered as a constitution which proclaims a people sovereign, nor as a declaration enumerating the rights and liberties of this people, but as the start of an enterprise of democratisation, that is to say, a takeoff of the individual and of the society, wherein the enterprise constitutes a part, towards the realisation of the democratic ideal. The march towards this ideal being moulded, oriented and regulated only by the sentiments whose germs would have been deposited in the Muslim consciousness in the form of general principles. It is essential, above all, to consider this movement at its initial moment, to consider the conditions wherein the enterprise of democratisation commences, because these conditions would mark all its subsequent results.

Now, at its beginning, every enterprise of this sort is, first and above all, a new valuation of man. From the very origin, various types of the democratic system are already established. One talks today of democracy in the West, just as one talks of it in the countries of the East, and also in China where one calls it the 'new democracy'. The French Revolution had made man 'the citizen'; it is a valuation. The Russian Revolution made him 'the comrade'; it is another valuation. One is, more or less, plainly in the presence of democratic types or versions that differ among themselves essentially by a certain signification of man that precisely marks the start of the enterprise of democratisation from its very origin.

It is this signification, or, more precisely, this initial valuation of man which marks from the outset the efficacy of the enterprise in relation to the anti-democratic tendencies that manifest themselves at the slave's or at the despot's. Consequently, this initial valuation of man constitutes a criterion of discrimination among the various democratic types that have been realised across history—from the Athenian type, three thousand years ago, to the type being realised in China, at the moment.

But, when one considers all this variety, with the exclusion of the Islamic type and in comparison with it, it constitutes, in fact, the same species because it valuates man either as a citizen to whom one grants certain rights, or, as an element in a society that accords him certain social guarantees. Islam, on the other hand, straightway invests the man with a value that transcends all political and social value. It is God Himself that accords him this value in the Qur'ān: "We have honoured the man", says, in fact, a verse (17:70) that constitutes a sort of preamble to an Islamic constitution, a preamble that gives to this constitution a character absent from all other democratic types.
The Islamic democratic concept sees in man the presence of God, while the other concepts see in him the presence of humanity and of society. On the one hand, one has a sacred type of democracy, on the other, a secular type.

The difference is not in the terms but in what they actually signify on the plane of the sentiments of the human being towards himself and towards the others. The man who carries the honour of God, feels this honour in his own weight and in the weight of others. His value and the value of others are incommensurable in keeping with this title to honour that neutralises in him all the negative sentiments. Moreover, his path is, as if, bordered by two parapets that prevent him from falling in the abyss of the slave, on the one side, and in that of the despot, on the other. These are expressly marked by two verses that point out to him the two abysses.

In the following verse, it is said, in fact: "We have reserved the eternal abode for those who are not tempted by the spirit of domination. . ." (28:83). As seen above, it is a barrier placed on the side of despotism, while the following verses clearly designate the other barrier.

The angels, when they took the souls of those who had been unjust to their own weal, demanded; "What hath been your state?" They said: "We were the weak ones of the earth." They replied: "Was not God's earth broad enough for ye to flee away in?" These! their home shall be Hell and what an evil resort! Except the men, women and children who were not able through their weakness to find the means (of escape) and were not guided on their way. These haply God will forgive: for God is Forgiving, Gracious. (4:97–99)

It is the other barrier that prevents man from falling in the condition of abasement referred to by the verses cited above.

Consequently, the Muslim is protected against anti-democratic tendencies, that could be found in his being, by the sacred honour that God has placed in his human nature and by the indications provided on his way, to prevent him from deviating from the path, and, as a man, from falling in the rut of the despot or that of the slave.

The consciousness of this honour which he possesses in a general manner in his quality as a man, is reinforced, moreover, by a particular honour that devolves upon him in his quality as a believer: "And glory belongs unto God and His Apostle and unto the Believers" (63:8). And the word 'glory' in this verse designates moral superiority and not temporal glamour.
Hence the negative sentiments that could drag the Muslim to the fall on the one side or the other, are dominated in him by the contrary sentiments whereof the germs have been deposited in his nature in his quality as a Muslim. Thus, to begin with, democracy is grounded in his consciousness with this new valuation of himself and of others that reveals the high signification of the man.

The expression ‘new democracy’ being applied in Peoples China, indicates primarily this new valuation and not merely new codes, new factories and new roads.

The Islamic democracy, as has been shown just now, is characterised, in the first place, by the immunisation of man against anti-democratic tendencies. The grant of political rights and social guarantees is one of the consequences thereof. On the contrary, a secular democracy first accords him these rights and these guarantees but without protecting him from being crushed under the weight of coalition of interests, cartels and trusts, or preventing from crushing others under the weight of class dictatorship. It does not eradicate from society the morbid germs that create the slave or the despot.

One sees more clearly, now, the relationship between Islam and Democracy. It was difficult to define it in the preliminaries of this paper when one tried to take the word democracy in its etymological sense, considering the enterprise of democratisation as a simple transfer of power to the people according to the stipulations of a constitution. At the same time, one sees more clearly the error that could be made by an act of borrowing a ready-made constitution, because, in such a case, the entire psychological infrastructure that has just been described, would make default in the enterprise of democratisation.

So, it is legitimate, now, to talk of ‘democracy in Islam’ or of Islam as a process of democratisation, marked, besides, with significant episodes. Abû Dhar al-Ghiffârî who was the most typical illustration of the transformation of a primitive society into a democratic society, furnishes us with a moving example.

One day, in Madinah, he had an altercation with a black man—perhaps with none other than Bilâl. He humiliated the latter with a word that referred to the colour of his skin. The Prophet, who was not far from the scene, witnessed the altercation and heard the humiliating remark. He reprimanded his disciple who immediately threw himself in the dust at the feet of Bilâl, imploring him to trample on his neck with his bare feet.

Another well-known episode concerns the son of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ,
the powerful governor of Egypt and illustrious Muslim general. During the pilgrimage, an Egyptian of coptic origin lightly brushed against the son of this powerful personage around the Ka'bah. The son of 'Amr ibn al-'As violently thrust aside the converted Copt, adding: "Keep thy distance; thou jostles the son of the nobles." The incident took place during the caliphate of 'Umar and the matter came to the knowledge of the Caliph who summoned the son of his governor, and before the crowd at the Ka'bah, ordered the Copt to strike him, saying, by way of a judgment: "That is how one treats the son of the nobles."

However, one must now ask how democracy, thus defined in the domain of consciousness and sentiments, is implemented externally in the domain of facts—in individual and public acts and in the functioning of institutions. One must ask, in particular, if it can assure the individuals political rights and social guarantees. Because, democracy is a two-faceted system. It must be, simultaneously, political and social. The system that accords to the individual a ballot-paper while letting him starve to death is not a democratic order.

It is another aspect of the question, and objection would doubtless be raised that one should look for necessary justifications of an Islamic democratic order in the present of the Muslim world. However, such an objection is justified superficially only. For, while studying, for example, the Athenian democracy, one does not seek its justification in the present of the Greek people. However, this does not signify that the contemporary Greek citizen, or the Muslim, is cut off from his respective democratic traditions. It is by no means a point of derogation to consider democracy in Islam in the period when this Muslim tradition was being constituted, during the life of the Prophet and under the first four caliphs, rather than in the period wherein the Muslim tradition found itself in a more or less fossilised state, as it is today in a general manner.

If one adopts the doctrinal point of view of the scholars of Islam, the enterprise of democratization launched by Islam would have lasted forty years. During this period the psychological infrastructure, that has just been singled out as the subjective foundation of the Islamic democracy, was completed, besides, by new premises reinforcing this foundation.

One of these premises must be mentioned because it completes the valuation of man on a capital point that concerns the position of the slave in Islam. As we know, the Athenian democracy had totally ignored this problem, viewing it merely from a utilitarian angle—the slave forming a part of the economic organisation—none dreamt in Athens of posing a principle of emancipation. But, this principle is forcefully posed in Islam.
The premises that complete the valuation of man fallen into the state of slavery, whether emanating from the Qur'ān itself or from the traditions of the Prophet, constitute, in fact, a legislation for the progressive abolition of slavery. We shall enumerate a certain number of these premises.

The Qur'ān says of the free man, in order to recall strictly to him, his duty with regard to the slave:

Yet he attempted not the steep;
And who shall teach thee what the steep is,
It is to ransom the captive. . . . (90:11-13)

Another verse thus defines the objective of charity:

But alms are only (to be given) to the poor and the needy . . . and for freeing the slave. . . . (9:60)

The same emancipating intention is expressed in the tradition of the Prophet: “He who frees a slave”, said he, “God would set free from hell one of his limbs for each limb of the slave freed.”

Another tradition thus recalls to the Muslims the lot of the slaves:

They are your brothers whom God has placed under your hand; you must feed them from what you eat yourselves and clothe them from what you wear yourselves. . . .

In another hadīth, the Prophet said:

My friend, the angel Gabriel, recommended me to be gentle towards the slave, so much so, that I believed that no man should fall into servitude, nor be submitted (against his will) to any labour.

There is, then, an ensemble of premises that complete the valuation of man, taking into account the position of the slave in a manner to guarantee to the latter, if not immediate emancipation, at least a vocation for emancipation.

Finally, the Prophet recalled this principle of democratisation at the Last Pilgrimage, in an address that was, at the same time, his spiritual testament and a declaration of the rights of man:

O men! you have the same God and the same father. You are all descended from Adam! And Adam was fashioned out of clay. Verily,
in the sight of God, the most honoured amongst you is the one who is most God-fearing. There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab and for a non-Arabs over an Arab in the sight of God, except in the fear of God.

This address completes, as seen, the doctrine of man put at the basis of the enterprise of Islamic democratisation. But this doctrine must have certain visible consequences in the temporal order—in the acts of the individuals and the rights and guarantees that he enjoys; in the acts of power, its prerogatives and limitations, as well as in the manner whereof it is constituted; that is to say, in a word, in all the characteristics of a democracy.

These results are, certainly, more evident in the gestation of the constitutional period which lasted till the battle of Šiffin, and appear, as may be conceived, most clearly in the gestures of men who animate this period of democratisation. It is in the temporal order that the efficacy of the principles, at the same time as their limitations, appears compatible with the demands of this temporal order. The extent and the limits of the principles appeared in this period of democratic formation. Here is a principle that bases the authority of the rulers on the obedience of the governed: “O ye who believe! Obey God and obey the Apostle and those among you invested with authority; and if in aught ye differ, bring it before God and the Apostle” (4:59).

As we see, it is a verse that indicates the prerogatives of power. But the very same day when Caliph 'Umar would be invested with this power, he himself formulates thereof the limits in his address of investiture. “Anyone among you”, he told the crowd that had just invested him, “who finds in me any deviation whatsoever, must fight against it.”

But, the event offers us, at the same time, the occasion to see how the notion of obedience presented itself to the consciousness of a Muslim in this crowd that listened to the khaliṣfah. When the latter uttered the words that have just been reported, the man who was listening to him, replied, in fact: “If we see in you a deviation, we shall redress it with our swords.”

Thus, the power and the obedience are limited, respectively, in the consciousness of the simple citizen and of the statesman by the same considerations. One sees already the efficacy of the parapets placed on the two sides of the path followed by Muslim democracy, to prevent the man from falling in despotism or in bondage.

Likewise, individual liberties are guaranteed by certain general principles. Liberty of conscience is guaranteed by this verse: “Let there be no
compulsion in religion. Now is the right way made distinct from error” (2:256). Freedom of work and of movement is guaranteed by another verse: “Traverse then its (the earth’s) broad sides, and eat of what He hath provided” (67:15). Freedom of expression had entered the usages from the very first days of Islam. The Prophet had accustomed his Companions to discuss his decisions. At Badr, the Prophet made the choice of a battle-field that appeared to him best suited from the view of tactical advantage. However, a Companion from the Ansâr was of a contrary opinion and designated another piece of land that seemed to him better suited to advantage in a battle. And the tradition which reports this incident in full detail, tells us that the Prophet came round to the opinion of his Companions. He, thus, left an Islamic tradition, subsequently illustrated by many a great examples.

One notable episode is that concerning the regulation of the dowery of women in the marriage. ‘Umar thought that dowery was too high for the man who must pay it to the woman he wanted to marry, and so should be fixed to a certain amount compatible with the means of each. Consequently, he made a declaration to this effect in the mosque. But a woman among the audience questioned the right of ‘Umar, the Caliph, to take such a measure. She based her contention on a Qur’ânic verse that expressly leaves the amount of the dowery to be fixed by the couple themselves. And the Caliph perceiving the validity of her remark, simply said: “A woman has seen right and ‘Umar is mistaken.” Likewise, the inviolability of home is guaranteed by a Qur’ânic text: “O ye who believe! enter not into other houses than your own, until ye have asked leave and have saluted its inmates” (24:27).

However, this general principle which guarantees the fundamental liberties of the individual is subject to an essential restriction whose spirit has been expressed by the Prophet in the parable of “the boat”. Certain people, says the hadîth, having together boarded a boat, severally occupied a corner therein. Now, one among them began to strike the side of the boat with an axe from his corner. His companions asked him: “What are you doing there?” He replied: “It is my place. I am doing here what appears to me best.” If his companions prevent him, they will be saved and he himself will be saved but if they let him do as he likes, he will perish and they will perish with him.

This essential restriction on the liberty of the individual in certain cases constitute a basis for public right, notably, when society itself forms a party in the acquisition or administration of material property, the right of individual cedes place to society.
But even in this case, the procedure morally and materially tones down, as far as possible, the restriction imposed on the individual. One relates in this regard, the story of 'Umar and the Jewish woman who did not believe it incumbent on her to surrender a premises which happened to fall in the proposed perimeter for the construction of the famous mosque which carries the name of the Caliph in Jerusalem. Since in this case, the act of expropriation could not base itself on the principle of public utility,—the construction of a mosque could not have this character in the eyes of the non-Muslims—one simply left the Jewish woman her property, embedded in the edifice of the Muslim cult.

The Muslim justice is founded on the same valuation of man—as the man carrying in him the honour bestowed by God, whatever his confession. The general principle is stated in the verse: “And when ye judge between men, to judge in full equity” (4:58).

And the visible consequences of this principle clearly appear in the entire gesta of this period of democratisation. Muslim justice rightly takes pride in a historic document left by 'Umar, when he addresses Abū Mūsā al-Ash'ārī (who was the chief Qādi, that is to say, a sort of public prosecutor) an organic circular wherein he gave to the judges certain instructions on the subject of the quality of justice.

You must establish equality between the parties brought before justice, equality in your presence, in the audience and in the judgment, in such a manner that a powerful person does not hope to circumvent you, and a weak one would not despair of your equity.

This recommendation did not remain a dead letter but was fostered and illustrated, besides, by lofty examples preserved in the Islamic gesta during the period wherein the enterprise of democratisation was initiated by Islam.

All these features constitute, in fact, the general characteristics of what one calls a political democracy, that is to say, a system that accords to the individual the necessary guarantees against each and every abuse of power. Islam is such a system even in the manner of conferring power, since the head of the State received his investiture from the people, represented by a Council of Elders, a sort of small Senate that designated the Caliph, in conformity with the precept. The Qur'ān, in more than one verse, recommends to the Prophet himself to consult his companions: “And consult them in the affair” (3:159), he is told, and when it decrees the general principle: “And whose affairs are guided by mutual counsel. . . .” (42:38)
The Muslim power is democratic by its inception and by its action, as we have just seen. Consequently Islam possesses all the characteristics of a political democracy which accords to the individual responsibility in the constitution of power and all the guarantees against its abusive exercise.

But, the experience of political democracy being pursued in the world since the French Revolution, shows how precarious the liberties of the individual are when the latter does not enjoy, simultaneously social guarantees that ensure his material independence. We have seen how in the politically advanced countries the ‘free citizen’ can become, in fact, the anonymous slave of powerful coalescence of interests and how he loses, from this fact, all the advantages theoretically accorded to him by a declaration of rights of man and a constitution, which do not have any visible consequences in his life. And, we have seen in the countries suffering from such an inequilibrium, the birth of class struggle which could end in the institution of a sort of democracy that accords to the citizen the necessary social guarantees, but only to the detriment of his political liberties.

Now, Islam has avoided this danger by providing solutions to the problems of the material life of the individual at the same time as it accords him political liberties. So, in this respect, Islam could be regarded as a synthesis of political democracy and social democracy. The Islamic legislation completes the political characteristics that have just been enumerated by other democratic characteristics relative to the economic aspect.

The work of democratisation in the economic field rests on certain general principles that result in the distribution of wealth, thus preventing its accumulation in certain hands. In decreeing the tithe of zakāh, the Qurʾān laid down the overall foundation of social legislation, before the social ideas that we know today circulated in the world. Describing the necessity of this principle, the Prophet says in a hadith:

God has fixed a part in the wealth of the rich Muslims, a part that is enough for satisfying the needs of the poor Muslims. Because the poor do not suffer hunger, when they are hungry, and do not suffer nudity, when they do not find the wherewithal to cover them, except by the fault of those who are rich.

And this principle, like all the others that have been decreed by the Qurʾān and the hadith, finds its consecration not only in the acts of individuals—because, even in our days, every Muslim feels bound to acquit himself of this obligation—but equally in the acts of power. Its visible consequences appear in the temporal order in the period of democratisation, and the historical record of this period has preserved thereof illustrious examples.
'Umar, having heard a baby crying, and having ascertained that its mother had prematurely weaned it, in order to obtain the allowance that the state accorded to the infants only from their weaning, ordered the public announcement of the following ordinance addressed to the mothers: "Do not haste in weaning your babies; an allowance would be made to them from their birth."

The above ordinance also gives us, incidently, an overall glimpse of the organisation of this official assistance to the infant the like of which cannot be seen in Europe even today—the title of the allocation being made, in fact, not in the name of the infant, but in the name of the mother in advanced European countries where maternity allowance is given. The result is the same, no doubt, but there is, nevertheless, a nuance that merits being noted in the gesta of the period of Islamic democratisation.

One can well admire, without doubt, in this example, the high consciousness that a Muslim head of State had of his obligations vis-à-vis the people. But, in another example, it is the people themselves who manifest a high consciousness of their rights, as we find in the case of a poor woman reproaching 'Umar for her misery. Without knowing that she was, in fact, addressing the Caliph himself, she accused him of neglecting his obligations, though he had undertaken the responsibility for the affairs of the State.

We see there, in fact, under one form or the other, not merely a manifestation of the consciousness of a head of State and the consciousness of a poor woman, but quite simply, a manifestation of the democratic consciousness formed by Islam; and above all, it is the manifestation, whether in the acts of power or in acts of the consciousness of simple individuals, of the fundamental valuation of man that Islam has placed at the base of the entire political, social and moral edifice.

The other principle which regulates the Muslim economic life, is the interdiction of interest. This interdiction has determined all the characteristics of economic organisation in the Muslim world. It has, in fact, straightway stamped it with a democratic character by preventing, from the start, the constitution of the banks. As a result money has not acquired three the over-all power which the banks have ensured for it in countries where interest is practised. As a matter of fact, it is interest that engenders commercial monopolies and industrial trusts—at the level suited to each period—by the intermediary of the banks that realise the concentration of the capital, that is to say, the power of money, on a large scale. Consequently, the prohibition of interest has, by a cascade of effects, linking one to the other, directly prevented the hold of money that has weighed on the national life of the advanced countries to such a degree that certain among them find themselves
obliged to fight against it through revolutions.

So, Muslim legislation has limited this power of the money and avoided its hold on the Muslim economic life, under the form of economic tyranny. Not only does it seek to limit its power in Muslim society, but also, in some sort, its spirit. It has not only fought against the big speculation that causes scarcity of products for raising the price, but against all forms of speculation susceptible of augmenting the course of life in any manner whatsoever.

Each and every sort of intermediary between the producer and consumer hides a form of speculation whereof the latter is the victim. It is economic parasitism. A ḥadith, related by Abū Hurayrah condemns all forms of parasitism:

The Prophet, peace be upon him, has forbidden that a man of the town should offer to sell (instead of a bedouin) a merchandise that the former would have brought to sell himself.

It is evident that the man from the Bādiyah would have sold his merchandise during the course of the day; while, the man from the town who resides there, can temporise for selling at a price more advantageous for himself but, needless to say, less advantageous for the consumer. This sort of parasitism has been condemned.

Likewise, the sale of provisions without immediate guarantees is forbidden because it is pure speculation, condemned by the ḥadith: “Whosoever has bought the provisions must not re-sell until they are (actually) in his possession.”

All these elements that constitute the social aspect of the Muslim democracy have had their visible consequences also in the temporal order, peculiar to the Muslim society and have contributed to its material development, conforming to the double objective of preventing the man from falling in the condition of economic bondage or becoming a despot in the guise of the specre of money.

Thus, in the political as well as in the social domain, the principles on which is founded what one can call, ‘democracy in Islam’, have effectively passed into acts of power as in the behaviour of individuals, at least, during the entire period of democratisation whose chronological limits in Muslim history have been indicated above.

This passage was dictated by the initial valuation of man, which pre-
cisely forms the essential content of the democratic spirit brought by Islam. When Caliph 'Umar had taken and proclaimed the decision relative to the weaning, as we have just noted, he withdrew within himself for a moment for making his self-examination. And from this moment of meditation gushed forth this sublime cry that Islamic *gesta* has noted: “Woe to thee, O, ‘Umar! how many Muslim children hast thou let perish!”

For seizing the true import of this episode, its development must be situated not in the time wherein the act of power was materially worked out, but in the consciousness of a man who already carried in unformulated form the cry of ‘Umar, before it was translated in an act of power that stamped the visible consequence of an internal moral order, in the form of an ordinance.

As a matter of fact, it is a question of the development of the sentiment towards oneself and towards others, whose germ was deposited in the Muslim consciousness under the form of a new valuation of man. The baby still suckling, was not, in the eyes of ‘Umar, the future man and the future ‘citizen’; the great Caliph did not see in this baby the simple presence of humanity and of society, but the presence of its incommensurable value, the value that God had given it even before its birth when He had honoured the man.

It must be recognised that, what one can name in utilising the current terminology, as the democratic spirit of Islam, carries an essentially sacred character. And history has shown the efficacy of principles when they are of this nature.

But it may well be remarked that all the examples chosen for illustrating this exposition have been taken from a period whose chronological limits are confined between the Hijrah (CE 622) and the battle of Siffin (CE 657). But beyond these limits or, at least, after Siffin, what do we have? In particular, are there certain conclusions valid in the present situation of the Muslim world? These two questions are outside the subject-matter of this *exposé*, solely concerned to point out the special character of the period of Islamic democratisation which came to a stop at the end of the elective *khilafah*, following the rupture of Siffin.

This rupture that prevented the enterprise of democratisation from continuing, did not, however, efface its results in the temporal work inaugurated by Islam. Its consequences have remained visible for a long time in the behaviour of the individual and, at times, in the acts of power.

One can rightly consider the reign of Mu‘āwiyyah as a regression of
the democratic spirit. But, if in this regression, the despot already reappears in the man incarnating power, the slave still did not reappear in the man when he simply reflected the Islamic spirit. As can be seen from the curious dialogue that took place, one day, between Mu'āwiya who was then building the palace of al-Khidrā in Damascus, and Abū Dhar al-Ghifārī who chided the former in extremely vehement terms, hurling at him, notably, this harsh reproach. He said:

Either you are constructing this palace with the money of the Muslims and it is a swindle, or, you are constructing it with your own money and it is pure squandering.

One finds this censure of Muslim consciousness still exerting its pressure on acts of power for a long time. Certain great dynasties like the al-Murādi26 or the al-Mu'āhid27 in North Africa, came into existence as a protest against despotism. This protest which was the final manifestation of the democratic Muslim spirit has yet lasted for centuries.

It has lasted till a new rupture whose date is not exactly known but which certainly coincided with the end of Muslim civilisation, that is to say, precisely when the visible consequences of the initial valuation of man, after having disappeared from the temporal order. In the acts of power, disappeared also from the moral order in the behaviour of the individual.

The democratic spirit ceased to manifest itself in the Muslim world when it lost its foundation in the psychology of the individual, from the moment when the latter definitely lost the sense of his own value and of the value of others. One must remark, in passing, that the Muslim civilisation ceased to exist from that moment, having no longer at its base the value of man. It is perhaps legitimate to believe that it is the fate of every civilisation that loses the sense of the man.

And, now, it is possible, if not to respond to the second question posed since it has been developed in other expositions, to express, at least, an opinion on the future of democracy in the Muslim and Arab countries. There is incontestably a Renaissance of the democratic spirit in these countries. A new enterprise of democratization has begun in certain countries among them, where one can ascertain encouraging results. But, in a general manner, this enterprise will succeed only in so far as it proceeds to a new valuation of man in his very consciousness, in order to put him above the despot and the slave.

Only Islam can re-make this valuation in countries where the social tradition has been formed by the Qur'ānic notion.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. This lecture was originally prepared for the Annual Congress of the Association of Muslim Students in Europe at Hanover. However, due to illness, Malek Bennabi could not personally deliver the lecture, which was subsequently published by the Congress in 1968. The above translation is from the French original as re-published 1989 by the Algerian Ministry of Religious Affairs, Algiers.

2. 'Abd al-Rahmán ibn Khaldún (1332–1406), the great Arab historian and sociologist.

3. Thucydides (c. 480–400 BCE) author of the History of Peloponnesian War.

4. Muhammad ibn Hajjaj (817–875), scholar and traditionalist. His Sahih ranks after Sahih Bukhari as one of the most reliable sources of tradition.

5. Abú 'Isa Muhammad (d. ca. 932), scholar and traditionalist. Compiled Jami' al-Tirmidhi.

6. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (780–855), 'the Imam of Baghdad', celebrated theologian, jurist and traditionalist.

7. Muhammad ibn Ismā'il al-Bukhari (810–870), the renowned scholar and traditionalist. His most notable achievement is Sahih, a meticulous and edited selection of some 3000 traditions with complete isnād.

8. Abū Hurayrah (d. 678), Companion of the Prophet belonging to ahil al-Suffah. A prolific narrator of traditions.


11. The sixteenth century religious movement that freed parts of Europe from allegiance to Rome and gave birth to Protestant churches.

12. The literary, artistic and scientific renewal that took place in Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

13. Maxamilien De Robespierre (1756–1794), French politician and revolutionary. A commoner, he was elected to the Third Estate in 1789 and played a dominating role in the French Revolution.


15. French writer, novelist and poet (1802–1885).


17. Hasan al-Ṣaḥāb (d. 1124), first da'i of the Nizārī Ismā'īlīs at Alamūt.

18. Abū Dār al-Ghiffārī (d. ca. 653), devout Companion of the Prophet, noted for his piety and love of knowledge.

19. Bīlāl ibn Rabāh (d. ca. 642), devoted Companion of the Prophet and the first muṣṭadhdhin (Caller to the Prayers) of Islam.

20. (d. 663).


22. The verse is: “And if ye be desirous to exchange one wife for another, and have given one of them a heap of gold (for dower) take not the least bit of it back” (4:20).

23. Noteable deeds or exploits of a person or a people narrated or recorded in history.


25. 'Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān (d. 680), appointed governor of Syria by 'Umar. Founder of the Umayyad dynasty.


27. Berber dynasty (1147–1269), founded by another Muslim reformer, Muhammad ibn Tumart. Ruled over North Africa and Spain.
ARABIC-TAMIL IN SOUTH INDIA AND SRI LANKA:
LANGUAGE AS MIMICRY

M. M. M. MAHROOF

Arabic-Tamil was, and vestigially is, the kind of Tamil language written in the Arabic script. It was used by the Muslims of Sri Lanka. And was also current in parts of South India. Arabic-Tamil was a part of the language-spectrum of the Muslims of Sri Lanka.

Tamil written in the Arabic script is the standard definition of Arabic-Tamil. This term is also used, somewhat imprecisely, for Tamil written in its own script but containing a large number of loan-words from Arabic, Urdu, Persian and Turkish. In this article, the second definition is subsumed under the former.

The purpose of this article is to sketch some of the mechanics of Arabic-Tamil, its historical role and its societal form and focus.

THE MECHANICS OF ARABIC-TAMIL

The Tamil language is generally considered to be the most ancient and the most intricate of the languages of the Dravidian group to which it belongs. Its phonology is equally convoluted. As with all languages, there are vowel and a consonantal system. The vowels (called in Tamil uir eluthu i.e. life-letters) are paired (short and long), viz. a, aali, iiley, eyylo, oh. The unpaired ones are ai and aw (diphthongal).

Tamil groups its consonants (termed mei eluthu i.e. body-letters) in three divisions; vallinam (hard consonants), mellinam (soft consonants) and idai inam (in-between consonants). Each vowel has a ‘sign’ which attaches itself to the consonants and so ‘generates’ letters. It is the elaborateness of the vowel signs that adds so much to the Tamil script, in complexity and articulation. Every sounded consonant (e.g., ka, ki, ko, ku, kai, kau) has its separate letter. Hence the total range of the Tamil alphabet is 246.
In some ways, the consonant of Tamil is specialized. There are two \( n \) letters (the tongue placed just above the back of the front teeth; and in the next, cacuminal); two \( r \) sounds (the tongue poised on the gums just back of the front teeth; and the other, cacuminal); there are three \( l \) sounds too (one with tongue behind the gums back of the front teeth; the other, cacuminal and the third, almost gurgling.

In addition, Tamil has borrowed immediately from Sanskrit, three letters (for words which are not germane to the Tamil language). These are \( sha \) (as in \textit{Shams}); \( kshi \) (as in \textit{pakshi}); \( sa \) (as in \textit{samarpanam}). The last is important because the native \( sa \) in Tamil cannot be used as the end of words and if it were used, it has to be pronounced as \textit{cha}. Another Sanskritic loan-letter is \( ja \) (as in \textit{jam}). Of course, for indigenous Tamil words, these letters are unnecessary. At any rate, when the alphabet is known, Tamil is easy reading for beginners or advanced users.

The immediate mechanics of Arabic-Tamil consists in adapting the phonology of Tamil to the script and hence the phonology of Arabic. However, Arabic script and phonology have developed, naturally, on different lines. There is \( k \) and \( q \) (of which sounds only \( k \) is known to Tamil). The range of \( t, d \) sounds is equally unfamiliar to Tamil. At least, eight letters in Arabic have descenders; Tamil has fewer, such as \( tha \), two \( r \) sounds, and one \( l \) sound; but unfortunately all Tamil consonants with vowel sign \( u \) have descenders.

In discussing the work of a French Arabist, H.K. Sherwani wrote:

Then there is a profusion of dots which are the only means by which we can differentiate certain letters from one another. The \( i'dib \) find a place sometimes above and sometimes below the words which they help to pronounce. Although the Arabic script occupies a smaller space lengthwise compared to the Latin or Roman script, taken breadthwise the space taken up is more than double that script . . . . [The author of the book reviewed goes on to say] the shape of most of the letters changes according as they are isolated, initial, medial or final, with the result that for just 28 letters the standard Amiriyah Press has as many as 470 characters.

This brings out the difficulties of adjusting the script of Arabic to a language which depends on precise ‘pointing’.

The practitioners of Arabic-Tamil took steps to accommodate Arabic script to the requirements of Tamil phonology. These could be summarised schematically.
The diphthongs of Tamil (non-existent in Arabic script) *ai*, *aw* were written synthetically, e.g. *aw* by *aliph* and *waw*.

The Tamil consonants (non-existent in Arabic), as *sa*, *nga*, *ta*, *pa*, *nna*, *rra*, *nja* were produced by modifying Arabic letters. For instance the Arabic *j* with two additional dots became the Tamil *cha*; the Tamil *ta* was the Arabic *d* with a dot below; a dot under the Arabic *f* made it the Tamil *pa*.

By these means, seven letters were added to the Arabic alphabet of twenty-eight letters.

The graphemes in Tamil and Arabic could not be completely matched in all cases, however. This is because in Tamil, in accordance with an auditory convention, certain combination of letters are softened in speech. e.g, *kaakam* (Tamil for 'crow') becomes when spoken *kaaham*. Hence in Arabic-Tamil, this convention was adhered to.

Unlike in normal Arabic writing, letters could not be piled on top of one another nor telescoped but had to be spaced out. Else, the profusion of diacritical marks, not to speak of the dots, would make the Arabic-Tamil script unreadable.

Arabic-Tamil had to be in bold writing for legibility.

As I have written elsewhere:

. . . the differences between short and long vowels are vital in Tamil; mostly due to the presence of vowel in every word because variations of meaning follow from variations in vowel-placement (for instance *kathir* is crop or grain; *kuthir* is 'broken-down wall'). Writing such a language in Arabic script needed many modifications. The specialties of Arabic such as the trilateral noun; the variety of stem verbs and vowels determined by cadence are unknown to Tamil. Arabic-Tamil writers adopted certain modifications in Arabic orthography. . . . The upshot of this whole exercise was that a page of Arabic-Tamil looks at best, complicated; and at worst, hopelessly cluttered. (Reading Arabic-Tamil gives a curious, nervous feeling as, say, reading English in Cyrillic script.)

A case could have been made for Arabic-Tamil if, for instance, Tamil did not have a script of its own or the rest of the users of that language could be induced to take over the Arabic script. Lacking neither situation, Arabic-Tamil in Sri Lanka and South India became, in course of time, subject to several sociolinguistic pressures which sapped its vitality.
ARABIC-TAMIL: RATIONALE AND LOCALE

A dominant motive for the invention of Arabic-Tamil was the traditional belief of the Muslims of Sri Lanka and South India. The oral tradition says that some Muslims of peninsular Arabia were dissatisfied with the policies of (the Caliph) ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān in the eighth century and they decided to leave that land. Wrote a nineteenth-century authority who had access to the minds of the people with long memories.

[The Muslim refugees] proceeding from the Euphrates southward made settlements in the Concan, in the southern parts of the peninsula of India, on the island of Ceylon and at Malacca. The division of them which came to Ceylon formed considerable settlements along the north-east, north and the western coasts of that island, one at Trincomalée, one at Jaffna, one at Mantota, one at Manar, one at Cooromallee, one at Puttalam, one at Colombo, one at Barbery and one at Point-de-Galle. All these places still have concentrations of Muslims. Even modern official documents endorse this view. The Superintendent of Census and Director of Statistics, writing in 1922, while discussing the Muslims of Sri Lanka, said:

During this period, the Arab or Moor traders—from whom the Ceylon Moors of to-day are said to be descended—increased greatly in number and importance and Colombo appears to have become their chief trade centre. That he is a part of the Arab Diaspora is a powerful inducement for the average Muslim of Sri Lanka to have recourse to the Arabic language in Arabic-Tamil, however vestigial its role and function in current practice.

The societal role of the Arabic language was equally intense in South India (in the former Madras Presidency with epicentres in the Ramnad, Tinnevely, Madurai and Tanjore localities). Several reasons have been noted. One authority writes:

In the south, the social relations between the Arabs and the Indians were cordial and friendly, different from that of Sindh and Multan and the peoples of north-western India. In the south, the Arabs settled as merchants, travellers and seamen while in the north, they were military conquerors with political authority. . . . An important factor which contributed to the development of good relations in the south was the policy of tolerance of the native rulers of the southern and
coastal regions towards the Arab settlers.\textsuperscript{13}

A survey of available evidence shows that Muslims (i.e. Arab settlers and their progeny) were established in South India by the time of the rise of Islam in the Arabian mainland. It is recorded that the graves (tombs) of Damīm al-Anṣārī and Abū Waqqāṣ, Companions of Muḥammad (peace be upon him) are found in Tamil Nadu (south India).\textsuperscript{14} It is also stated that an Arab missionary and scholar, al-Ḥājj ‘Abd Allāh ibn Anwar came to Trichi, when the Cholas were in power and he built a mosque there in CE 738.\textsuperscript{15}

On certain occasions, a new dimension was given to the Muslim presence in South India. One such occasion was in the twelfth century. In 1182, Sayyid Ibrāhīm from Arabia arrived in Cannanore (on west coast of South India) with his retinue and came over to (the present) Tamil Nadu. Sayyid Ibrāhīm was forced to fight with the ruling Pāndyan princes of South India. He was victorious, and making Powthira Mān̄ikkapatanam (Melai Pattanam) his capital, he ruled over the eastern coast of South India for twelve years.\textsuperscript{16}

It is possible then to surmise that the Muslim presence in South India by that time was firm, regular and well-established. The invention, the acceptance and the growth of Arabic-Tamil should be assessed not only in terms of historical events but also as a dynamic relationship between itself and the Tamil language proper. Such an analysis would apportion Arabic-Tamil into three phases.

Phase I: Beginnings and growth.  
Phase II: Maturity.  
Phase III: Decline and marginalization.

Since the locus of Arabic-Tamil was co-extensive with Tamil language and literature, an attempt at analysis of the scope and societal role of Tamil language and literature seems necessary.

Just as in the case of many Asian languages, the study of the Tamil language and, inevitably, of its literature, was an elitist exercise. Right up to modern times schools, even primary schools, were never thick on the ground. The incidence of caste system made schooling unnecessary for a large number of people.\textsuperscript{17} Those who took to schooling, generally, learnt under a single teacher (the \textit{gurukula} system). The gifted boy (it was hardly ever a girl) of the right social connections went up the educational ladder by shifting from one expert teacher to another, till he became an expert teacher himself.
Then, there was no strict barrier between teaching and literary creativity. Education meant the careful elucidation of grammatical texts and literary classics. Scholars of Tamil language, throughout the centuries, have cultivated, analysed and documented Tamil grammar assiduously. And as the study of Tamil grammar involved a mastery of prosody; every scholar was ipso facto a poet.

Tamil has always insisted on the meticulous following of established procedures of its poetic modes, of which it has an endless variety. By the tenth century, the mode of the kapyam (the classical epic in Tamil) was established in literary circles. The kapyam is the poetic celebration in detail of a chosen hero, a paragon of courage and virtue along with descriptions of his country, city, birth and heroic deeds. Kapyam which follow the above rules without the slightest deviation are classed as Perum kapyam (great epics) and are five in numbers Chinta mani; Chilappatikaram, Manimekalai, Valayapati, and Kunoealakesi. Kapyam which lack any of the set descriptions are termed chiru kapyam (lesser epics). These, too, are five in number viz. Chulamani, Yasodarakavyam, Udayanakumarakavyam, Neelakesi, and Nagakumarakavyam.

The modalities of these kapyam are probably derived from Sanskrit originals. An important book on prosody in Tamil, popular from the Middle Ages onwards, is the Thandy Alankaram composed by the Tamil poet, Thandy, as a direct translation from the Sanskrit work on prosody, Kavyadharsha. Tamil prosody continued to proliferate in its literary modes, based on the type of (poetic) meter, stanza formation, subject-matter and celebratory occasion. These literary modes (styled prabandam in Tamil) became ninety-six in number. Certain modes became popular in certain times. In the period between the fourteenth and the eighteenth centuries, the literary modes much in use were parani, ulaa, kalambakam, pillai thamil, nanmani malai, mummani kovai, and thuthu.

The elitist nature of the themes in pastoral poetry matched that of the kapyam. There was the noble-born hero and the equally noble-born heroine. These poems treated with the theme of departing of the hero for the wars or on employment, the resulting pining away of the heroine and the final return of the hero. The poetry was basically of the upper-classes for the upper classes.

The modes of publication were, likewise, selective. After composing the poem or epic, probably the author or others would copy it down, working ola leaves. Later there was the arangetram, where the poet would publicly declaim it in the presence of his peers and the nobility (a princeling or prince). If none present could fault it, the poem was accorded acceptance.
Since the assembly was convened by the ruling prince or princeling, the successful poet would receive substantial gifts. It was part of the duties of rulers to support and encourage literary efforts. The technology of those days did not afford the possibilities of mass publication. Hence, if the poetic work was one of declared merit, it survived in a few copies or in the form of oral transmission. If it was an indifferent work, it sank into obscurity and disappeared.

There were two elements which dented the hermetically sealed atmosphere of the medieval Tamil literary world. One was the oral repetition by the few educated (i.e. schooled) ones to formal or informal assemblies or gatherings of those not literate. The second element was the existence of folk literature, never written, never conforming to the rules of prosody. This folk literature took the form of occupational songs such as those of fishermen, carters, and those grinding rice. Some of these were ballad-like in nature—robust, earthy but poetic because of the intensity of the human experience underlying it. One variety of statement and refrain is called themmanku. Speaking of medieval English ballads, M.J.C. Hodgart wrote:

A ballad is a narrative song which bears the stamp of folklore. . . . They are impersonal in their attitude, and there is little comment or moralizing. They are free from the rhetorical devices of most ‘learned’ poetry but possess a rhetoric of their own . . . and a stylized description of heroes and heroines—all this in common with folk-literature of other kinds and of other peoples. Their special narrative technique carries a folk-view of life, an ironic acceptance of tragedy, and a rich background of popular myth. . . . The result is often poetry of a high order. This is also true of the folk poetry, ballads, in Tamil.

It is in this environment of an elitist literature, of elitist control of Tamil grammar, that Arabic-Tamil had its origins.

ARABIC-TAMIL: THE FIRST PHASE

It is plausible to hold the view that Arabic-Tamil was found out or rather invented as a matter of necessity. When Arabic-speaking ship masters, seamen and traders came to South India, they would have had to make records of their commercial transactions. By necessity, names of commercial goods, locations, names of persons, articles of food, clothing, would be in the local language (in this case, Tamil) recorded by Arabic-speakers in Arabic with some modifications. Hence, it would be the nouns of the local language which would be written down in Arabic. In course of time, common verbs and common sentence patterns would be transcribed in Arabic, too.
first, each individual Arabic-speaker would do the transliteration on his own. But in course of time, this coding of Tamil words in Arabic would become standardized. Thus a common Arabo-Tamil script emerges.

Another powerful element is at work here. All Muslim activities concerned with religion involve the use of Arabic language and the use of Arabic material (whether in the form of Holy Qur‘an, the Hadith or other respected works). Hence, in such places as the mosques, madrasahs, it was convenient to use local language material written in Arabic.

Another notable place of Arabic-Tamil was in the funerary sphere. Sometimes it became necessary to note the name and other details of the dead person on his tombstone; some of these details could be comprehensible only in the phonology of the local language (Tamil). It has been stated that a tombstone in Arabic-Tamil dated H 137 (corresponding to CE 755) had been found in a mosque in Galle (an important city in south Sri Lanka). It is probable that the use of Arabic-Tamil on tombstones pre-dates its other uses.

Another was personal use. The keeping of diary entries, commercial information, notes and messages to one’s commercial partners and employees, notices in front of mosques, personal invitations and private letters were some uses to which Arabic-Tamil easily lent itself. In all these uses, an element of secrecy (the refusal to transfer information to the ‘other-group’) exists.

Other uses of Arabic-Tamil such as translation of the Holy Qur‘an and the Hadith literature; prose and poetic works; dictionaries and thesauri, were specialized processes, which called for a prior decision on the precise role of Arabic-Tamil.

The period from the eighth to the eleventh century might be thought of as the formative period of Arabic-Tamil, for it was in the latter period that the first available Islamic Tamil literary work was written. That is the *Palchanda Maalai* of which at present only eight verses are extant. *Palchanda Maalai* “must have been a literary work of repute dealing with love themes”. It was composed before the twelfth century. As its title *maalai* indicates, it is written in a classical Tamil literary mode, meticulously following the appropriate prosodic pattern.

During the three centuries after the eighth century, the practitioners of Arabic-Tamil (in South India and Sri Lanka) had the following theoretical options.
(a) They could have siphoned off the vocabulary of native Tamil words, except for key verbs and particles. Thus the language would be mainly Arabic underpinned with a Tamil grammar. It would be a symbiotic language with an Arabic (Semitic) word-stock on a skeletal Tamil (Dravidian) grammar frame. A similar process, it seems, has taken place in the case of Urdu. Theoretically speaking, Urdu might be looked upon as a jettisoning of most Sanskritic words in favour of Turko-Perso-Arabic words, while retaining an eroded Sanskritic grammar (itself a 'softening' of Vedic grammar).\textsuperscript{33} Though Persian and Sanskrit belong to Indo-Aryan Proto-Aryan language stock, their respective phonologies are disparate enough for them to sound different.

(b) The practitioners of Arabic-Tamil could go further. In addition, they could have pruned verb proliferation in Tamil. For instance, the Tamil verb in the present tense has nine different forms, depending on person and number. This pruning will be in accordance with Arabic practice. There is a precedent in Sri Lanka, in the case of the Sinhala (Sinhalese) language. A modern grammarian writes:

The verb in colloquial Sinhalese considerably differs from that in the literary language. Generally we can say that it is simplified. . . . In the Present tense, for both the numbers and all the three persons, the form in-\textsuperscript{\textacute'\texthypertarget{a} \texthypertarget{\textdagger}}\textsuperscript{\textquoteright-anava', 'inava', 'enava' is used.\textsuperscript{34}

(c) On the other hand, the practitioners of Arabic-Tamil could keep the study of Arabic separate from the study of Tamil. And yet, they could acclimatise Tamil letters to cater for Muslim needs by incorporating new letters (by modifying extant Tamil letters) for sounds unknown to Tamil such as $b$, $f$, $g$, $z$. It is needed even today. For instance, ‘Pakistan’, ‘Baluchistan’ and ‘Farukabad’ are written in Tamil as ‘Pakisthan’, ‘Paluchistan’ and ‘Paarookapath’ respectively.

(d) The Arabic-Tamil practitioners could write Tamil in the Arabic script by modifying some Arabic letters to accommodate sounds non-existent in Arabic.

The practitioners of Arabic-Tamil chose the last and the most ineffective mode. By doing so they developed a sterile discipline, i.e. Arabic-Tamil (actually, Tamil mimicking Arabic) and dismissed the study of Arabic proper (confining it to a reading ability of accented texts). It should be remembered that the study of Tamil did not suffer, keeping in mind that it was an elitist discipline in the upper reaches. Those Muslims who were innately gifted in learning Tamil went up the usual educational ladder, shifting from teacher to teacher and themselves becoming teachers and scholars in due course.
There was total co-operation between the Tamil-speaking Hindus and Tamil-speaking Muslims in this respect. Learning and scholarship were recognised in the world of Tamil letters, whatever the religious or ethnic affiliation of the practitioners. Some Muslims became accomplished scholars, recognised and patronized by the affluent elite. Nonetheless, religious scruples demanded that Muslim scholars and poets confine themselves to Islamic themes.

The basic educational facility of the Muslims of Sri Lanka and South India was the Qur’an school. It had various names: among them were ‘verandah school’, ‘mosque school’, Maktab pallikkoodam (Tamil for ‘school’). Essentially, it was a one-man school where instruction was given in the Qur’anic recitation, Arabic-Tamil reading, some Tamil, and a little Arabic. The pupils were from age five to age fifteen bracket (and in the case of girls, up to puberty). It could not be said that every child in the village came under the net of the Qur’an school. Social status and some financial ability mattered. What was inculcated was the reading of accented Arabic texts. And, of course, every Arabic-Tamil text was accented.

**ARABIC-TAMIL: PHASE II**

The second phase of Arabic-Tamil might be said to last from the end of the fourteenth century up to the first part of the twentieth century. This was the period of growth of Arabic-Tamil in so far as a sterile language could develop.

This phase naturally falls into two divisions: the period up to the mid-nineteenth century and the period thereon to the early twentieth century. The early part of this phase saw the entry of the European powers—mainly the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British—into the Indian Ocean. Subsequently, the Portuguese, by the beginning of the sixteenth century, had headquartered themselves at Goa (in the south of India) and had managed a toe-hold in the west of South India. The later centuries were to ensure the presence of the British East India Company and the French in South India. The Carnatic became the mise-en-scène for the struggle of the British and the French. However, the presence of the poligars in South India in a sort of client-relationship with the British and the sheer inability of the British (or the French) because of the vastness of the region, to hold the people in total subjection, allowed indigenous institutions, including literary activity, to develop.

By the seventeenth century, Muslim poets had established their significance in the literary milieu of Tamil. Apart from Palchanda Maalai,
which reference has been made earlier, other literary work of those times have stood the test of time. Second in time, are the poems of a scholar and poet who called himself Yakoob Chittar, who flourished after the twelfth century. Vanna Parimala Pulavar composed a didactic poem called “Aayiram Masala” (thousand queries) or “Athisaya Puranam” (Wonderous story), probably in 1572. Alim Pulavar wrote the poem, “Mikurasu Maslaa” celebrating the Mi’raj of Muhammad (peace be upon him) in the last part of the sixteenth century. A poetical catechism called “thiru nerigathad” (teaching of the right path) was written in 1613 by the poet, Pir Muhammad. The first kapyam written by a Muslim is the “Kanakabisheka Maalai” (the Ode of the Golden Consecration) written in 1648 by the poet Kanakavirayar whose real name was Sheik Naynar. Varisai Muhideen Pulavar wrote the “Sakoon Padaigor” (the Battle of King Sakoon) in 1686.

The crown and flower of Muslim poetic achievement in Tamil is the Seera Puranam, which celebrates in magnificent detail and poetic skill, the life of Muhammad (peace be upon him). Umaro Pulavar, the author of Seera Puranam was born in 1642 in what is now called Ramnad district of Tamil Nadu. Gifted with poetic talent from birth; he later became the court poet of Ettayapuram, held by a princeling. He decided to write a religious poem and so sought the help of Muslim theologians. The Seera Puranam is accepted as a great kapyam. It has three parts; “Viladath Kandam”, “Nubuwath Kandam”; “Hijrath Kandam”. These three parts altogether have ninety-two divisions. Seera Puranam is still a popular and respected work among the Muslims of Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu.

The acknowledged ability of the Muslims in the field of Tamil classical verse (Tamil prose was yet to become respectable) was to depress the role of Arabic-Tamil. There was no impulse to make it a viable language. It was allowed to remain at the level of script. Muslims had become adept at the use of Tamil. Words of Turko-Perso-Arabic origin were, with some modifications, used in Tamil; these changes were to make them less exotic in Tamil. In any case, the Muslim reader of Tamil could (mentally) read p as b or f, as these two latter letters do not exist in the Tamil language. Thus, one reason for the existence of Arabic-Tamil disappeared.

Conditions in Sri Lanka were somewhat different. The country was much smaller and the Muslims were much fewer. The European Powers—the Portuguese and the Dutch—who controlled the littoral of Sri Lanka, were much harsher. The Portuguese and the Dutch looked upon the Muslims of Sri Lanka as their religious opponents and commercial rivals. For instance, one Governor of Dutch Ceylon, Rykloff van Goens ordered his subordinate, the Dissawa of Matara, to register the Muslims of his area and ordered him, not to:
In these circumstances, Muslims of Sri Lanka adopted a low-profile. They, naturally, eschewed all kinds of literary activity, then mainly done in Tamil. Their Qur'ān madrasahs confined themselves to teaching Qur'ānic recitation, Hadith literature, some arithmetic and, perhaps, Arabic-Tamil only. Only in this period and perhaps at no other time in Sri Lanka was the role of Arabic-Tamil so positive and dynamic. It formed a palpable symbol of the identity for the Muslims in Sri Lanka. And since none could read or write it except those Muslims qualified in it (and repeat it to other Muslims), it was an effective instrument of secrecy.

By the first half of the nineteenth century, the British had strengthened their hold on the Indian sub-continent and Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka they had introduced a mono-culture (first, coffee and then tea) export economy which provided some opportunities for the trading sections of the Muslims of Sri Lanka. There was a high level of imports and equally a high level of exports in Sri Lanka.

At that time, however, most Muslims kept themselves aloof from state education, which they thought would be destructive of their culture. They retained their affection for their Qur'ān schools or verandah schools which gave them a basic education in Qur'ānic recitation, some Tamil and some arithmetic. In some verandah schools, there was some Arabic-Tamil as well. Religious teachers took to Arabic-Tamil because it gave them some confidence in a rapidly changing world.

A fillip to Arabic-Tamil was given in the second half of the nineteenth century because of the arrival of Muslim missionaries of South India. They set about helping the establishment of mosques in Sri Lanka, establishing branches of thariq and instructing Muslims in the hinterlands of Sri Lanka. An important personage in this respect was Seyed Mohamed Bin Ahmad Lebbe, popularly known as Mappillai Lebbe Alim. Born in 1817 at Kayalpatinam in Tinneveli district (Tamil Nadu), he arrived in Sri Lanka in 1835. Abandoning the commercial intentions of his visit, he decided on Islamic missionary activities in Sri Lanka. He helped to establish some six mosques in Colombo, about seven in the south of Sri Lanka. He also composed several works on Islamic law and ritual, in Arabic-Tamil. Among these were, Maghānī; Fath al-Dayān; Fath al-Salām; Fath al-Maṭlūn; Ghamāmat al-Sāli-kīn. In his activities, Mappillai Lebbe Alim seems to have the services of
Sheik Abdur Rahman ibn Meeran Lebbe of Colombo, better known as 'Colombo Alim'.

This revival of Arabic-Tamil as a viable vehicle in Sri Lanka appears to have stemmed from two impulses. One was that religious discourses should be written in Arabic-Tamil only. The other was that somehow or other Arabic-Tamil led to the mastery of the Arabic language. This belief was reinforced by the fact that in verandah schools boys who took four years in learning to read accented Arabic did so in the belief that they had had gained some mastery of Arabic. Auxiliary to this belief, was that there should be some known identifying language at hand at the time (1860s) when English was rapidly coming to the fore in Sri Lanka.

Some of the Arabic-Tamil works published during this period were commentaries on the holy Qur'an (tafsir) and didactic works on Islam and its practice. Some of these works were:

1. Work of Sheik Mustapha (vali) of Beruwela (Sri Lanka), Mizan Maalai (1868).
2. Commentary on the Holy Qur'an by Sheik Mustapha (vali), Fatah Rahman fi Tarjuma Tafsir ul Qur'an (Beruwela, 1873).
3. Deen Maalai (Kandy, 1878) by Sheik Mohamed Lebbe Alim (Kasawatte Alim Appa).

As a rule, these works would be read out to a group of people, at home or elsewhere.

Even the Muslim intelligentsia of that time might have played with the idea that Arabic-Tamil could be a viable language. Mohamed Cassim Siddi Lebbe, a prominent advocate of Muslims' entry into special Government schools (learning Arabic and Tamil), was, perhaps, not without such aims. A polymath of dazzling brilliance, he managed to published a grammar of the Arabic language written in Arabic-Tamil. A book of 112 pages, it was published in 1892 and was called Tuhfat al-Nahw.

The central role in the educational progress of the Muslims of Sri Lanka, played by Siddi Lebbe is a matter of common knowledge in Sri Lanka. A textbook read by every school-going child in Sri Lanka says:
M.C. Siddi Lebbe was a Muslim leader who worked for the independence of Sri Lanka [then known as Ceylon]. He was born in Kandy in 1838. He worked in the interest of Muslims in Sri Lanka and was active in education, politics and culture. He founded a number of Muslim schools in Sri Lanka.53

In 1882, following the defeat of the Egyptian patriots in the Battle of Tel el Kefir, the British authorities then in control of Egypt, exiled Col. Orabi el Misri and his supporters to Ceylon.54 Col. Orabi el Misri (generally known as Arabi Pasha in Sri Lanka) had been the leader of the forces arrayed against the British. Arabi Pasha, whose sojourn in Sri Lanka lasted till 1901, was influential in presenting a high-profile of Arabic language in Sri Lanka.55 That glamour, perhaps, rubbed off on Arabic-Tamil, too. However, the Sri Lankan Muslim leaders were more interested in bringing into existence an educated Muslim middle class. Hence, an explicit decision on the role of Arabic-Tamil went by the board.

The situation of Arabic-Tamil in South India was more complex. Towards the mid-nineteenth century, the poligars had been suppressed. The complaisant ones among them had settled down as zamindars and mirazdars. They had considerable disposable income. They could help traditional poets and literary scholars. The British had created an infrastructure for administration and a foundation for Western education. Christian missionary efforts had created a group of young men of education (even with university education). They were interested in up-dating the higher criticism of Tamil. They edited Tamil classics, after consulting several recensions. They wrote histories of Tamil literature; collected biographies of Tamil poets, and compiled Tamil dictionaries. Some of these scholars were from Sri Lanka, mainly the alumni of the Jaffna College of the American Mission (now called, the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India). They included C.Y. Thamotherm Pillai, Carroll Viswanatha Pillai, A. Muthathamby Pillai, There were also men of traditional scholarship such as Kumaraswamy Pulavar, Sabapathy Navalar, Kanaka sunderam Pillai.

At the same time, the traditional Hindu temporalities in South India became active in supporting literary scholarship. The atheadams (math or Hindu religious fraternities) of Dharmapuram, Thiruvavuduthurai, Thirupalnthal were among those dominant in this field. Meenakshi sundaram Pillai of Madurai, an important Tamil grammarian of the last quarter of the nineteenth century and his pupil, U. V. Swaminatha Aiyer who has collated and edited many classical Tamil texts, had been associated with the atheadam of Thiruvavuduthurai.56

The upsurge of Tamil literature (and Tamil scholarship, generally
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Saivite in tone) stimulated the literary activities of the Muslims of South India and Sri Lanka. Though in the mainstream of classical Tamil literature, their religious commitment made them avoid certain themes and certain literary modes. Thus a specific literature of the Muslims was being created.

These years also saw the attempts to provide 'back-bone' for Arabic-Tamil literature through language tools such as lexicography. It is stated that the first Arabic/Arabic-Tamil dictionary was compiled by Moulavi Mohammed Ibrahim of Ramnad District (Tamil Nadu) in 1913.57

During those years (and sometimes, adventitiously, even today) there was a special place for Arabic-Tamil. It was in the field of mowlid, rathb and manaqib literature.58 These terms are used to describe celebratory verses in praise of Muslim saintly persons. Frequently these are composed in Arabic bay forms, alternating with Tamil verses in the (practically) same meter. Sometimes, there were long sections of Tamil prose. Since formerly it was considered injudicious to write Arabic and Tamil side by side or one after another, there appeared to be a rationale for this use. A number of mowlids and qasidas have been composed by Mapillai Lebbe Alim.59

ARABIC-TAMIL: THE THIRD PHASE

By the first quarter of the twentieth century, the situation of Arabic-Tamil in Sri Lanka and South India was on the decline. Economic and social changes were intrusive; they could not be denied. Elementary education was on the uptake largely owing to government efforts.60 The importance of English could not be denied. In the circumstances, learning yet another script (Arabic-Tamil) was not to be thought of, except by those particularly inclined.

On the other hand, publication of books was becoming a costly enterprise. At any rate, circulating a few copies, laboriously written by hand, was no longer the done thing. The audience and the readership had changed. It was no longer viable to print and publish an Arabic-Tamil book.

A famous educationist and Muslim leader of Sri Lanka, Dr A.M.A. Azeez, pointed out sadly the social irrelevance of works written in Arabic-Tamil. While discussing the Fath ul Mistr, a work in Arabic-Tamil written by Sheik Mohamed Lebbe Alim (Kasawatte Alim Appa), he said that none knew that it was based on the Arabic work on the same subject by Sheik Mohamad ibn Mohamed Ilmu Azh and that Kasawatte Appa's work was not noticed even when it was published and that kind of obscurity resulted because of the lack of concern among Sri Lankan Muslims.61 Dr Azeez also mentioned that while he learnt Arabic-Tamil books such as Iratna Muham-
There was another factor at work. Nearly all Muslims learn their Qur’anic recitation at school mainly staffed by indifferent teachers. The child learns by accenting (saying aloud) every syllable in every word.

Evidence exists that this was a temporary measure, till the child could pick up the Arabic alphabet. But later on, the practice was continued right through the child’s scholastic career; it became a pseudo science in itself. It would take two or three years to learn to recite the Holy Qur‘an in this way. This methodology was, of course, a futile approach; and it chained the child to read accented Arabic only.63 Hence reading Arabic-Tamil was yet another hurdle in the educational ‘progress’ of the average Muslim. And so, easily dispensed with. When education in Sri Lanka became ‘free from kindergarten to university’ in the middle 1940s, Arabic-Tamil was still displaced.64

In the 1950s and 1960s, the case for Arabic-Tamil script had become hopeless. Some of its advocates preferred that Muslims should use a large number of Islamic (i.e. Turko-Perso-Arabic) words in their Tamil speech and writing. However, intelligibility to other users of Tamil was a permanent constraint on such use. When Tamil (along with Sinhala) became the medium of instruction in the 1960s, knowledge of Tamil became available to most Muslims; even those who would have preferred English as the medium were denied that option. This meant that the folk Tamil speech of the Muslims of Sri Lanka began to shed Islamic words (as defined above) and took up the correct Tamil equivalents. 65

Nonetheless, in both South India and Sri Lanka, there is the vestigial role to which Arabic-Tamil is now constrained. This can be called, for want of a better term, hagiography. There is also a sub-group of instructive works on Islam, which, however, is vestigial, for Muslims prefer to read works in English or Tamil instead. The following is a list of Arabic-Tamil books which one usually comes across in South India and Sri Lanka.66 Nearly all of them have their exact equivalents in transliterated Tamil.

1. **Tiru mudi Trakina Ḥadīth** (The Story of the Removal of Hair).
2. **Nabi Awathara Ammaanai** (Lyric of Birth of Holy Prophet).
3. **Beevi Mariam (Alaihaissalam) Kissa** (History of Lady Mariam).
4. *Qasas ul Anbiyya* (Narratives of Prophets)
5. *Mihraj Naama* (Ode on the *Mi’rāj*)
9. *Raas ul Ghaus Padaipor* (War Ballad of Raas ul-Ghaus)
10. *Ahkam ul Muslimeen Shafi‘i* (Manual of Shāfi‘i *madhhab*).
13. *Suwarka Neethi* (Laws of Paradise)
14. *Tholukai Adavu Shafi‘i* (Primer of Prayer of Shāfi‘i *madhhab*).
15. As above for Hanafi *madhhab*.
16. *Tholukai Nama* (Discourse on Prayer)
17. *Noor Masala* (One Hundred Questions and Answers)
22. *Abu Shama Kissa* and *Kissa of Kafan Kallan* (Story of Abu Shama and the Story of the Shroud Thief).
24. *Kaliyarukum Kallanaklum nadanda Kissa* (Disputation between the Qazi and the Thief)
In brief, the role of Arabic-Tamil began and ended as Tamil mimicking Arabic.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. It appears that Muslims of the Indian sub-continent had equivalent versions such as Arabic-Malayalam (in Kerala), Arabic-Telugu (in Andhra), Arabic-Bengali (Bengal). The Malys of Sri Lanka, sometimes, wrote Malay in Arabic script. This is called samudul. See, M.M.M. Mahroof, "Malay Language in Sri Lanka: Socio-Mechanics of a Minority Language in its Historical Setting", in Islamic Studies (IIS) (Islamabad, Pakistan), vol. 31, no. 4 (Winter 1992), 463 seq.

2. The Muslims of Sri Lanka are the second largest minority in Sri Lanka. According to the last census (1981), Muslims formed 7.4% of the total population of 14,988,000. For census purpose, at least, Muslims of Sri Lanka are grouped into Moors (descendants of Arab settlers), and Malays (descendants of Malay Indonesian settlers). Moors numbered 1,056,972 and Malays 43,378. For details of Muslims, see M.M.M. Mahroof and M. Azeez, An Ethnological Survey of the Muslims of Sri Lanka (Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1986), pages 262. Maps, Bibl.) Sri Lanka was known till 1972 (when it became a republic) as Ceylon. In this article both terms are used, according to context. All dates are in Common Era.


4. Urdu is commonly known among the Muslims of Sri Lanka as Hindusthani.

5. In Chomskian terms, currently in favour among linguistic circles, the 'seminal' structure of Dravidian languages is the strict OV type with only one finite verb and with non-finite forms in embedded structures. Yet, Tamil (the most intricate of Dravidian languages, insists on the precise choice of verbs; a single sentence can be very long, indeed. Noun phrases coming in front of a determining noun are akin to the 'over-grown adjective' in German. Tense signification in Tamil is temporal strictly; not aspctual as in Arabic. Tamil does not like compound sentences, unlike Arabic which frequently uses connectives such as wa and fa. Hence, learning strategies of Tamil (Dravidian) language and Arabic (Semitic) language call for different techniques. See, Herman Beytham, Praktische Grammatik der Tamilisprache (Leipzig, 1943); Sanford B. Steever (a) "Tamil and the Davidian Languages", in B. Comrie (ed), World's Major Languages (New York, 1987), pp. 725 et seq; (b) Serial Verb formations in Dravidian Languages (Delhi, 1988); R. Caldwell, A Comparative Grammar of the Dravic-
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9. The best account of the traditional Muslim diaspora is that of Sir Alexander Johnston's article in the Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of St. Britain and Ireland, vol. I, 1827, reprinted in I.L.M. Abdul Aziz, Criticism of Mr. K. Kananthan's Ethnology of the Moors... (Colombo, 1955 reprint), p. 52. Sir Alexander was the Chief Justice of Ceylon in early nineteenth century. He was also a student of Muslim affairs and other communities. He was the Sri Lankan version of 'Asiatic Jones', Sir William Jones in India.

10. Of these places, Jaffna is in the extreme north of Sri Lanka. Manar, Mantota, Kudramalai, Puttalai, Colombo, Beruwela, Galle are in descending order on the western sea-board of Sri Lanka. Kudramalai, Beruwela and Galle are the modern terms for Coodramalie, Barberyn and Pint-de-Galle. Trincomalee is on the north-eastern seaboard. See map in M.M.M. Mahroof and M. Azeez, p. 39. Of these today, Colombo, the principal port and harbour and metropolis of Sri Lanka, has the largest concentration of Muslims.


14. M. Mohammed Uwine and P.M. Ajmal Khan, Islamiya Tamil Ikkiya Varalaru (History of Islamic Tamil Literature) (Madurai, India, 1986), vol. I (Beginnings to 1700), p. 15 (All English translations of titles of cited works are by the present writer).

15. Ibid. p. 16.


17. See E. Thurston, Castes and Tribes of Southern India (Madras, 1909), passim.

18. Tulavar Somai Elavarasu in his book Ilakana Varalaru (History of Grammar) (Chidambaram, India, 1963) lists upwards of thirty grammars in Tamil ranging from the fifth century BCE Tholkappiyam to Kuwaii anandam of the nineteenth century. Present-day grammars in Tamil are, of course, numerous.


20. Ibid. p. 160.

21. Ibid. p. 160. The Kanyakadharsha of the Sanskrit grammarian Dandin (fl. 641) gave a 'recipe' for the sargabandhe or maha kavya (great epic) which is exactly similar to the requirements of the Tamil kavyam (A. Berriedale Keith, Classical Sanskrit Literature [Calcutta, 1947], p. 123.


25. The melody and the simple phraseology of the themmanku is always attractive to the ordinary Tamil-speaker. Themmanku has had a revival in Tamil film music from 1975, starting from the village-based Tamil film "Annakili".


27. In Tamil, folk poetry goes by different names. Among these are kiramala padal (village songs), nattu padal (country songs), nadodi padal (minstrelsy).

28. This view is not so far-fetched as it sounds. Upto 1940s, young Englishmen coming out to
Sri Lanka as ‘green-born’ managers of tea plantations (estate superintendents) were given printed brochures of useful sentences in Tamil (that language being the mother tongue of plantation workers). Some of these brochures were called naalaku va (come tomorrow) books; that sentence was the first to be learnt.

32. Ibid. p. 2.
33. The stock of Urdu (Turko-Perso-Arabic) words, other than those specifically involved in Islamic devotions (prayer), in current use among the Muslims of Sri Lanka is about 175. See, list in M.M.M. Mahroof, "Urdu", *I/S* (Summer 1992), pp. 194–198.
40. The Portuguese ruled the littoral of Ceylon from 1505 to 1656; the Dutch from thence to 1796. They were replaced by the British in that year and in 1815, the British annexed the indigenous principality of Kandy and ruled over the entire country. Ceylon gained independence from Britain in 1948. See. H.W. codrington. *A Short History of Ceylon* (London, 1939); S.G. Perera SJ, *History of Ceylon for Schools* (Colombo, 1949), Pt I (Portuguese and Dutch periods); Pt II (British Period).
41. The Portuguese were Roman Catholics; the Dutch, Calvinist Protestants (Dutch Presbyterians). See, M.M.M. Mahroof, “Impact of European-Christian Rule on the Muslims of Sri Lanka: A Socio-Historical Analysis", in *I/S*, vol. 29 no. 4 (Winter 1990), 353 seq.
42. Sophia Pietersz, *Instructions from the Governor-General and the Council of [Dutch] India to the Governor of Ceylon 1655–1665* (trans. and ed. Sophia Pietersz) (Colombo, 1908), p. 63. The Dissawa was the term for a Dutch provincial administrator. Graves meant the boundaries of a township.
43. M.M.M. Mahroof, "Muslim Education in Ceylon 1780–1880”, in *Islamic Culture (IIC)* (Hyderabad, India) vol. xvi, no. 2 (April, 1972), 119 seq.; “Muslim Education in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) 1881–1901”, in *IIC*, vol. xvi, no. 4 (Oct. 1973), 301.
46. Ibid.
48. Colombo Aliim, himself, has written Arabic-Tamil works such as *Mikat ul Aqfal* (see, Kanaka Chenthanathan, *Iluatu Ilaikiya Valarchi* (Development of Literature in Ceylon) (Colombo, 1964) p. 144 (based on the information given by late Mr. A.P.N. Allapichai).
52. Ibid. p. 31.
U.V. Swaminatha Aiyer had discussed the role of *uthhenam* and literary encouragement in his *Maha Vidwan Meenakshi sundaram Pillai avarkalin Charithram* (History of the Learned Meenakshi Sunderam Pillai) (Madras, 1940), two volumes. See also his *En Charitram (My Story)* (Madras, 1947) for his search for old MSS.


The most popular *mowlids* are *Subhana mowlid*, *Kilari mowlid*, *waja Muinuddin mowlid*, *Harari mowlid* and *Sheikh Dawood mowlid*. Some popular *rathib* are *Rathib Muthabwiya*, *Rathib Hadad*, *Rathib Addash*, *Rathi Jadaliya. tahai Fatiha* (celebratory verses on Lady Fatimah), *Badr Shahaba mowlid*, *Rathib Jawfer Sadiq* are equally popular, specially among women.


Some representative Ceylon legislation are, *Town Schools Ordinance* (Ord. no. 5 of 1906). *Rural Schools Ordinance* (Ord. no. 8 of 1907).


Some of these items have been extracted from a catalogue 1862–1963 issued by a principal publishers and printers of Colombo and Madras.

Islam is a universal religion that seeks to restore the condition in which all of humankind testifies to its submission to Allah. To achieve this goal of life on the straight path, Muslims must strive hard (*jihād*) to establish a political order on earth. This obligation is expressed by the Qur'ānic phrase *al'amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa'l-nahy 'an al-munkar* which is loosely translated as "enjoining the good and forbidding the evil" (3:104, 110, 114). This basic obligation of Muslims to pursue what is now popularly known as Islamization is expounded in the theological and legal discourses of Islam.

In *Islam: the Fear and the Hope*, Habib Boulares explores the ways in which the effort to transform the Islamic message into a political programme may turn out to be counterproductive and do damage to the message itself. His preferred term for these efforts is "Islamism" defined as "an action carried out by militant Muslims so that their concept of religion penetrates the state and society" (p. x). The book, as the author claims, is "both a report of actual events and an essay. Islam is its subject and Islamism its province" (p. x). The subject, however, is conceived from a "progressive" Muslim perspective and the province is portrayed through a somewhat narrow-angle lens. In twelve chapters, with eye-catching titles like "The Sword and Destiny", "The Fear of Islam", and "The Shipwrecked Mullarchy", the author surveys "truly the actual situation" in "all the Muslim countries". In covering such wide historical and ideational spectrum, the work ends up being synoptic in some parts and sketchy in others.

Habib Boulares argues that the sudden resurgence of "religiosity" is due to a crisis of values provoked by the technological advances which have assigned man an obsolete place with respect to the matter. He is sympathetic to the idea that the multiple crises of contemporary Muslim society have led the Islamists to the kind of violence which characterizes their views. He notes the signs of disarray and imbalance in the society as well as political intolerance and police brutality perpetrated by the various regimes upon the Muslim activists. Citing these examples, Boulares deduces "a theorem": "all situations of social crisis in Muslim countries are accompanied by religious movements of seditious character. . . . The more they [the despotic
leadership] treat people harshly, the more the revolution swells to the point of explosion" (p. 18). Here Boulares is simply reechoing the classic Western explanation which is based upon the neo-orientalist school of Middle Eastern studies. Muslim scholarship would generally prefer the alternative explanation given by John Esposito which looks at Islam as “a faith in history” and analyses Islamic re-awakening as the product of a dynamic changing process “in which the word of revelation is mediated through human discourse in response to specific socio-historical contexts”.

The greater part of the book is devoted to the examination of the nature of Islam, Islamism and its contemporary development. Boulares laments that the West, engulfed in its self-created image of the Muslim as a swordsman and a fatalist, does not understand Islam and its seductiveness to the Muslim. “Islam”, he explains, “is a faith, an ethos, a cosmogony, a cult, and a way of life” (p. 44). The message Boulares imparts through this explanation is four-fold: that Islam is universal; that the Muslim ethic in its fundamental aspect does not differ from Christian morality; that millions of Muslims cavalierly ignore the Islamic vision of life and have reduced Islam to a soulless skeleton of obligatory prayers; and, finally, that there is necessary flexibility in every aspect of Islamic belief system. “The latitude left to man is so great that one cannot know with precision where it ends” (p. 47).

Boulares has brought together a vast body of material in order to buttress his case for “liberalism”. He is well-informed about the history of Muslim religious and political thinking and examines its development to the present day. However, one must take serious note of the book’s ideological constraints, for these detract from its objectivity and its reliability as a guide to action. Ever conscious of his “socialist and humanist convictions” (p. 88), Boulares works on the premise of the universality of culture as expressed in the West and adopts its definitions of rationality and legitimacy to advocate “protestant reformation” (p. 131) within Islam. His is a call for a “return to the Qur’ān” and the adaptation of its precepts to the needs of “the age of computer and international communications”. His heroes, among the scholars, are the Muslim modernists like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis and, among the politicians, Muammar al-Qadhafi, “who rejected the Sunnah”, and Habib Bourguiba, who never hesitated to use the words “the adaptation to Western ways” (p. 109). His venomous attacks are reserved for the “shipwrecked Mullahs” like Shaykh Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, Sayyid Abul A’lā Mawdudi and Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini.

The Islamists who demand a radical transformation of the contemporary sociopolitical, legal and economic realities of the Muslim world, Boulares argues, do so under the banner of pure Islam. They do not pause to consider
Islam in its historical dimension as interpreted through the centuries by generations of Muslim jurists and thinkers. They present an Islam which is static and lacks the dimension of internal evolution. Boulares concedes that the 'ulamā' had performed a herculean task of keeping the faith alive during the most trying period of Muslim history. Without “these discredited body of men, the small flame that remained lit in the midst of shadows would have been extinguished” (pp. 68–69). Yet, the same ‘ulamā’ are guilty of closing the door of ijtihād. They are bent upon maintaining intact the whole of one’s heritage and thereby withdraw into the sophisms of false justifications. The traditionalism they preach is “hybrid and sectarian” as they appeal to the arguments of the reformists without following the logic of reformism to its culmination and as they cast anathema on others.

Presenting himself as a person committed to the humanist universalism, Boulares has persuaded himself that nothing that the leaders of contemporary Islamic movements ever propagated could merit credit. They are accused of exposing the darker side of the belief; of twisting the meaning of the terms like jihād and qiṣāṣ; and, of circumventing Qur’ānic and Sunnaic texts in order to establish a basis for irrefutable contemporary argument.

Boulares cites carefully selected passages from the works of Muslim personages like Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, and Mawdudi to highlight their lapses. Facts and accounts likely to weaken his verdict are conveniently overlooked or lightly brushed aside. The Jamā‘at and Ikhwān leaders have their lapses and they might have made mistakes, but their writings and activities helped millions of Muslims to affirm their beliefs in a positive and constructive way. They are the source of knowledge and inspiration to many and even those who differed with their methods and movements do not question the value of their contribution. To subject them all to a summary condemnation without reference to the text and the context which made their views possible, leads to a judgement which is one-sided and misleading.

Islamism, to Boulares, is a politicized truth. Their activism is political in its motivation and in the tension that characterizes it. In contradistinction to the Islamists, Boulares proclaims Islam to be a flexible, dynamic system that was and should always be reinterpreted to accommodate the socio-political and economic changes of the age. From this vantage point, allegiance to a territorial state, a unified, complex and modern system of justice and the equality of the sexes are among the features of the Islamic order. What separates Boulares and those of his ilk from the Islamists is that the former desire to work towards a development of the Islamic order through the processes of rational reinterpretation of the general Islamic directives.

Rational reinterpretation is limitless. Boulares appreciates the “in-
comparable faculty of Islamic adaptation” which took place in the Soviet Union (p. 135). There, the number of prayers have been reduced to one or two per day instead of five, the Ramâdân fast has been dispensed with but for the ifâr (the breaking of the fast) at the prescribed hour, and the pilgrimage to Makkah is replaced with visits to the holy places. The purified hearts of the individual believers could not but revolt in disdain against the type of Islamic dynamism Boulare advocates. Boulare demands further that “Muslims, all Muslims, provided that they know how to read”, must have easy access to the Qur’ân and to its interpretation without the benefit of traditionalism. The ‘ulamâ’ would have no quarrel with the knowledgeable pondering over the meaning of the Qur’ân, they would, however, suggest necessary caution. Joining the rat-race will not suit everyone, nor indeed is it desirable.

His most scathing criticism is reserved for those Islamists who back up their interpretation of the faith with force: “khomeinism is to the Shi‘ah what stalinism is to Marxism” (p. 84). Violence is the handmaiden of an impatient minority and the disease of the age. His heartfelt cry is that “the day Islam causes fear will be the day that the religion is finished” (p. 137). This exhibits his unease, as a Muslim, at the presentation or, what he perceives it to be, misrepresentation of Islam in France where he now resides. His fear is that the majority of Muslims will not oppose the vocal and the visible minority of the Islamists. He ends with a rather naive hope that his brand of dynamic Islam, of protestantism within Islam, will eventually prevail.

Islam: The Fear and The Hope may at best be credited for providing a critique of contemporary Islamic movements’ commonplace errors. It is certainly not a cheap polemical tract produced by a semi-literate author but a well-written and cogently argued study. Boulare presents his case with considerable skill and dexterity. The book, however, reads more like yet another sophisticated Western retort to the activities of the contemporary Islamic movements. As an attempt to recast Islamic history and Muslim community’s key symbols and categories in terms of Western rationality and legitimacy, the book will be appreciated by non-Muslims and neo-orientalists.

Abdul Rashid Moten
The origin of the Karaites, a Jewish sect characterized primarily by its denial of the talmudic-rabbinical tradition, continues to be shrouded in mystery. According to Martin Cohen, the reasons for this are the paucity of evidence required to reconstruct their history, the ingrained prejudice (against the movement) harboured by various Jewish scholars reared in the Rabbanite tradition, and the failure of most Jewish historians to treat Karaism in its total historical context. The tremendous efforts made by scholars like Leon Nemoy, on the other hand, do reflect sincere efforts to arrive at the truth and to uncover the history of this sect.

A study of the work of “the greatest Karaite mind of the tenth century”, Abū Yusuf Ya'qūb al-Qirkisānī (or al-Karkasānī) (ca CE 937), indicates that though there are some unexplained gaps in the history of the origins of the sect, it is, in fact, the principles of this sect, their legal theory, that have been neglected most. Al-Qirkisānī's work also suggests that the real difference between the Karaites and the Rabbanites lies in their different approaches for the identification and interpretation of sacred texts. While the Rabbanite tradition may be said to use two methods for developing the ḥallakha, the midrashic method and independent reasoning—through takkanot (legislation), and minḥāg (custom)—the Karaites try to stay close to the midrashic method as far as possible. It also appears that the Karaites do not reject the oral law completely, but have their own system for authenticating it.

The major point to note about the methodology of the Karaites as well as that of Rabbanites is that the Karaites wished to stay close to the midrashic method. This method requires that the law be derived directly from the texts through more or less literal methods. This is similar to the method followed in usūl al-fiqh by Muslim jurists. It was emphasised by al-Shāfi‘i, who insisted that the derived law must stay close to the evidence.
The independent reasoning undertaken by Rabbanites would be characterized as personal opinion or ra'y by Muslim scholars. The exercise of personal opinion by the Rabbanites should not be confused with ra'y attributed to the Hanafis. The Hanafi method is based on reasoning from general principles derived from the texts. Under takkanot, the Rabbanites have much more discretion and freedom. Western writers in their attempt to show similarities between Islamic law and Jewish law have stretched the meaning of principles like istihâr and istislah to equate them with legislation undertaken by the Rabbanites through takkanot and minhag. This is incorrect and would amount to a distortion of truth. In any case, the Shâfi'i influence on the methodology of the Karaites is obvious, and can be noticed in al-Qir-kišâni's book.

In this article, the major ideas in al-Qirkišâni's Kišâb al-Anwâr wa'l-Marâqib (The Book of Lights and Watchtowers) concerning the origins of the Karaite movement will first be highlighted. This will be followed by a description of the Karaite principles, as explained by al-Qirkišâni and acknowledged by the later Karaites. The primary source relied upon for this purpose will obviously be al-Qirkisâni's book. A comparison of this book with books on usûl al-fiqh written by Muslim jurists will also be undertaken to show the influence of Islamic law on Karaite thought.

The founder of the Karaite movement is generally considered to be 'Anân Ben David. Cohen lists five sources that contain accounts about 'Anân and his role. The first are the extant fragments of 'Anân's own book Sêfer ha-Mishwot, while the other four are accounts that provide evidence about 'Anân's role in the formation of the movement. The latter four accounts have been translated by Leon Nemoy. Three are Rabbanite while the fourth, by Al-Qirkisâni, is the Karaite account.

The Rabbanite accounts depict 'Anân as a scholar, apparently the son of the Exilarch or at least his nephew, trained in the Rabbanite lore and aspiring to the exilarchate but suspect because of his freethinking. His younger brother Hananiah is preferred over him and he proceeds to establish a secret sect along with "all manner of evil and worthless men from among the remnants of Zadok and Boethus". The sect is discovered and 'Anân is put in jail for treason and is to be hanged. However, he receives advice from a Muslim jurist, who is also in jail, and manages to gain favour with the Gentile government. Cohen says, "[t]he assertion that all this took place within the space of one week appears to be a telescoping common to legends". He also says that when all four accounts are considered "the Karaite text emerges as the calmest and most matter-of-fact. By contrast, all the Rabbanite accounts are intensely polemical", calling 'Anân's followers "heretics, mockers, and despisers of the words of our Rabbis", and cursing...
'Anān with the words “may his name rot”.

Al-Qirkisānī begins the second chapter of his book by briefly introducing the history of the sects or persons who have been guilty of sowing dissension in the Jewish religion and within this is the account of 'Anān. A translation of the entire chapter, except the last few lines, is provided by Leon Nemoy. It is necessary for our purposes to briefly reproduce the substance of this chapter as it throws light on the presumed origins of the Karaites.

The first person mentioned is Jeroboam. This is followed by the names of the Samaritans, the Chiefs of the Community, who were the original Rabbanites. After the Rabbanites there appeared the Sadducees, a sect founded by Zadok and Boethus. Zadok, he says, was the first to expose the errors of the Rabbanites. Then came the Magarians whose books were discovered in a cave. Next there appeared one called Jesus, son of Mary. On the shores of Egypt a sect appeared known as al-Qar‘iyah because they used instruments known as gar’. It was after this that the Rabbanites split into two groups, called the School of Hillel and the School of Shammay. The Rabbanites of Iraq followed the practice of the School of Hillel, while those of Syria followed the School of Shammay. Next there appeared Obadiah, better known as Abū 'Isā al-Iṣfahānī, who considered himself to be a prophet, followed by his pupil Yūdhghān, the Shepherd, who also claimed to be a prophet. “After Yūdhghān appeared 'Anān, the Ra’s al-Jālūt, and this in the days of Abū Ja’far al-Mansūr. He was the first to elaborate the whole truth about the obligations (farā‘īd) and was learned in the opinions of the Rabbanites. There was none among them who could discredit his erudition. . . . The Rabbanites tried to kill him, but God did not enable them to do so.”

These descriptions are followed by very brief accounts of Ismā‘īl al-‘Ukbari, Ben Yāmīn (Benjamin) al-Nahawandī, Mūsā al-Za’farānī also known as Abū 'Imrān al-Ṭiflisī, Malik al-Ramlī, Mishawāyī al-‘Ukbāri, and finally Dāniyāl (Daniel) al-Dāmīghānī, better known as al-Qūmīsī. He observes two facts about 'Anān and all those following him. First, that their followers are very few or almost extinct, and second, that they do not follow analogy or the dictates of systematic reasoning (ma‘qūl, from ‘aql or intellect) in matters of law. He acknowledges that al-Qūmīsī does accept opinions based on reasoning and rational argumentation, yet he denies systematic reasoning and criticises those who practise it. It is important to note here that analogy (qiyyās) is a source of law for the Karaites, as will be explained later.

The most important point to be made about the four accounts of
'Anân and his role in the Karaite movement is that there is no direct evidence linking 'Anân with the Karaites. The accounts provide evidence about 'Anân and not the Karaites. It is true that 'Anân had followers, but al-Qirkisâni points out that very few of these followers are left in his times. Cohen observes that "many deny 'Anân the actual paternity of the movement", and that 'Anân and his followers may be called "'Ananites or proto-Karaites to distinguish them from the later phases of the movement". Cohen also indicates that Ben Meir distinguishes between the 'Ananites and the Karaites, while al-Qirkisâni's work, he says, does not clearly distinguish between the 'Ananites and the Karaites. This appears to be the earlier view of Leon Nemoy also, but later he maintains that:

The name "Karaite" was not applied to the sect until the ninth century; the principal component of the sect was originally known as "Ananites" from the name of its founder. . . . The Karaite sect absorbed both such Jewish sects as the Isawites (adherents of Abû 'Isâ al-Isfahâni) and Yudghanites, who were influenced by East-Islamic tendencies, and small remnants of pre-talmudic Sadducees and Boethusians and similar anti-traditional movements.

The Karaites themselves, however, trace their origin to the first split among the Jewish people, at the time of Jeroboam; the true law had subsequently been preserved by the Sadducees, whose leader, Zadok, had discovered a portion of the truth, while the discovery of the whole truth was the achievement of the exhilarch 'Anân (thus al-Qirkisâni and others).

This statement of Leon Nemoy appears to contradict al-Qirkisâni's own view. He does not appear to link the Karaites with the sects or persons listed. On the contrary, he makes it clear in the beginning that these were the people responsible for sowing seeds of discord among the Jewish people. Nor does he maintain that the truth is present with the Karaites as it had been understood by 'Anân. He is merely implying that 'Anân was correct in many ways in his criticism of the Rabbanites. In fact, he concludes his second chapter with four lines, one of which has been translated by Nemoy while the remaining three have been left out of his translation in Karaite Anthology. In this short statement he compares the position of the Karaites with the all the dissident sects mentioned above. He says:

These are the famous and well-known sects, according to the information reaching us. As for the Qarrâ'în (Karaite) of this period, who are outside (khârîjîn) these sects that we have mentioned, you will not see two of them agreeing upon all things, but one opposes the other in one thing while another opposes another in many things and we will mention some of this in what follows. We now begin with...
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mentioning what is unique to each sect.22

This statement not only dissociates the Karaites from the ‘Ananites, but also contradicts the thesis that the Karaite sect absorbed the other sects or that the Ananites can be considered proto-Karaites. Al-Qirkisâni does mention the decreasing numbers of the other sects, but that does not prove anything. If some of the followers of ‘Anân, or those of al-Qumisry or of someone else for that matter, bolted from their own sect and joined the Karaites, it does not make them proto-Karaites, or the founders of those other sects the founders of the Karaite movement.23

There are other reasons on the basis of which a distinction can be made between the Karaites and the other sects. ‘Anân is accused of denying the oral law completely, at the same time the Karaites are criticised for accepting the oral law on occasions. This raises the question: do the Karaites really deny the oral law completely, like the ‘Ananites, or were they two separate sects, one denying the oral law and the other accepting parts of it? A study of the principles of the Karaites shows that they were ready to accept the oral law if it conformed to certain standards set by them.24

The principles of the Karaites are never discussed in detail and are ignored as principles emerging from, or developed under the influence of, Islamic law. Leon Nemoy relies on Harkavy to say that the philosophical foundations of Karaite jurisprudence are rooted in Muslim fiqh.25 This may be true to some extent, but al-Qirkisâni’s work reveals that this is not so at least in the case of all the principles of interpretation. In the absence of historical data, it is the principles of the Karaites that should be examined, independent of the principles and beliefs of any of the other Jewish sects mentioned above, to note the distinctions between them. We must, therefore, turn to a brief examination of these principles.

We may begin with a statement on the Karaite sources of law by Leon Nemoy. He states that: “[T]he monopoly of the Bible was gradually extended into the three official basic sources of Karaite law: the scriptural text (Hebrew kätûb, Arabic nass), analogy based on it, and the consensus of successive generations of scholars (Hebrew kîbhûs, ‘edâh later sêbel ha-yerûshâh, “burden of inheritance”; Arabic ijmâ‘”), the latter term covering laws which have no direct root in the Bible, but which are not contrary to it or to reason and logic, and have been accepted by scholars after exhaustive study (naṣar, bâhiy).”26

Al-Qirkisâni confirms that the sources of Karaite law are three: nass, that is the written law; qiyyâs, that is analogy (syllogism to be exact); and
*ijmāʿ*, by which he does not mean agreement of the scholars as stated by Nemoy, but authentic and agreed upon *naql* (transmission, tradition) found in the hands of the entire Jewish nation and not a particular group (like the Rabbanites, for example). The form of the principle of *ijmāʿ* described by Nemoy appears to be a norm with a small group and not all the Karaites. This concept of *ijmāʿ* is explicitly rejected by al-Qirkisānī. Al-Qirkisānī devotes the entire fourth and final sections of his book to the discussion of the exegetical principles and to analogy along with the theory of abrogation, the conflict of sources and their reconciliation, and to the art of systematic reasoning. The theory of *ijmāʿ* is discussed in the second section.

The exegetical principles discussed in the fourth section appear to be a combination of the thirteen exegetical principles of Rabbi Ishmael and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*). He devotes a small chapter to each of the thirteen principles. The discussions on the remaining principles of literal interpretation and on *qiyās* (analogy) appear to be exactly similar to those found in books of Islamic jurisprudence, though they are applied to Jewish texts and laws. These would form the basis of a very interesting comparative study. It is the theory of *ijmāʿ*, discussed in the second section, that is of much greater importance and, perhaps, forms the basis of the legal system of the Karaites. It is unique to the Karaites and it would be incorrect to assume that it is similar to the Islamic concept of *ijmāʿ*. Perhaps, it is closer to the concept advocated by the Muslim jurist al-Shāfiʿī, which never struck roots in the classical Islamic legal theory. The generally accepted meaning of *ijmāʿ* according to Muslim jurists is the “agreement of qualified jurists of the Muslim community, in a particular generation, on a matter of law”. Such consensus becomes binding upon the later generations, because it is an agreement on a general principle. It is more or less similar to a general principle laid down by higher courts in modern times, a principle that would be binding on lower courts. Al-Shāfiʿī advocated the consensus of the entire community and not of the jurists alone. It would be useful to explore the concept of *ijmāʿ* as expounded by al-Qirkisānī. The statement of Leon Nemoy can then be compared with it.

Al-Qirkisānī begins his discussion on *ijmāʿ* by saying that:

1. A group of the ‘Ananites and one of the Karaites affirms the use of *ijmāʿ* in different laws and they think that this is one of the means through which one arrives at the knowledge of the ordained (prescriptions). That is, the modes through which it (knowledge) is obtained are three: *naṣṣ, qiyās, and ijmāʿ*, which some call *naql* (transmission). If they are asked about this transmission and consensus, what are its boundaries and form, for we see the Rabbanites arguing (their opinion) on the basis
of consensus and transmission and you oppose them in many of their opinions? They would, then, say that proper consensus is that when all the sects of the Jews—Rabbanites, Ananites, Benjaminites, and others—agree, and are counted sect by sect. Thus, they thought that proper ijmāʾ is that when these sects are entirely in agreement and when they do not agree in this way it is not proper ijmāʾ.

2. Their opponents from among the Rabbanites would say to them: Was it so before the appearance of Ḥānân and Bin Yāmīn? If ijmāʾ has to be a transmitted proof it has to exist before the creation of these sects.

3. A group from among our companions said that transmission and proper consensus is that which is not attributed to a specified group and that for which there is no evidence in the text or analogy, but is in the hands of the nation dictated by way of ijmāʾ alone and not otherwise. If, however, an evidence for it is established in the text or in analogy it is not ijmāʾ. As for their opinion that there should be no evidence for it in the text or in analogy, it is a mistaken opinion.

4. With respect to their opinion that transmission and proper consensus is that which is not attributed to a specified group, but is found in the hands of the entire nation, then, that is a correct opinion. That is like their consensus about the day of Sabbath from among all days, as it is not attributed to a specified group, but has been acquired through transmission and "inheritance" and is in the hands of the entire nation from east to west.

5. Similar to the Sabbath is the transmission and proper ijmāʾ on the authenticity of the Torah and all the books of the Prophets that exist in the hands of the nation from east to west, without dispute and without increase or diminution, they are but a single manuscript.

After mentioning some of the basic issues he continues to give examples of laws that can be found in authentic traditions and constitute a consensus. In the end he distinguishes between that which is transmitted by way of consensus and is found in the "Book" and that which is not found in the Book, but which is not subject to doubt or imperfection. If it cannot be found in the Book but constitutes ijmāʾ in the hands of the nation without
controversy, it has to be acted upon, unless it is by way of a concession for that is not acceptable. He gives some examples of the distinctions drawn.

In this statement al-Qirkisâni discusses three concepts of *ijmâʿ*. The first is the 'Ananite concept, which he rejects. The second is upheld by a small group of the Karaites, and attributed by Nemoy to all Karaites, which he also rejects. The third concept he maintains as correct and as the principle accepted by the Karaites. Through this principle the Karaites not only ratify and justify interpretations of the Bible, but are ready to accept that part of the oral law which is not disputed and which does not lead to concessions against the strict letter of the law. It is, perhaps, for this reason that many rulings of the oral law have been accepted by the Karaites.

*ijmâʿ* (consensus), then, as conceived by al-Qirkisâni, appears to be a means for authenticating the interpretation of the Bible as well as the generally accepted parts of the oral law. It is not a source for the generation of new laws. New laws can be generated through analogy (*qiyyās*) on the existing law and then subjected to the standards of *ijmâʿ*, but for doing this the use of analogy has to be widespread, that is, it must have been undertaken by the entire Jewish nation. It is, perhaps for this reason that al-Qirkisâni maintains in his discussion of analogy that the Rabbanites have been using *qiyyās* even though they did so under a different name.

The complete system of interpretation of the Karaites is, therefore, a system of literal interpretation. Analogy used by them is merely narrow syllogism, which does not provide much flexibility. Such a system ultimately has to fall back on the general purposes of the law for new interpretations. It must have been for this reason that a fourth principle was added by the later Karaites, to the three discussed above. In the fifteenth century Elijah Bâshyazi, improving upon the work of Judah Hadassi, laid down four principles as norms for the determination of the law: (1) the literal meaning of the biblical text (*ketav mishma*); (2) the consensus of the community (*edah, bbuz*); (3) conclusions derived from Scripture by the method of analogy (*ekkesh, qiyyās*); (4) knowledge based on human reason and intelligence. The last principle was not universally accepted by the Karaites. Perhaps it would be if it is expressed in the form of the general purposes of the law. The Rabbanites, on the other hand, maintain that the general purposes are known only to God and difficult to determine.

When the principles of the Karaites are viewed objectively, the importance of their origins recedes into the background and becomes a question of historical importance only. The Karaites, whatever their origin, represent a general trend in the Jewish law, a trend found in all legal systems including modern secular law, of staying close to the letter of the law as far as possible.
It is a system of literal interpretation. As compared to them the law of the Rabbanites can be called judge-made law, which has been developed by jurists over a period of centuries through techniques like takkanot, minhag, etc., in order to maintain its flexibility and adaptiveness. It has been maintained that the law of the Rabbanites contains many Persian practices and that was the reason for the reaction of the Karaites. This, however, does not sound very convincing. Each legal system when it comes into contact with other legal systems has to decide whether to accommodate new practices or to reject them. These new practices are accommodated in the light of the standards of the system and no longer remain foreign. The only reason for the reaction of the Karaites seems to be that the rabbinic law appeared to them to deviate from the original texts and was not conforming to the letter of the law as viewed through the eyes of the literalist.

Karaite thought was clearly influenced by Shafi'iite thinking, just as Jewish manuals of law, called "codes" by modern scholars, were influenced by the work of Muslim jurists, at least in format and the manner of presentation, if not in actual opinions. This, however, is not very important in the opinion of this writer. What is important is that there was a struggle between rationalists and literalists within the Jewish tradition, and this was influenced directly or indirectly by the movement of the Ahl al-Hadith in Islamic law. While the movement of the Ahl al-Hadith was successful and continues to play a major role in the Islamic tradition, the literalist movement led by the Karaites within the Jewish tradition was crushed by the Rabbanites, who often used vicious language to do so. Had the Karaite movement been successful, it would have added to the richness of the Jewish tradition, even if had elements of Islamic law in it. The Karaites took refuge in Muslim lands, and it appears that six thousand of them have now been allowed to live inside Israel.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Martin A. Cohen, "'Anan Ben David and Karaite Origins", Jewish Quarterly Review, 68 (1978), 9. He adds: "This is clearly seen, for example, in the characterization of the Karaites by scholars like Harkavy, Pozanski, and Nemoy, as heretics, apostates, or 'apostate sectarians', which they were, in the eyes of the Rabbanites, but clearly not in their own, and therefore also not to a researcher standing objectively at a remove from the controversy and recognizing that one person's or group's heresy is another's authenticity." Ibid. 9, n. 1 (italics in original).

2. Dr Leon Nemoy is recognised for his important contributions to the understanding of the Karaite movement. His edition of al-Qirkisani's Kitāb al-Anwār wa'l-Manqīb (1939–40), and his Karaite Anthology (1952) earned him a high standing among the students of Karaism. The list of his articles and book-reviews on the subject is very long to be reproduced here. Some of these will be referred to in this paper, but for a complete list see Sheldon R. Brunswick (ed.), "Bibliography of Leon Nemoy", in Studies in Judaica, Karaithica, and Islamica (Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1982), pp. 11–24. In 1947, commenting upon
Dr Raphael Mahler's book on the Karaites, he said, "[A] general reexamination on the whole position of Karaism in Jewish history is long overdue, and that a revision of long-held and generally accepted notions of the origins of Karaism and of the nature of its role in Jewish thought and social structure cannot be long delayed without doing injury to the most precious ideal of history—the attainment of factual truth." Leon Nemoy, "Early Karaism (the Need for a New Approach)", Jewish Quarterly Review, 40 (1950), 307.

3. Leon Nemoy, "Karaite", in Encyclopaedia Judaica, x, 769.

4. Abū Yūnīf Ya‘qūb al-Qirkisānī, Kitāb al-Anwār wa-l-Maṣlah: Code of Karaite Law, ed. Leon Nemoy, 2 vols. in 1 (New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1939–1940). Strange as it may sound, Western scholars including Jewish writers, depict their own books on law as "codes", while they deny the status of codes to books of ʿifḥ or Islamic law. Insofar as codes are documents enforced by the authority of the state, none of these books can be classified as codes. The same can be said of the Code of Maimonides and of the Shulkan Arakh. The book written by al-Qirkisānī is not even a book on substantive law, let alone a code; it is a book written on the pattern of books on ṣult al-ʿifḥ by Muslim jurists. It is surprising that this important book has not been published in a proper form. The only copy I have found was in the University of Michigan Library. This is a copy of the handwritten manuscript, and is somewhat difficult to consult. The book deserves to be published in a more decent manner.


7. Ibid. p. 4.


9. Nemoy, Karaite Anthology, p. 4. Rabbanite propaganda against the Karaites is usually expressed in such vicious language.

10. This Muslim jurist, according to Jewish literature, is said to be Abū Hanīfah, the founder of the Hanafi school. The report is obviously a total fiction.


12. Ibid. p. 135.


15. It may be mentioned here that al-Qirkisānī shows great respect for the Schools of both Hillel and Shammai. This he does in the first chapter, which forms an introduction to his book. Al-Qirkisānī, Kitāb al-Anwār, p. 3.


20. He says: "All this had crystallized itself long before Anan, and the inescapable logical conclusion is that Karaism was really founded not by Anan, but by these early uncouth pioneers, living in an atmosphere of a frontier region and profoundly influenced by the political, social, and economic aspirations and grievances of their Persian fellow-citizens. . . . To describe Anan as the founder of Karaism, even in the most general terms, is therefore not only an uncritical oversimplification, but a matter of direct reversal of solidly documented facts." Nemoy, Early Karaism, pp. 310–11.


23. Cohen is of the opinion that: "All these movements are akin to early Karaism in their deviation from Talmudic Law. Thus they bear eloquent witness to the fact that ideas structurally parallel to those of the Sefer ha-Miṣwot were present in Jewish society long before 'Anan. . . . Such similarities, however, are insufficient to establish a direct influence of the earlier movements upon Karaism. Independent dissident groups originating under the same constitution and possessing similar needs frequently display similar ideological and ritual patterns."
27. Al-Qirkisî, Kitâb al-Anwâr, i, pp. 141–43.
28. Ibid. p. 146.
32. Dorf and Rosett, A Living Tree, p. 204. This principle of the Rabbanites clashes with that of Islamic law, where the purposes of law or the maqâsid al-Shaârî’ah are used for the derivation of laws.
33. This is the view of Zvi Cahn in his book, The Rise of the Karait Sect (New York, 1937).
34. The time in which al-Qirkisî and the sects of his time were active, we see an exactly similar struggle between the rationlists and the literalists. Nemoy says: “[T]he cardinal controversy of rationalism versus literalism raged as violently in Islam as it did in Judaism, and at precisely the same time.” Nemoy, Cahn’s Rise of the Karait Sect, p. 356.