TOWARDS A RENEWAL OF ISLAMIC 
HUMANISM* 
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Statement of the Problem

The countries of Islam are all facing to-day a decisive choice. A fair number of them have achieved their political independence just after the second World War. Others, like Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria, have done so even more recently. But, in our time and civilization, political independence is devoid of substance unless it is sustained and animated by genuine economic independence. Consequently, the problems of social reconstruction (fight against illiteracy, development, industrialization, agrarian reform, etc.) are all so grave and pressing that the state must spend its most precious energies in the search for immediate and efficient results. No doubt, politico-economic independence can be achieved only by means of a revolution (thawrah) which would enable the newly independent countries to utilize all modern techniques. In order to achieve this without falling under new forms of subjection, there is great temptation to recourse to means of power which regard even the spiritual values as subservient to this end.

The advocates of this Islamic awakening (nahdah) which has been in the making since the end of the Nineteenth Century have so far failed to furnish a solution. One may think here of the Egyptian Muhammad Husayn Haykal, of many Salafiyyah reformists as well as of Muḥammad Iqbal, who denounced economic (iqtiṣādi) materialism of modern structures and demanded of the Muslim society of tomorrow to learn to animate the indispensable contributions of technology with spiritual meaning. But this, in fact, is none other than the problem of Islamic humanism, of a new Islamic humanism, which is here being stated.

The lands of Islam have seen many brilliant apogees of humanism in the past. A few examples—among a good number of others—might be cited here. There is above all the classic humanism of the Tenth Century under the ‘Abbāsīs, of the Umayyads in Qurtubah, of the Fātimis of al-Qāhirah and of the

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Aghlabis of Tunis. Before the decline of the great Arabic culture, the torch was carried forward by the Imāmi Shi‘ism of the Šafawīs in the Seventeenth Century in Iran. From the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century, it was raised high in Delhi in the splendour of the Moghul court. Letters, arts and sciences—all these Arab-, Iranian- and Indian-Muslim cultures brought about an irreplaceable contribution to universal culture.

As a matter of fact, these side contributions have been little known. One should wish that they become better known in both the East and the West. Some efforts are being spent in that direction. To mention only a few: the great congresses of Ibn Sīnā in Baghdād and Tehran which gathered together philosophers and men of learning from all cultures. And right now, Baghdād is preparing itself for many more official celebrations of past glories. On the other hand, one of the manifestations of the reconstruction of the Nineteenth-Twentieth Centuries has been, for better or for worse, the massive translation into Arabic of the European works, works more literary than philosophic, and betraying an infatuation as live as that of Baghdād of the Tenth Century was with the science and philosophy of Hellas. There is also a growing amount of translation of classical Islamic works from Arabic and Persian into European languages. The case is no more one of the works of learned Orientalists only, but of works addressed to the learned public. The “gentleman” of the Twentieth Century has no more the right to ignore the names of Ibn Rushd, Ghaẓālī, Ibn ‘Arabi, Ḥāfīz, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī, Kabīr—to mention but the most famous. And yet, all these are but premonitory signs of the culture of Islam. Fortunately, this Muslim humanism of the past has not stopped inviting the modern man of culture to look into its literature and thereby to enrich his mind and thought.

What is extremely desirable to-day is that the appeal of these great works of the past would so extend and intensify itself as to bring about contemporary works. The Arab, Iranian and Urdu literary awakening is undeniable. It would be idle to enumerate the Muslim poets and prose-writers in these languages. But it is necessary to recognize here that the influence of Europe is often dominating. We should welcome the fact that Muslim thought is undergoing some necessary change after its long stagnation, and hope that this is merely a transitory matter, that a more profound originality will soon begin to characterize Muslim growth in the domain of philosophic and religious thought.
The problem may also be stated in other terms. Would the contribution of Muslim lands to this new humanism seeking universal dimensions consist of merely descriptivist works founded upon the common heritage of the age of technology and bound to their particular countries and peoples' psychologies? Or, would it take root in an original thinking which is so not because it seeks new solutions to the problems of the hour but because it does so in fidelity to the real and genuine culture of Islam?

Two Observations on Classical Humanism

It is not at all my intention to mean that the Islamic humanism of to-morrow ought to limit itself to a repetition of the great centuries of the past. We must keep in mind two specific remarks regarding Arab-Islamic and Iranian-Islamic classification. First, it was above all a palace-humanism, a humanism of the court, royal or princely, or perhaps, of the urban élite, in which the people of the towns and villages, often little refined if not illiterate, did not participate. It even seems that this breach between a class which cultivated many luxuries and the people at large, the working masses, was to grow and become more and more acute. At the time of the Umawis, Kitāb al-Aghānī tells us that a Muslim army going from Khurāsān to fight against the Khārijīs, lent itself to disputes and oratorical tournaments designed to decide who was the greater poet—Jarīr or al-Farazdaq. The innate predilection of the Arabs for poetry and eloquence, kept alive the desire for works of the spirit. But inasmuch as Iranian, Greek and Indian influences came to bear upon the intelligentsia, literary and aesthetic culture degenerated into a search for formal and unapproachable beauty; while on the level of thought, the circle in which men were initiated into audacious searches after a wisdom, oft pointed with gnostic colours, were looming ever larger and larger.

So too, in second place, this classical humanism took on really supercilious attitudes towards the Islamic religious sciences. The Umawi' and Abbāsi societies which cultivated these attitudes were far from any strict observance of the Law of Islam. One has but to read over the tendentious but challenging description of Tanūkhī, a Ḥanafī anti-mystic jurist of Baghdad of the Tenth Century, to assure himself of this fact. Such "free-thinkers," in the larger meaning of the term, were not at all rare. This is not to
say, following 'Abd al-Rahmān Badawi, that only those strands of Muslim thought which tended to question the Islamic faith itself, constitute "Arab humanism." For Badawi, "humanism" means "nothing but man," and only those gnostic gropings towards the truth of the perfect man (al-insān al-kāmil) and which aim at a sublime anthropocentrism, deserve the title "Humanist."

This is of course far from the truth. Certainly, there exists another humanism. Islamic influences stirring in the deep and aspirations tinted with Qur'ānic values and traditional references are equally real in Islamic history. In fact, genuine Islamic humanism was much less "separated from religion" than the humanism of Eleventh Century Renaissance in the West, despite the fact that Islamic humanism was continuously opposed by doctors and jurists. The defenders of religious law reproached humanism for providing cover to the moral licence evidenced by the erotic and Bachic themes of an Abu Nuwās, or by the earlier poetry of an Abu'l-'Atāhiyab. Equally, they blamed it for the freedom of thought it has brought about. And there is no overlooking the fact that the grand age of 'Abbāsi humanism, so well illustrated by Jahiz, did go into decline when the reaction of al-Mutawakkil kicked out the Mu'tazilis from the Court of Baghdād. The historic reality of this Islamic humanism stands, therefore, beyond question.

Perhaps, more examples are needed. In the following century, philosophy, so violently combated by the Ḥanbalīs as well as the doctors of 'ilm al-kalām, was protected in the person of Ibn Sīnā by the Amirs of Hamadān and then of Iṣfahān. Later on, when Shahristānī and Ghazzālī directed their attack on philosophy, she was openly challenged by the official organs of public instruction. In the Seventeenth Century, furthermore, in the rigid environment of Sunni-Mālikī Maqrīzī under the Muwahhidūn, it was the Sultan of Qurṭubah who asked Ibn Rushd to write a commentary on Aristotle. The Maqrīzī fuqahā', however, reacted against Ibn Rushd with such vigour that his works were burnt in al-Andalus, and he died in Marrakesh where he was banished.

In their fights against the humanism of the courts, the jurists and doctors of the law made certain, on most occasions, that the students of the large mosques and the artisans and merchants of the sūq were on their side. There is not one instance of the pietist tendencies developing in Iraq under the influence of Ḥanbalī currents. A little later, the Ḥanbalīs were to oppose Şūfism;
though it may not be forgotten that the first great founder of a Ṣūfī brotherhood was none other than the Ḥanbālī doctor ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, or that the famous Ṣūfī Shaykh of Afghanistan, Anṣārī-Harawi, was equally a Ḥanbālī.

As of the Sixteenth Century, while classical humanism was petering out, popular piety took refuge in the brotherhoods (ṭarīqāt) where Ṣūfism was to suffer degeneration and decay. The brilliant cultivation of letters, of the arts and sciences was nowhere to be renewed. On the social level, the relics of the Middle Ages weighed heavily on the daily life of the people. It was thus that the Muslim World remained dangerously outside the discoveries of technology and their implementation. The will to power of a Europe intoxicated by its material conquests did the rest. And when the “reconstruction” of the end of the Nineteenth Century imposed upon the countries of Islam the necessity to acquire the technical achievements of modern civilization, the distance which had by then separated the masses of simple folks, loaded with their tradition and folklore, on the one hand, and the élite desirous of giving Dār al-İslām the place which it deserves in the world, loomed exceedingly large.

In brief, if we are to learn the lesson of history, we must acknowledge that the two internal causes which interrupted the brilliant Arabi- and Iranian-Muslim humanism of the past seem to be firstly the non-participation of the working people, deprived of any riches of the spirit, and secondly, perhaps, the too rapid integration of the ancient Greek and Iranian cultures. This double factor further contributed to separate humanism from the moral and religious values which might have guaranteed its continuity.

**Conditions of Reconstruction**

Contrasted with the achievements and failures of the past, what do the conditions of present-day reconstruction appear to be? That it is no more possible in these days to have any “court or palace culture” separated from the people is evident. The fight against illiteracy and the popularisation of culture continue to be pushed. This is done in a language, namely literary Arabic, which assures to the present the touch of and continuity with the past. The danger in all this, however, remains what I have already mentioned at the beginning, namely, the seeking of a “modern” culture, tending towards indispensable economic liberation and borrowing from the West or from the Marxist countries (them-
selves products of Western Culture) its ideological forces and norms. But an intellectual élite would certainly rely upon the glories of the past and would thereby seek to save the historic memory of Islamic values which dominate them. These glories of the past may be relived in the editing of old texts and learned treatises; but they would have ceased to constitute the dominant element in, or even an element constitutive of, reconstruction. Would this be enough?

It is hoped that the Muslim reader will permit a Christian historian of culture to wish for another prospect. The question can be put in these terms: Do not the Muslim peoples, in the apogees of their faith and religious attitude, have an answer to the new humanistic exigencies of a world-in-technological-revolution? To speak of humanistic exigencies does not at all mean that man constitutes his own end, but that though he may fill the world of today with his realized potentialities, he should remain true to the full content of his destiny which is not "of the world."

For its part, Christian thought has given its answer to such a question in the affirmative. That its answer is not universally dominant in a materialist, de-Christianized West, does not reduce the evidence of the qualitative reconstruction which has been the prerogative of the West for decades. It is the analogous answer of reconstructed Islamic thought that is here looked forward to. The movement of the Salafiyah has been a sort of prelude. It did not know how to command, in at least as far as the Arab countries are concerned, the ears of the young intelligentsia. Perhaps, that is due to the fact that the movement was developing under duress and had to content itself often by taking defensive apologetic attitudes. In fact, it has not gone beyond adopting a number of traditional values to a situation created and constituted from the outside. The polemical writings of Muḥammad ʿAbdūh, the dream-plans of political reorganization of Rashid Riḍā, and some tafsīrs suggested by the old Manār, illustrate the point.

Without anticipating the concrete solutions which the élite of the Muslim countries alone could and should discover and help establish, let us mention a few points about the sort of question which can be fruitfully addressed to that élite. These points will all revolve around certain principles of ʿusūl al-fiqh on the one hand, and around the notion of man which the Islamic faith puts forth on the other.
**An Open Ijtihad**

If the new humanism is not to be a simple luxury of the men of letters, but assume the concrete conditions of the life of the people, it is certain that it must take place under dispositions of the law and reconstruction of the jurisprudence. It was one of the dramas of the Muslim Sunni community (perhaps the major one!) that all liberal renewal in jurisprudence from the Fourth Century of the Hijrah, was arrested. There is no need to repeat here the defence of all "reform" advocates in every period regarding the resumption of personal research, or the opening of the gates of *ijtihād*, into all Islamic texts beginning with the Qur’an and the Sunnah. That is the *leit-motiv* of Ibn Taymiyah, the great Ḥanbali of the Seventh-Fourteenth Century, and one of the recurrent themes of the contemporary Salafiyyah. That such research may not become an anarchical "free-for-all" is obvious. But a methodology of the processes of *ijtihād* is imperative. Such methodology must give us a historical and sociological analysis of *ijtihād*. It must seek to establish an acceptable, functioning organization of *ijmāʿ* or consensus. Here, Rashid Riḍā and Muḥammad Iqbal have each tried his hand but separately. Both have projected models which are not free of modern parliamentarianism from which they adopted many a feature. Moreover, the principle of such reforms, which has been represented as being at the same time a "return to the sources," is widely acknowledged by the modern generations of Muslims.

The young intelligentsia, however, does not meet this reformism but with indifference. For it, what count first are the concrete empirical solutions which enable the country to became a modern nation. And we have oft seen the legal code of a new Muslim state affirm in its preamble a general loyalty to a reconstructed Islamic Law but limit its application in the sequel to the measure necessary for adopting the attitudes of different European codes? The reformist effort does not seem to be therefore, except an attempt to justify, under the banner of widely reinterpreted principles, ulterior solutions inspired by foreign influences. We may recall in this connection the justification of money-lending advocated by Rashid Riḍā. If its reasoning were pursued to its logical end, the real outcome of it was to find a foundation for a capitalist economy under the aegis of Islamic Law. But are such attempts creative? Are they not artificial superpositions of the
kind of outmoded exegesis of Shaykh Ṭanṭāwī who sought to
discover in the Qur'ān the expression, though symbolical, of the
physical doctrines of the day?

It seems that the Muslim past can open up far more promising
avenues of research. But it must first be recognized that the
singular way in which Islam integrates the spiritual with the
temporal (al-Islām dīn wa dawlah) does not necessarily imply
immobility. Historical reality itself has proved this fact. For,
right from the early centuries, the development of the law (fiqh),
or rather, its elaboration, depended upon concrete situations.
Certainly, the first purpose of the doctors of the law was to apply
the principles of the Qur'ān and Sunnah to the new situations of
everyday life. From this point of view, fiqh meant first the act of
personal reflection, and was opposed to 'ilm by which was meant
the descriptive "knowledge" of the texts and of the tradition.
From this emerged the fact that at this early age local non-Islamic
influences began to interfere. So too, prior to its division into
several doctrinal schools, fiqh diversified itself according to regions:
Madinah, 'Irāq, Egypt. The last-named was first related to the
Madīnī school and then struck a new path of its own. To regard
the elaborations of these diverse schools as immutable, as insepar-
able from the Qur'ānic sources, is to go against the facts.

On a more profound level, the required reopening of "the gates
of ijtihād" does not put in question the texts themselves but only
their elucidation (istinbāt). As 'Alī 'Abd al-Rāziq proposed as far
back as 1925, the matter is not one of distinguishing between a
"revealed" part and a "human" part of the Qur'ān, nor, on the
other hand, one of merely getting rid of certain ill-taken
interpretations of Ṭanṭāwī, or of the apologetics of some
Salafiyyah advocates ever recoursing to forced reconciliations of
the Qur'ānic texts with all sorts of desiderata. It is, rather, a
question of arriving at an internal principle of distinction by
thinkers of the intellectual calibre of Ghazālī, "the proof of
Islam," or of Ibn Taymiyyah, the undeservedly less famous Ḥanbālī
thinker. Both these men used to distinguish, in the code of daily
living taught by the Qur'ān, between: First, the beliefs and cultic
laws ('aqā'id, 'ibādāt) which they regarded as inviolable: second,
the ethical principles (ākhārāq) equally inviolable but whose appli-
cation ought to take the existential conditions into account; and
third, the social relations (mu'āmalāt), which are relative to times
and places. There is then a principle enabling us to take up and
deal with the problems of the hour; a principle behind which stand a whole great tradition of Muslim thought.

**Spiritual and Temporal**

In order to understand this principle better, we must emphasize that it does not mean to cut off the spiritual from the temporal after the fashion of modern de-christianized societies. Nor does it imply the traditional hierarchized distinction of Christianity usually associated with the saying, "Render to God that which is God's and to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar," despite the fact that Caesar too belongs to God though from a different aspect. The tripartite distinction proposed by Ibn Taymiyah, with which we have concluded the foregoing paragraph permits the elaboration of progressive social and political philosophies.

In their time, the best traditions of *fiqh* had opened the road. At the turn of the Century, many an Orientalist committed the error of representing a work like Māwardī's *al-Āhkām al-Sultāniyyah*, as if it were the political philosophy (or theology) of Islam. Now, it is a well-known fact that this book is only the judicial rationalization of the social institutions of the ‘Abbāsi period which had become in the days of the author a sort of golden age. The effects of Byzantine administration left in place by the Umawīs as well as those of the autocracy of the "great kings" of Sāsānì Persia, are obvious in this work. If, following the example of Louis Massignon, we may call the political philosophy of Islam a "secular and egalitarian theocracy," it is only in the measure where the basic principles refer to the Qur'ān as a revealed text that we may do so. It should not be forgotten, however, that the Qur'ānic texts which have to do with the constitution of the state are extremely few. One may condense them to three principal tenets: Obedience "to those who exert authority" (Qur'ān, IV: 59) who are thereby instruments of Divine will, for it is to God alone that sovereignty belongs; duty of the chief to consult his subordinates (Qur'ān, III: 159); and the duty of the believers to consult among themselves (Qur'ān, XLII: 38). Rather than being one of the organization of the state, the question is then one of a political ethic. The most diverse forms of government, "depending upon the times and places," may very well be subsumed thereunder.

The same consideration applies to the basic principles of social and economic philosophy. The Qur'ānic texts here concerned are
certainly more numerous. But we can say that they always tend to export the fundamental virtues of fidelity and justice. In the rural sectors of the Islamized countries and in the professional corporations (ṣināf) of the urban centres pre-Islamic or extra-Islamic principles governed the on-going course of life. This does not mean, however, that these sectors had not harvested and integrated many truly Islamic values. They did. And, it was through the reflection of these values on the moral and social role of the ḥisbah, the control of customs and market-places as well as of the Muḥtasib, the trustee and executive of the system, that jurists and theologians delineated the principles of what Henri Laoust had well called the economic ethic of Islam. This ethic consists predominantly in the just price, the just wage, the regulation of individual traders, etc. Laoust had defined it as "communal consciousness (societism—Tr.) and solidarity," by nature opposed to any conception of "war between classes," and guaranteeing to every workman his place in the political community. There still remains the job of sifting in all this legacy, the universally-valid principles from their outgrown applications. Likewise, there is the need to distinguish critically within these applications, those which have fulfilled the said principles and those which have violated them. It is certain, for instance, that the feudalism which established itself in the course of years is utterly out of tune with Islamic values. Rather, it constitutes their very opposite.

The young Muslim states are incessantly engaged with the problems of agrarian reform and urban industrialization, the twofold axis of social and economic evolution. Meanwhile, the old professional morality of the corporations is silently and progressively replaced by that of the modern syndicates. But, may the principles of new solutions not be found in this already-elaborate "economic ethic of Islam?" The logic itself of communalism and solidarity of old, seems to tend towards progressive, socialized, non-Marxist structures, towards a "corporative movement" (al-ḥarakah al-ta'āwuniyyah) which subject private property to collective usufruct.

One may wish here for an enlightened "reformist" school to establish for the Muslim mind that economic development and independence do not in any way preclude or deny spiritual values. But it is necessary—and I here again quote Laoust—that such schools have "a knowledge of traditional Muslim thinkers within the historical setting," that is coupled with "a knowledge of the
doctrines as well as the social and economic facts of the world.'" Even if it is true, as Laoust claims, that these two conditions are hitherto never met together, it still remains a fact that the Islamic principles themselves can be as well applied to the societies of to-day as they were at the patriarchal and feudal societies of the past. This certainly presupposes a revivification of spiritual values precisely at the point where they are said to interfere with the temporal values. It also presupposes the universalization of the spiritual values and hence, the putting of social and economic progress deliberately at the service of man.

**Man and His Responsibilities**

But are these requirements not those of a renewed Islamic humanism? If the integration of the spiritual and temporal values proper to Islam has oft been misunderstood, the same is true of the Muslim nations of man and of his rôle in society. There are here two particular prejudices which it is high time to remove, namely, the so-called "fatalism of Islam" and, secondly, the idea that Muslim man is so engulfed in the life of the community that all personal initiative develops only at the cost of religious faith.

Certainly, if Islam necessarily encouraged its adherents to resign themselves blindly and passively under the notions of inevitable divine decrees, its position would be radically anti-humanistic. And inasmuch as the Muslim peoples accede to the technologies of modern times and to their requirements of personal initiative, a progressive de-islamization of the Muslims would be in progress. But really, the charge of "fatalism" rests on a double misunderstanding, doctrinal and historical.

In any case, we cannot call "fatalist" a religion whose source and author is God, the One, the Living (al-Hayy) who speaks to men through Messengers whom He chooses. The *fatum* of Greco-Latin culture asserted that the Supreme Law of Destiny, supreme not only over men but equally over the gods as well, is immutable in its absolutely predetermined course; that to it men and gods alike are all subject. Muslim fatalism, on the other hand, does not concern a blind destiny, but the free and inscrutable will of the living God. It is founded on a conviction of "salvation" and "reward" in the future life to which must lead the well-borne trials of the present.

We must recognize that "surrender to God" (*islâm*) has been more than once distinguished from the resigned and passive
acceptance associated with the well-known *maktūb* (it is written!), or *maqdūr* (it is decreed!). If this attitude to life continues to constitute a sort of *leit-motiv* of Muslim attitudes to life, it is only to the superficial observer, that it seems to do so. On the Muslim side, we still encounter this attitude among the less fortunate struggling as they are between the grave sufferings and little joys of life. But this so-called fatalism was equally the brand mark of the warriors who faced the risks of death. It has coloured the Muslim virtue of endurance or forbearance, *sabr*, upon which tradition as well as the mystics have well insisted.

It is indeed true that this misconceived attitude had for centuries dominated large masses of Muslims to the point of undermining every possibility of reconstruction, cultural and technological development. Nonetheless, it remains true that this attitude has in Islam never been primitive, that it clearly went beyond the prescriptions of Qur'ānic teaching. It was conditioned by two historical factors, *Ash'arism* and popular piety. The former contributed by teaching, since the IVth-Vth Centuries of the Hijrah, the doctrine of the negation of human freedom on the ontological level. The latter, whose contribution was the greater, inclined towards an affective devotion to "intercessors" and a forsaking of temporal matters under the appeal of religious brotherhoods.

However, if the Qur'ānic teaching affirms the absolute omnipotence of God and the Divine eternal decree (*qadar*) it no less affirms human responsibility on the temporal order. More than three hundred verses of the Qur'an speak of, or imply, man's responsibility for his acts. If necessary, one might even recall the numerous verses, filling the pages of modern apologists, which command the human mind to "reflect on the signs of the universe." True, the purpose of such verses is to prove the existence of God. Nonetheless, the rational recognition of God's existence in the signs of the universe is itself impossible without knowledge of this world, without the development and continuous growth of this knowledge. The *Ash'arī* negation of human freedom is the judgment of a school, a scholastic fact. At the beginning of the Century, Muḥammad 'Abduh, founder of the Salafiyyah, affirmed in his *Risālah al-Tawḥīd* at once human freedom and divine omnipotence. If he ended his argument without attempting any rational elucidation of this equivocal truth, there is no reason in the world why his word should be the last dictum of the new Islamic Philosophy. As to the devotional
piety of the brotherhoods, it is not only not bound to Islam as such but it has never been but a decadent form of Ṣafism. Many reformist believers have emphasized that Islam demands an active surrender to God; and that, rather than choking personal initiative, such active surrender demands it. The reformists do not thereby impugn the piety of the ancestors; but, they claim, it is one thing to surrender faithfully to God and another to resign oneself to a passive acceptance of life. We should not forget that “to enjoin the good and forbid evil” is equally a strict Qur’anic prescription.10

Therefore, the achievements of technology which contribute to a better accommodation in the world, should in no way run counter to the living and enlightened Islamic faith. That which any faith in God does in fact contradict is rather, to make technical progress the end of human life, to pursue the useful as if it were the final end itself, to subject man to the technique rather than make of it an instrument of his liberation.

The Human Person

What is, after all, man? The Qur’ān answers that he is the vicegerent of God in the world.11 To recognize God as his Lord is precisely the first condition of fulfilment of this destiny.12 We can even say, with L. Massignon, that for Islamic thought, the human person is the first “evidence of God.”

It is needless to analyze in detail the diverse anthropologies which were taught in the course of history, but a historical sketch would be quite rewarding. The first doctors of 'ilm al-kalām taught that the whole man actually died, his body as well as his soul, but that he would be resurrected on the day of judgment in body and soul. As a Ḥadīth put it, “the time between death and resurrection passes like the winking of an eye.” Per contra, the Hellenist professors (al-falāsifah) taught that the human person consists of the rational soul alone, that this soul is spiritual and immortal, that it belongs by nature to the world of intelligibles and that the body is merely its temporary instrument. Between these two extremes, many theories found a stand (Ghazālī is here a case in point), which affirm that the human personality is a spiritual principle, but that man is both soul and body, and that the body, no less than the soul, will rise again.

Whatever be the explanations of philosophy, man’s destiny is not limited to this world. The early sūrah s of the Makkī period strongly emphasize the expectation of the last hour. Does this
mean that Islamic thought should all revolve around an eschatological, and therefore essentially antihumanistic (in however measure) view of the world? Certainly not. It is a strange confusion, properly belonging to some currents of modern thinking, to bind humanism together with the negation of all personal after-life. On the contrary, it is in the measure that the human person is prepared for an eternal destiny that he acquires any absolute value; and since that destiny is engaged by worldly life, the acts done on earth engage the whole future life. How then could man, the "witness of God", not seek to make justice ('adl) reign all the more on earth beginning right from this day?

Likewise, does the Qur'anic injunction to "command the good and forbid evil," hold for every believer as an individual as well as for the community of the Faithful as a whole? This notion of "community," of Ummat al-Nabīy (the Prophet's community), played a great role throughout Muslim history. Even to-day, this notion remains alive in the affective life of the people. There, it combines with the more modern idea of "nation" (ummah or qawm) without being dissolved by it. No sociologist can but be struck by the communal aspect of Muslim life. The community in Islam has been described in many terms. But it can destroy the individual person only in the measure to which petrified structure has taken precedence over the spirit of invention and research which the notion of ijtihād makes imperative for every believer. And one of the tasks of the new Muslim humanism is undoubtedly to establish some equilibrium between the communal sense with all its wealth of fraternity and solidarity and the free development of the person which, rather than countering the community, would enrich it all the more by putting it itself at the service of the person.

**Conclusion**

Now to conclude. The originality of the countries of Islam is not only a matter of language or ethnology. It stems from a long and glorious past where, in the long run of centuries, values of a spiritual and religious order have informed the organizations of the state. The conditions of actual life, the industrial and then the technological revolutions, have demanded new accommodations. The notions operative in the "sources of the law" seem to permit it and, especially, the principles themselves which governed the beginnings of an "economic ethics," provided
that the latter are extended and universalized. Finally, the notion of man which Muslim religious values command, rather than oppose a free and just initiative in the temporal order, requires it. Such initiative is necessary for the promotion of the so-called "world of justice" (dār al-‘adl) which the pious ancestors used to equate with the Ummah. We may call "integral" that humanism which derives its inspiration from the Christian faith,18 in contradiction to the mutilated "atheistic" humanism where life on earth is the end of human life. It seems that humanism in the lands of Islam is called upon to follow the same line of growth and development.

For the matter is not merely one of a literary or artistic reconstruction, of a humanism of the men of letters separated from the people. Rather it is one of revivification and appeal of secular values imbedded in the hearts of the people, open to new conditions of life while respect to the human person, the witness of God and vicegerent of Him on earth, remains supreme.

NOTES

1. The reader may refer to diverse collections and works, among others, edited under the auspices of UNESCO.
2. There are others, political and economic.
4. ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Rāziq, Al-Īslām wa ʿUṣūl al-Ḥuḳm, Cairo, 1343/1925. The violent debates to which the theses of this work have given rise are well known.
5. It being understood, that "theocracy" refers, as the etymology of the term indicates, to God alone and has nothing to do with clerical or ecclesiastical power.
6. In a lecture given a few years back at the International Congress of Toumliline in al-Maghrib.
7. Qur’ān, IX: 120-1; XLVII: 19; XLVII: 33; etc.
8. Ibid., II: 119, 164; III: 190; VI: 99; XIII: 2-3; XXIV: 43-54; etc.
10. Qur’ān, III: 104, 110; 114; etc.
11. Ibid., II: 30.