
This study of modern Qur'ān interpretation presupposes familiarity with the details of Bible criticism. The attention is focused on Qur'ānic qiṣas (narrations) about events that are believed by Muslims to be historic, such as the construction of the Ka'ba by Abraham and Ishmael or the story of prophets like Joseph, Moses, and Jesus. A basic shortcoming of the book under review is its taking for granted that these legends have scientifically been proved to be unhistoric. It is certainly known to many a Muslim theologian that some historians of the Bible consider Abraham a mere symbolic figure and that Jesus had once been shown to be nothing but an amalgam of Near Eastern myths. It would have lent tangibility to the book had there been an incipient chapter or at least a section where the latest findings were epitomized along with an indication of the most relevant sources, in other words, an effort to render plausible, if not cogent, why for instance Abraham is finally to be discarded as an historic personality and why the historicity of Jesus is now established beyond doubt. Without such an exposition all the author's insistence on the necessity of dissecting those tales in the Qur'ān and adopting an entirely new conception of them floats in a sort of void — at least when looked at from the Muslim angle. For the non-Muslim historian of religions it should be of interest to know concretely what there is so utterly unhistoric about the Qur'ānic qiṣas (said to be distorted versions of the Biblical stories) and why all this difference with traditionalist Muslims who are wont to regard the material revealed to Muḥammad as superior, being convinced that they possess the only authentic edition of the reports about the prophets of God.

It is anyhow difficult to overcome the impression that there is something dogmatic about the author's implicit reliance on the present position in Bible research and her concomitant expectance that trained Muslim historians adopt them as something like ultimate truths. When Muḥammad 'Abduh and his disciples took to modern science for the first time they misunderstood it as a given, static pattern of conclusions. Very soon they were criticised, sometimes caustically, for their not differentiating between the conclusions of the natural and those of the social sciences, the difference being that the degree of certainty in the natural sciences is much higher. The social sciences, so their Western schoolmasters condescended to tell them, are only a process, a method to find out the truth. The results of this method possess only relative validity, they have to be
revised again and again. Today we can reaffirm that this is true especially of archeology and the Biblical studies depending on it. By the time a modern standard work on archeology appears in print many of its discoveries have become obsolete and the authors have no choice but to append an addendum. It is not clear from what sources Rotraud Wielandt derives the confidence to pronounce herself so authoritatively. The New Bible Dictionary of 1962 (The Inter Varsity Fellowship, London), has the following to say about Abraham:

"The evidence of archeology and increasing knowledge of the period means that most modern scholars accept the substantial historicity of the narratives; this has led to a weakening of the position of those who hold the theory that Abraham personifies a tribe, or an early tribal deity (the mystical theory of Noldeke), or is the-product of a cycle of sagas."

The Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche of 1957 (Verlag Herder, Freiburg i. B.) is even more emphatic on this point. Here the question is whether Rotraud Wielandt relies on pre-1957 evidence, in that case her thesis would be out of date, or whether she has availed herself of post-1962 research to pin up her conviction. A third possibility would be that she does not accept the stand of 1962 as documented in the New Bible Dictionary and sticks to 19th century findings, for reasons best known to herself.

Leaving aside this fundamental omission to clarify the point of departure, the dissertation is otherwise also of a controversial nature, and the author is deeply aware of it. "Western scholars," she says, "expect modern Muslims to examine their religious traditions, and especially the Qur'ān, in the light of historical criticism. In the Muslim world this demand has usually been spurned and even orientalists have occasionally expressed doubts as to whether it is justified." This statement is a kind of exordium to the study under review which the author introduces with a justification of her procedure. Right at the outset she refutes some major objections to the application of the method of historical criticism to the study of the Qur'ān.

Louis Massignon protested against a "dissection" of Abraham by such Jews and Christians who erroneously believe that their religions could dispense with the patriarch and that only Islam builds upon his historicity. Massignon wants to see the figure of Abraham preserved, firstly, because he considers him equally indispensable to all the three prophetic religions and, secondly, because he is still very much a living force with the Believers. In all likelihood, Rotraud Wielandt has not fully understood this concern of Massignon, for she discerns only his paradigmatic spirit of religious solidarity. While appreciating his fraternal feelings for Muslims, she regards this unscientific approach as untenable for a historian. Moreover, she is of the opinion that such brushing aside of the results of historical research can only do a disservice to the Believers. Leaving aside the academic aspect, she avers, there is also an ethical side, insofar as every religion teaches us to strive for the truth, the whole truth. Any prevarication on verified findings would be, according to the religious standpoint, injurious to the moral fibre and thus against the paramount concern of religion. Who would not like to agree with her in principle, if only she had convinced us that history has said its last word on Abraham? The reference is to Massignon's preface to a book by a non-Muslim scholar, Y. Moubarac, on Abraham dans le Coran (Paris: 1958). Rotraud Wielandt has apparently paid no heed to the fact
that Moubarac, like many other scholars, makes a verdict on the historicity of Abraham dependent on further research into the almost untapped archeology of Yemen.

The next objection comes from the pen of Walther Braune, a German Islamicist of mark, who wrote a book that has become far too little known even among his colleagues, Der Islamische Orient zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart (The Muslim Orient between Past and Future, Bern: 1960). Walther Braune, Professor of Comparative Religions and a disciple of Paul Tillich, distrusts the Western application of the critical method to Islamic studies because he sees in it an expression of colonialism. He pleads for a humanization of the orientalists' approach because scholarly objectivity in the service of the Western bourgeoisie has made them loose sight of the primacy of human needs. He not only demands from the Western historian that he put himself in the position of his Muslim object so as to understand the other's questions about life but, beyond this, to realize the universality of the human condition underlying that particular quest for meaningful and lasting existence. As against this, Rotraud Wielandt argues that it is precisely the critical method of historical research which enables one to perceive the other's viewpoint and to fathom the human depths of the issues concerned.

In defence of historical criticism the author avers that it helps to understand better what was actually meant by the various revelations. Much of the original message has been buried under the debris of later interpretations; it has now to be reconstituted through historical research. Such criticism may prove, she writes, that revealed scriptures are human testimonies to the faith, conditioned by history. If it does so, it renders a service to the adherents of prophetic religions by preventing them from equating the word of man with the word of God. The German philosopher Schleiermacher once remarked that every holy book is a mausoleum of religion. Rotraud Wielandt seeks the help of historical criticism to abrogate this harsh dictum and to assure the viability of the faith and its capacity for change and adaptation. Islam, like the other great religions, plunged into the maelstrom of modern history, has to cope with cataclysmal transformations in politics, social structure and cultural orientation. Here an exegesis of the Qur'ān on the lines of historical criticism, so the author, can fulfil an important need in liberating the Believers from their attachment to conceptions and injunctions which, by their very nature, cannot claim any value of their own.

An historian, by sheer dint of his profession, she argues, has to look at the book of revelation as the work of the Prophet and perhaps of later editors. Whether it is also the work of a revealing God is something about which the historian with his methods can pass no judgment, neither positive nor negative. For the researcher it is but a piece of literature and like other such documents it is to be understood in the context of the customs, ideas, and requirements of the milieu in which it was brought into existence. The historian has to stick to the principle that historical matter cannot be traced back to causes that lie outside the historical plain. Besides the genetic understanding of historical factors there is the phenomenological cognition that seeks to find out how the object of research conceived itself and what it desired to be. But it does not fall under the critic's competence to analyse the acts and the motives of the deities. Here, according to the author, lies the difference between the writing of history and the formulation of myths.
When in the following Rotraud Wielandt examines the ideas about the Qur'an proffered by eminent Muslim thinkers, she does so by putting them on the touchstone, questioning whether they hold the Qur'an to be entirely the word of God, or whether they consider it to be only Muhammad's expression of a divine message, in other words, the product of man. This is, of course, a simplification of ours, because in her erudite analysis she discusses the relation between revelation and history in many of its philosophical ramifications. However, while doing so she makes her point very effective, one could even say she hammers it home.

Rotraud Wielandt discusses Muhammad's concept of history as gauged from the Qur'an and outlines the Qur'anic description of the course of revelation. Her second chapter is devoted to a review of Qur'anic exegesis and philosophy in Muslim tradition after which she proceeds to the changes wrought by the encounter with European politics and culture. She essays to delineate how the problems caused by this impact are reflected in the historical self-understanding of modern Muslims and what results it produced in recent interpretations of the Qur'an. This leads to the second part of the book where there is a chapter each on Mufti Muhammad 'Abduh, his 'successor' Rashid Riḍā, the Shaykh 'Ali 'Abd al-Rāziq of al-Azhar, the versatile literateur 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād, the Algerian writer Malek Bennabi, and the Egyptian theologian Muḥammad Ahmad Khalaf-Allāh.

Much has been written on Muḥammad 'Abduh, on his intellectual acumen and bold reformist thinking, as well as on his failings, particularly his succumbing to an apologetic tendency and his inability to break through certain barriers of traditional thought so as to arrive at decisive reformulations. In the present context it is important, as Rotraud Wielandt pinpoints, that 'Abduh had yet very little knowledge of the critical method in historical research. He endeavoured to improve the situation in which he found himself by taking recourse to a philosophy of history that had its roots in the European period of enlightenment. Thus he declared the Qur'an to be the manifesto of the era of reason which crowns the development of humanity. This philosophy of history enabled him to adopt a positive attitude towards tendencies of modern civilization, for it gave him the assurance that by affirming modernisation he would not betray his own cultural tradition. In this way he would rather foster the seminal values of his religion, values that had already come to fruition once upon a time. He postulated that the message of Muhammad is entirely rational. In this axiom Rotraud Wielandt sees the obstacle that ruled out an historical cognition of the Qur'an.

The man who usurped 'Abduh's renown and stultified his movement, Rashid Riḍā, has been equally much dealt with by a galaxy of scholars. It is clear since long that, notwithstanding his assumed role as a custodian of the great Mufti's legacy, Rashid Riḍā constitutes in fact a low ebb in the history of Muslim intellectual life. His incongruous dogmatic system, based on a superficial acquaintance with modern branches of knowledge, manifests itself in wholesale comparisons between the utter depravity of pre-Islamic Arabia and the golden era of perfection ushered in by Islam. This indiscriminating black and white vision is all the more dismaying to the academician because of the intertwining of arrogant communal self-conceit with a nationalist pride in belonging to the chosen race of the Arabs; to this is added an intellectual, if not moral, numbness making him starkly incompetent to tackle the ideological issues confronting twentieth century Muslims.
'Ali 'Abd al-Rāziq is treated only cursorily, whereas 'Abbās Maḥmūd al-'Aqqād is discussed at length, because of his acquaintance with modern disciplines and his conscientious efforts to defend the religious heritage with historical objectivity. His vast learning and knowledge of German notwithstanding, he fell prey to theories of little scientific value, such as the emergence of prophets in response to the needs of the age. This resulted in his ending up with cliches. Such misconstrued notions along with apologetic proclivities that seemed gradually to get the upper hand, precluded him from a major breakthrough towards a more genuine historical method.

Next in the chronological order is the Algerian engineer Malek Bennabi with his reversionary treatise on Le phénomene coranique which stands out for little more than a misunderstood phenomenology clumsily thrust into the discipline of Qurʾānic interpretation. Though the author concedes that Bennabi, like Al-‘Aqqād, is well-read he is, however, not sufficiently steeped in the methodology of historical science. This is her explanation for his defending the historicity of the Qurʾānic legends.

With Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Khalaf-Allāh the book comes to its logical culmination. In 1947 this Egyptian scholar submitted a dissertation entitled Al-Fann al-Qaṣṣāṣ fī l-Qurʾān al-Karmin. Khalaf-Allāh’s grounding in historical science was more thorough than that of his precursors. Rotraud Wielandt holds that for this reason he had to be fully aware that the Qurʾānic qiṣṣā do not stand the scrutiny of modern historical research. Since he was a fervid Muslim the problem for him was how to believe in events that either did not take place at all or at least not in the manner reported in the Qurʾān. Khalaf-Allāh found the solution in the concept of divine intent (qaṣd, maqṣād, gharāf). God did not want to act as an historiographer but as an artist who inspires. If there are different versions of one and the same story in the Qurʾān, it is because God revealed with poetic license. In case one of the narrations runs counter to historical findings, this does not matter at all. God had to mould his materials in such a way as to achieve a maximum impact on the heart of man. The purpose is not to teach historical truth but to induce man to testify to the eternal truth of the message conveyed with the help of literary devices. Khalaf-Allāh sees the iʿjāz of the Qurʾān in magic-like psychological compulsion. To him the emotional effect prevails over the rational aspect.

Khalaf-Allāh is convinced that the Qurʾān is addressed to a milieu of remote times to which there is no return. But one has to endeavour to understand those conditions and the mental make up of that period in order to know why revelation came to us in that particular concrete mould. He does not want to reestablish the order of those days but to resuscitate the impressions and reactions of those Believers to whom the Scripture was revealed. Rashid Riḍā and others of his ilk saw the iʿjāz of the Qurʾān in its high intellectual level which was far beyond anything thought or uttered by the men of the Prophet’s age and, for that matter, any age to come. Khalaf-Allāh’s view is almost opposite. In his opinion the Qurʾān is miraculously inimitable because it is so exactly and so skilfully tailored to the psyche of the first recipients with their knowledge and ideas of things that it had a momentum unparalleled in the history of revelations.

For Rotraud Wielandt this raises an important theological question. She wants to know what intrinsic connection there is between this kind of impulsion and the doctrines of faith that are to be deduced. The modern exegete, she concludes, cannot grasp
the fillip of the text save by historiographical reconstruction of those emotions and impressions. How can the interpreter of today find his way through those psychological elements of ancient times and arrive at religious purports that are binding for him? Khalaf-Allāh does not broach this question. He conceives of Qur'ānic narrations as art and confines himself to this literary interest. For him the prophets of those tales are characters comparable to the heroes of the popular epics. They are not historical figures but merely names that can be exchanged, depending on what morale God wants to inculcate unto Muḥammad and his listeners. Khalaf-Allāh concedes that occasionally God might have incorporated materials that are historically authentic, but since that is irrelevant to the purpose, he considers research about the origins of those historical elements beside the point.

It is, therefore, only logical that he does not delineate a chronology of prophetic development. ‘Abduh had assigned a function to each prophet that was clearly defined in terms of a certain epoch. Khalaf-Allāh is not in a position to adumbrate such a theory because he no more regards as historical the details of the prophetic creators required for this fabric.

Like ‘Abduh, Khalaf-Allāh takes up the concept of disposition (isti’dād) that makes men accept a new religion, but with him this term acquires a different connotation. Whereas ‘Abduh thought of the objective preconditions, intellectual and moral, that facilitate religious progress, Khalaf-Allāh uses it to denote the subjective readiness of the soul, depending on a variety of factors, among them also economic distress.

Rotraud Wielandt rightly points out that Khalaf-Allāh’s conception of divine takhyl (creative phantasy) at work in the Qur’ānic similes leads back to the controversy around the Muʿtazili exegete Zamakhsharī. She could have expanded the argument by emphasizing how firmly Khalaf-Allāh stands in the tradition of the iʿtizzāl school, the parallel extends to his indirect rejection of the legists’ dogma of infallibility (ʿismā). This is evident from Rotraud Wielandt’s lucid exposition of Khalaf-Allāh’s image of the Prophet, though she does not refer to this pivotal concept of ʿismā. It will not be out of place to mention that Ahmad Amin, the chief proponent of neo-Muʿtazilism in Egypt, dealt with it in his tract on Al-Mahdiyy wa l-Mahdawīya (Cairo, Dār al-Maʿārif, 1951) and the many similarities between Amin and Khalaf-Allāh, especially with regard to their conception of the Prophet and the notion of isti’dād, show the author of Al-Fann al-Qaṣṣāṣī fi l-Qurʾān al-Karīm as another representative of revived iʿtizzāl, characteristic of an important trend in Muslim thought of the first half of this century.

Again like Ahmad Amin, and so many others of this brand, Khalaf-Allāh failed to reconcile what Iqbal calls ‘aqīl and ‘ishq, i.e., the exigencies of neo-Muʿtazilism and neo-Sufism. The despair of betrayed intellectualism and the drift into spiritualism which it entailed accounts for the subsequent loss of perception in his later production (parallel to Amin’s drooping from Ḥuḥā l-ʾIslām to Yawm al-ʾIslām) which Rotraud Wielandt notes with regret without discerning the salient reason.

It is obvious that Khalaf-Allāh’s view of revelation proceeds from the assumption that the Qurʾān is the created word of God. Rotraud Wielandt does not refer directly to this moot point of the Muʿtazilite doctrine, but she concludes her chapter on Khalaf-
Allāh with the question whether all the thoughts and reflexes of Mūhammad and his audience had been pre-existing with God, or whether God has created the Qur'ānic art of narration on the spot commensurate with the prophetic events. Has he picked up the constituents of the concerned individuals' consciences from case to case and responded to them in a didactic manner? This is how Khalaf-Allāh made it appear, but he did not delve into the metaphysical problem of how the eternal word of God could take into account the temporary events of the Prophet's inner and outer life.

Though Khalaf-Allāh is the only one in this array of writers who has studied the Qur'ān in a truly historical perspective he still is in unison with orthodoxy and regards God as the sole author of the Qur'ān. He sticks to the hereditary concept of verbal revelation and shirks reducing the Qur'ānic statements to an historical origin in the mind of Mūhammad.

If Khalaf-Allāh was not yet wholly free from the entail of a dogmatic past, Āṣaf A.A. Fayḍi certainly was. The author concludes her book with a succinct exposé of post-Khalaf-Allāh developments, centering mainly on non-Arab writers like the Pakistani M. Dāʿūd Rahbar (before his conversion), the Indian Muslim scholar Āṣaf A.A. Fayḍi, and the francophone Moroccan philosopher M. 'Azīz Laḥbābī (Al-Ḥabābī). With Fayḍi the author arrives at the proffered goal of her disquisition: faith in verbal inspiration has given way to the conception that the Qur'ān is not simply the truth as revealed by God but rather Mūhammad's testimony to the divine truth. To Fayḍi the Qur'ān is no more the word of God as such but the word of God as heard by Mūhammad. A similar change in the concept of religious truth is found with the Lebanese Ḥasan Saʿb and the Tunisian Ibn Milād. They regard it as something every individual in his particular historical situation has to decide for and to testify to. Saʿb's concept of revelation as a never ending dialogue between God and man has its parallel in Ibn Milād's principle of a permanent interaction of revealed truth and human reality. However, it is the existentialist Laḥbābī in his Le personnalisme musulman who pushes the notions of dialogue and testimony furthest, arriving at a pregnant concept of truth tinged with a highly individualistic relativism. In such a "well thought out synthesis of traditional articles of faith and the intellectualism of modern historical criticism" Rotraud Wielandt finds the philosophical onset which, if carried through, could overcome the present dilemma, and she patently implies that this advance is irretrievable.

He who studies the Qur'ān in an historical perspective, she says, will differ in his understanding of the Holy Scripture from the way Mūhammad understood it. The historian examines form and content of the Qur'ān and establishes a relation between these and the conditions of the Prophet's life. He does so with the certainty that those conditions no longer exist and that they differed from his own. What must the believer do to justify such a procedure? Rotraud Wielandt answers that like Āṣaf Fayḍi and Dāʿūd Rahbar he must start with the realization that Mūhammad could conceive the religious truth of the Qur'ān only in the form of something that is, historically speaking, transient. All human knowledge is tied up with a temporary intellectual horizon. Once this constellation changes there has to be a fresh examination of the book of revelation so as to make out what the message really conveys. If a Muslim wants to look at the Qur'ān from an historical angle he must, first of all, accept that the very belief in the Qur'ān has its own history. This history is not confined to a constantly improving explanation of its
verses. It is history also of the transient interpretation of the purport of the message, for in every age it acquires a new and different meaning for those who receive it.

In the same vein Labbâbi avers that revelation cannot be real for man unless it steps down to the human level, unless it "humanises" itself and enters into a dialogue with the reflections of the receivers. In this sense revelation is no more to be equated with the literal meaning of the Qur'ân but emerges out of the process of interpretation. It is no more the text per se that is revelation. Revelation rather is whatever occurs to the Believer while reading it anew.

Does this Muslim Personalism of Labbâbi enunciate a novel understanding of the Qur'ân and does it effect a reconciliation of history and revelation? Rotraud Wielandt seems to hope so but this, then, is merely a finger-post at the end of her thesis.

We would rather hold that this approach has its moorings in the earliest history of Islam. One could instance the famous episode at the time of the Prophet's demise when Abû Bakr recited the verses "Muḥammad is no more than a messenger. Messengers before him have passed away. If he die or be slain, will you then turn on your heels?" Reception of the Qur'ân had come to an end because the Prophet was no more and the Scripture was complete for compilation. But the Companions reacted to the Khalifa's recitation as if the revelation was still on and 'A'isha expressly said that they felt as if they heard the verses for the first time. It was the same text as before, but a new significance in a changed context. This process continued throughout the ages until Iqâbî was impelled to compose his eloquent poem Mard-e Musulmân in Darb-e Kalim where he says that what appears to our eyes is the Believer reading the Scripture but in reality what we see is the Qur'ân itself.

This understanding of the Qur'ân may not be reflected in the 'orthodox' commentaries on which Rotraud Wielandt and the lot of orientalists have to rely for their analysis of what emerged as the dominant stream in Muslim exegesis. It is often overlooked that those commentators were not simply ignorant of the above mentioned approach but had knowingly shut themselves off because of what they tended to regard as all too latitudinarian tendencies in rationalist and mystical schools before 'orthodox' state power clamped down on the Mu'tazila. The traditional theoreticians deprecated attempts such as those by Al-Zamakhshari, Al-Râzi, and Ibn 'Arabi to understand and explain the Qur'ân in the light of their mundane knowledge and spiritual experience. It was the reaction against the bâţint excesses which led a linguist of Abû Bakr Bâqillâni's stature to deny semantic change even in the religious terms.

In her introduction Rotraud Wielandt explains that she had to confine her study to the 'Arab (Egyptian) realm with only a few passing references to the Muslim authors of India and Pakistan. This is understandable in a dissertation of this kind. Nonetheless, it is significant that in her delineation of prospects for future Qur'ân studies it is Āṣâf A.A. Faydî who serves her as beacon and she acknowledges that in "Indian Islâm" the endeavour to understand the Qur'ân in an historical perspective is almost traditional. It would be interesting to examine what influence these precursors from the Subcontinent had on the Egyptian thinkers discussed in Revelation and History in the Thought of Modern Muslims. Contrary to Goldziher's contention that there is no such influence (Cf. Richtungen) it seems possible to adduce much evidence in favour of an outside impetus.
Much of Khalaf-Allah’s thesis, for instance, is adumbrated in *Al-Fawz al-Kabîr* by Shâh Wâliy-Allâh of Delhi. The Arabic translation of this work was published in Egypt in 1892.

An objection could be raised to Rotraud Wielandt’s predisposition to transcendentalism. She has nowhere discussed the relationship between the conception of God and the approach to revelation. Understanding of the Qur’ân must necessarily differ in accordance with the varying standpoint of the student, whether he conceives of God as transcendent or as immanent. Quite obviously she presupposes that the Muslim concept of God is but transcendent. To the large fold of Muslims who believe in an immanent God this will appear unjustified as Elie Kedourie’s untenable charge of heresy against ‘Abduh because of the latter’s mysticism. (Cf. *Afghani and ‘Abduh*, London: 1966). Due to this onesidedness some of her observations are out of focus. She espouses the cause of those Muslims who regard the Qur’ân as Muhammad’s testimony and crusades against those who obdurately insist that it is verbal inspiration, the revealed speech of God. But which God? Before discussing the nature of why it is imperative to settle the nature of the concept of God. True, her dissertation deals with a selection of modern authors who seem to uphold faith in a transcendental God. But this does not allow such generalisations. There ought to have been some clarification, perhaps, on the lines of Montgomery Watt’s balanced contrasting of the two contending trends in Muslim theology (cf. *What is Islam?* Beirut: 1966).

It may be worth our while to digress for a moment and to take on the author’s purely theoretical approach to the issues involved. Rotraud Wielandt searches for intellectual explanations at almost every twist and turn which her protagonists’ line of thought takes. This is, indubitably, a laudable effort and certainly consistently in tune with her professed scientific method of the critique of ideas. But the gaping detachment from practical facts of the life of the thinkers concerned leads at times, to say the least, to a sort of artificiality in her deductions. To make our point clearer we should, perhaps, contrast her to the Marxist Georg Lukács, an outstanding literary critic from Hungary. He is something like an opposite pole to Rotraud Wielandt. In his book *Deutsche Real­­isten des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: 1956), Georg Lukács has culled abundant material from the personal life of those writers and the social conditions of their milieu. His diligence and precision in this respect would do honour to the FBI. All these synergetic forces are put in relation to the trends of thought, the volte-faces and reassertions of those German realists. For the reader this adventurous concatenation of circumstances and events is at times breathtaking.

Now it goes without saying, that in the frame of her analysis Rotraud Wielandt could not possibly have followed the example of the literary critic Georg Lukács. But surely she could have come somewhat closer to Baber Johansen who, in his monograph on Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal (*Europa und der Orient im Weltbild eines Ägyptischen Liberalen*, Beirut: 1967), adduces, enough evidence from the prolific journalist and biographer’s career as not to be sidetracked into pure theorising. Johansen takes pains to analyse wherever a very practical consideration of private or political nature was responsible for a different attitude toward religion or a sudden change in ideological orientation. In Rotraud Wielandt’s book we find only a few very general allusions to the hampering effect of traditionalist opposition which might be responsible for the sealing of such quick-
ening fountains of thought as ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Rāziq or Ahmad Khalaf-Allāh, who never followed up what their one controversial publication promised. On the other hand there
is a footnote on page 100 in which the author refers to N.A. Fāris, who said that the main
reason why Egyptian authors once flooded the market with books on Muḥammad and
other heroic figures of Muslim history was their discovery that this was the surest way
to gain publicity and make money. This motivation is not accepted by the learned author
of Revelation and History in the Thought of Modern Muslims. With due respect to Rotraud Wielandt, and with some reservations, we should hold that N.A. Fāris knows his
soul-brothers better. It is to the credit of the author that she follows the best tradition of
German scholarship, there was a time when her compatriots led in the field of Islamic
studies. However, it appears that she has also inherited the inclination to abstract the-
orising that makes the proverbial German professor so weltfrernd.

With her superb knowledge of Islamic sources and enviable talent to translate
difficult Arabic terminology into limpid German she does not seem to be overly familiar
with the social realities of the Muslim milieus, ancient and contemporary. Threats held
out to Faḍl al-Rahmān, Director of an Islamic Research Institute, in 1969, stand in the
direct tradition of the attempts on the lives of Shāh Waliy-Allāh and Sayyid Aḥmad Khān.
This is only the most drastic break among innumerable minor obstacles preventing a Muḥammad ‘Abduh or an ‘Abbās Mahmūd al-‘Aqqād to come out with what they might
regard as the whole truth. So many personal motivations of a most unacademic nature
can be responsible for inconsistencies or contradictions in intellectual production. This
is, no doubt, the case everywhere, with the difference that in the Middle East of today
these motives are often as chimeric as the famous 1001 Nights of yore.

Rotraud Wielandt’s abstract critique of ideas is certainly more rewarding than Elie
Keddourie’s dismal dabbling in the amorous adventures of Afghānī. Nevertheless, some
of her erudite endeavours to account for multiple failings in the ideological development
of the thinkers discussed in her dissertation appear slightly futile, detached as they are
from the vicissitudes of the social process in which the intellectual formation of those
writers took place.

Nascent liberalism, so telling with Al-‘Aqqād, was the faith, and indeed the raison
d’être, of an entrepreneurial ruling class. In their attempt to refine and renew Muslim
society and to restore its glory they had to compete with the hardy ventures of the upsur-
ging ‘dynamism’ of the petty bourgeoisie which crystallised in the fascist Muslim Brother-
hood party. Simultaneously, the ideological front in Europe, on which the liberals so
utterly depended, changed rapidly. On both scores the liberals were put to many shifts
which gave their movement so protean a character and made their literary production
appear rather tawdry.

Whether in the second half of our century it still makes sense to attempt such an
analysis as the one under review, while completely discarding economic factors and the
overall dominant element of class struggle is more than questionable. In this respect
the book falls in line with a deplorable tendency common in West German Islamics
(possibly a reaction to what might be considered an overemphasis on class struggle by
their East German rivals, or, of late, the “young left.”).
Revelation and History in the Thought of Modern Muslims is, by any standards, a stimulating challenge that calls for a response. Highly objectionable as the whole attempt must necessarily seem to traditionalist Muslim scholars, it should, nonetheless, be admitted that Rotraud Wielandt's dissertation is free from any Christian bias. It is, no doubt carried by a missionary zeal, but her mission is that of the sciences of history and religion, rather than that of sapping the strength of Islamic faith. She is bent on dispensing aid, academic aid to the budding historians of religion in the developing countries of Islam. With all her scientific approach the author is by no means an agnostic, her disquisition rather bespeaks a pro-religious attitude. In fact, she is convinced that a service is rendered to Islam if Muslim exegetes are brought round to research on the Qur'an understood as Muhammad's confession of faith rather than a verbal inspiration from God. This is the only way, she believes, to warrant a lasting meaningfulness of revelation. In propounding her thesis and analysing manifold strands of thought in contemporary Muslim authors she is quite sensitive to various religious sentiments, though her opinions are couched in a paternal tone (or should we say maternal?). Endowed with a remarkable perspicuity she remains scholarly throughout, and her conclusions never savour of any personal preferences or aversions for the protagonists discussed by her. This sober and sympathetic approach makes her book deserving of the attention of even those scholars who will look askance at the very topic and differ from her inferences on all scores.

It is needless to say that this book is well documented. Secondary sources are relied upon only in the final chapter where references are made to Indo-Pakistani writers. In a work on Qur'anic exegesis in Egypt the skillful and assiduous hand of Jacques Jomier is, of course, ubiquitous. Reference is made especially to his study on Le commentaire coranique du Manâr. — Tendences modernes de l'exégèse coranique en Egypte (Islam d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, Paris 1954). The editing leaves little to be desired except for the spelling of Al-Shâlibi's Muwāfaqât which is constantly mentioned as Muwāqafât.

The chief disqualification of the book under review lies certainly in the fact that it is written in a vernacular largely obsolescent in the field of Islamic studies. Translation into a world language, preferably English, is called for.

Berlin

Detlev H. Khalid

Umm al-Kitāb could, in Pakistan, lay claim to the scholars’ attention from the simple fact that two of its few available manuscripts were found in as unexpected places as Chitrāl (1928) and Hunza (1932). The best copy, though, came from the region of the Upper Oxus (Amu-Darya, USSR) and was collated and published by W. Ivanow in Der Islam (23, 1936, p.1 fl.). In an article (REI 4, 1932, p. 419 fl.) the same author made a first approach to the mystery of this text, analyzing its contents, probing its relevance for our knowledge of early heterodoxy in Islam. The fact that the book was kept sacred by an Ismā‘īlī group of the Upper Oxus seemed to indicate kinship with Ismā‘īlī beliefs, but Ivanow’s findings showed that the differences by far outweighed any possible common traits. Instead, he identified links with speculation of the Kaḥṭābiya group, analogies with the Nusayri doctrine, Manichean influences and other elements of uncertain origin. As a result, Ivanow wondered whether Umm al-Kitāb would not contain a version of the little known Qarāmīṭa doctrine. As regards authorship and dating of its origin Ivanow, from the very scarce historical and the somewhat more revealing geographical records of the book, conjectured it was written by a Persian living in southern Mesopotamia or in Syria at the end of the 11th century at the latest.

With P. Filippiani-Ronconi’s presentation and translation of Umm al-Kitāb we now have gained new ground for the exploration of this difficult text. Not only has he, inspite of the many deficiencies of the Persian original, tried to provide a coherent reading, but he also has, by means of an extensive introduction and a wealth of foot-notes, offered us an attempt at interpretation based on his wide competency in the field of comparative history of religions. (Prof. Filippiani is indeed author of studies in Indian and Chinese religious thought and shows an impressive familiarity with Persian, Tibetan, Arabic and Hebraic sources.)

Umm al-Kitāb being of a very complex nature, it cannot be said that Ivanow’s questions and assumptions have now received any definitive solution. They still remain, inviting more inquiry in a context which Filippiani has greatly widened and enriched with new vistas of the multiplicity of factors involved in the history of this book. As a result, it can now be thought of as the work of several authors instead of one, and the date of its origin might fall as early as the 8th or 9th century. It also appears possible that the Persian author(s) drew from an Arabic original, although not by way of translation. As regards likely relationship to the Kaḥṭābiya, Filippiani assigns to its influence a more or less adventitious role. The basic beliefs of the sect gathered around the teachings of Umm al-Kitāb were pre-Islamic. When extremist Shi‘ite currents of thought spread into the sect’s remote territory, presumably through Kaḥṭābī refugees from Küfa or some isolated Ismā‘īlī propagandist, they met there with mystico-religious conceptions which were analogous with their own and had derived their common features from Manichean preaching that had taken place centuries earlier in Eastern Iran as much as in Southern Mesopotamia. This original kinship created a situation favourable to the ‘Islamization’ of the Umm al-Kitāb sect. It did not bring any fundamental innovation, but rather took
the form of a gradual symbiosis between related elements. Formal integration into reformed Isma'ili sm may have followed at a considerably later stage, perhaps under the influence of Naṣīr-e Khosrow's da'wat in Badakhshān (d. towards 1072). As a support of his hypothesis, Filippani refers to similar processes of amalgamation between Zoroastrian, Mazdean and extreme Shi'ite beliefs that occurred in the first 150 years of the Hijra era in Iran as a sequel to movements like those of Bihāfrīd, Abū Muslim, Sindbād, al-Mukhtār, al-Mughīra a.o. (p. XII). Filippani considers the Islamizing impact of the Shi'ite extremists on the Umm al-Kitāb sect as of so little weight as to affirm that if one were to replace the Arabic names in the book with Iranian ones, the names of the five legal Muslim prayers with the corresponding five Mazdean ones, the titles of certain sūras with titles of gnostic and Manichean works, and if one were to take away all ejaculatory prayers and Qur'ānic quotations (which mostly have nothing to do with the ideas exposed,) then the question of the 'Islamicity' of Umm al-Kitāb would not even arise. “The book then would appear as nothing more and nothing less than a gnostico-Manichean work bearing strong influences of opposing currents from Tantrism and Qabbala” (p. XXXIV). The only possible exception which Filippani would concede is that Isma'ili influence of the time when the sect joined formally reformed Isma'iliism, may have accentuated the universality of the soteriological role ascribed to the Imāms (p. XXXV). Finally, as regards the vicinity of Umm al-Kitāb to Shi'ite extremism in non-Islamic speculation, it would seem greatest in respect of al-Mughīra, and not of Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb who figures in the book mainly as a “mystico-religious abstraction” (p. XXXIII). Instead, Umm al-Kitāb shares with al-Mughīra (who died in 737, twenty years earlier than Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb) his belief in the symbolic value of the letters of the alphabet, the secret science of the jafr. (Cf. part of the introduction of Umm al-Kitāb and question II.) Like al-Mughīra Umm al-Kitāb also professes the divinity of Imām Bāqīr, whereas Abū'l-Khaṭṭāb ascribed divinity to Bāqīr's son, Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, and was punished for it by execution (p. XXXIII).

It may be justifiable to remark (as J. van Ess does in Der Islam, 46, 1-2, 1970, p. 98) that Filippani's research in the direction of Islamic connections between Umm al-Kitāb and Shi'ite extremism leaves a number of lacunae. What might account for this, could well be his extraordinary acquaintance with the world of non-Islamic religious systems. Their spell on the scholar would be all the more understandable as up to the foundation of Baghdad they had been thriving in southern Mesopotamia. On the other hand, Vajrayāna Buddhist theories and mystical practices were very common in Gandhāra, an area contiguous to that Pamir region where the teachings of Umm al-Kitāb keep followers even in our days. Both these factors together must have been like a challenge for Filippani to seek the interpretation of this multi-faceted book preferably in the light of parallels and correspondences with these systems. His research gives evidence that he moves in their realm with versatile mastery.

What then is Umm al-Kitāb according to him? Its contents, divided into a preface and 38 questions, represent for him an esoteric creed. Its language is an archaic form of neo-Persian with distinctive features (as f. ex. the contamination between the prepositions ba, be and az) characterizing its use in areas close to Indian linguistic regions. Language analysis shows two fundamental data: on the one hand the text uses a popular style of expression, on the other a profound philosophico-religious nomenclature destined
to convey highly sophisticated and at times abstruse theories. The presence of these suggests that in a summary form the *Umm al-Kitāb* reflects the anterior teaching of masters profoundly versed in esoteric knowledge of various kinds: neo-Pythagorean, Qabbalistics Mazdean, Manichean, Vajrayāna and others. This authorizes Filippani to assume the coming together in *Umm al-Kitāb* of two main currents of thought: the one gnostic, originating from Mesopotamia (Nisibin, Gondeshāhpur, Harrān) where the late speculation of antiquity resulted in a mystico-philosophical synthesis which will henceforward offer food for philosophical thought to the early Islam up to the encyclopedia of the Ikh wān aš-Šafā, - the other mystical, drawing from the Gandhāriān Vajrayāna and incorporating elements of yoga practices into the course of doctrinal teaching (p. X/XI). For the book not only communicates secret knowledge, but also aims at the transformation of its reader. It wants doctrine to become living experience in this precise sense that at the level of his somatic and psychical dimensions he is enabled to realize the cosmic dramas and metamorphoses to which the gnostic teaching initiates him. Filippani calls this the most distinctive feature of the whole book. He sees in it a clear resemblance to the manner of the Indian schools of philosophy and mysticism where the teaching of theory also involves communication of ‘discipline’, i.e. of that method by which the initiate will arrive at the immediate perception of what is revealed to him in terms of doctrine. The initiate of *Umm al-Kitāb* thus is summoned to enter, ecstatically, into the dazzling mysteries of the ‘drama in heaven’ of which he receives cognition in the symbols that arise within the psycho-somatic sphere of his being and form an intermediary world (‘meso-cosmos’, says Filippani) between himself and the cosmic totality. Later Islamic mysticism names this ‘imaginative conscience’ (H. Corbin) the *ālam al-mithāl* (p. VIII/IX).

Taking all together, *Umm al-Kitāb* appears, in the Italian scholar’s hypothesis, as a text of a Persian school of Manichean-Mazdaic origin, combining the teaching of Syro-Mesopotamian gnosis with a soteriological technique derived from Shiva-Vajrayāna Buddhism. If this is correct, *Umm al-Kitāb* as a book unique of its kind, would then have a good chance of shedding light on certain teachings involving esoteric actualization through ecstasy as they can be found in Persian ṣūfism from al-Bīšāmī down to the modern Shaykhi schools. Their possible source would be Indian (p. XI).

In as far as the book’s connection with proto-Īsmā‘īlīsm is concerned, Filippani lists three reasons for it: first, because it also exposes theories and concepts that will become peculiar to the Ismā‘īlī sects; second, because its esoteric teaching is dispensed by Imām Bāqir; and third, because, as already mentioned, *Umm al-Kitāb* is held sacred by a sect that professes itself Ismā‘īli. But he thinks that these facts are nothing more than “an interplay of perspectives” and offer no hold for any essential relationship (p. XXXV). Nor do the Imām’s questioners, a motley group of supposed disciples whose identity and historical records are replete with problems, do so. (Cf. J. van Ess, *loc. cit.*, pp. 96-97.)

There remains the question of the basic themes of *Umm al-Kitāb*. They are cosmological, soteriological and eschatological, - a sum of knowledge proposed in symbolic language. Its ciphers, the book stresses, give way only to the devotee willing to prepare his psyche for it through ascetical exertion. Inner realization by man of the symblic truth alone lets him participate in the cosmic reality. For it is the spell of this symbolic truth over the human soul which in the act of concentration by the initiate enables him
to establish the link between the universal macrocosmos and his own individual microcosmos. The language of the symbols thus is intermediary between the two cosmic orders and serves as the medium that brings mystically man's sensory capacity into communion with the transcendent archetypes. Ismāʿīlī speculation calls this the ta'wil, the unique way to tawbīd, taking the word in its proper etymological meaning (awwala) of "reconstruction of a being to its principle, its archetype" (p. XXXVI). The ta'wil, in the psyche's act of realization of the symbols, becomes fath, i.e., it "overcomes" what separates the symbols from the archetypes.

After this, the modern reader of Umm al-Kitāb must make allowance for a large deal of speculation on the structure of the two cosmic orders: the archetypal creative ideas of the Pleroma, its constellations and angelical hierarchies, its lights and colours, its problematic barzakh, i.e., the limiting screen on which the archetypes seem to be reflected thus giving intelligibility to the underlying world of negativity, exile of Adam imprisoned under Ahriman's action. Lavish symbolism attaches to the human heart. It represents the condition of earthly life. Immersed in it is Adam fallen from his primordial bliss. It marks the point of intersection between the divine creativity (conscience) from above and Ahriman's negative counter-action (concupiscence) from below. Harbouring therefore a share in divine light, it is destined, in the event of qiyyāma (resurrection), to regain eventually a celestial function (pp. 346-54). Man's redemption consists in his being liberated from relationship to the material world to which he remains fettered as long as he does not renounce his sexual appetite. Woman, at this earthly level at least, is the symbol and instrument of sin. In the heart also is perpetuated that 'spirit of resistance' which caused Adam's fall at the instigation of his two tempters, the serpent and the peacock. The prototype of man remains however in heaven, unaffected by sin and decay. Adam thus exists in three forms: the heavenly one ((kāfūri or dā'īm, cf. p. 222) who is in no need of redemption, - Adam in the human heart, capable of salvation (habst or mu'tarid, cf. p 156), - and Adam delivered up to the instincts (madhmrim, cf. p. 55 and passim) for whom there is no possible salvation. Redemption begins when the 'Spirit of acquiescence' which resides in the heart and has Muḥammad for heavenly archetype, turns to the Imām of the Time, a sort of emanation of Salmān al-Fārīsī. Salmān whose identity and function are extremely multiform (p. XLIII), then descends into the heart and operates its overturn. (Cf. question IX and XXV). "The sun now rises from the West" symbolically indicates the beginning of the qiyyāma, i.e., Adam's return to his archetype. Thanks to Salmān's intervention he recovers his self-consciousness and can set out on the inner ascension from the heart to the brain and to heaven. Umm al-Kitāb identifies it with Muḥammad's mi'rāj (p. 137). This process is not that of an individual, however. It involves the 'man-universe' and must be understood as the "re-integration of the universe into its primordial principle" (p. XLIII) and hence "is nothing else than the way back, in reverse, of the epiphany of the worlds" described in question V of the book.

Indefatigably, Filippiani in his vast effort of interpretation labours to bring consistency into all this and to elucidate its links and correspondences with the presumed sources of Umm al-Kitāb. How intricate this task is, - not least on account of a "hopelessly perverted text" (Ivanow), - may be seen from just one example. As one of its many 'heresies', if considered from the Islamic point of view, our book professes the belief in man's repeated earthly lives (karrat o raj'at, p. 210). But they mean not only a progression
through future existences, they can also be repetitions of lives in the past. In this view each cycle of time, while being perfect and closed in itself, reflects the function of a celestial hierarchy which manifests itself in a particular prophet as its type. The cycle thus does not vanish in an indefinite 'past', but can be re-lived in its archetype by anybody who has an inner affinity with any one of the respective prophets, past or future, as f. ex. the spirit of 'resistence' in Adam's cycle, the spirit of 'domination' in Moses's cycle, etc. (p. XXXIX). This recurrence comes to an end only when the light that remained imprisoned in the lower faculties of the individual is completely re-absorbed in the azal (pre-existent eternity) of the divine light.

This singular theory denotes, according to Filippi, a mixture of at least three different theories: the Buddhist and Hindu concept of the repetition of earthly lives, the Manichean liberation of the light from the psyche entrapped in matter, and the Iranian-Ismā'īlī doctrine of salvation through successive cycles of prophets (p. XXXIX).

For the historian of religions Filippi's work on *Umm al-Kitāb* makes highly fascinating reading. The merits of his painstaking handling of such difficult matter can but elicit admiration and thankfulness from the student. Whether his interpretation, though, will prove sound in all its parts, is a question that requires the test of further investigation. As it stands, it is not free of a number of text misreadings. (Cf. J. van Ess, *loc. cit.*, p. 98).

Lahore

ROBERT A. BÜTLER

***

This is a book based on Dr. Riaz Ahmed’s researches for a Ph. D degree for the University of Durham. The author says that he has enlarged the work and added one more chapter.

The book attempts mainly to discuss Mawlānā Mawdūdi’s thought in relation to the process of constitution-making in Pakistan. In the first chapter the author discusses the classical theories of Caliphate put forward by al-Mawardi, Ghazzālī and Ibn Khaldūn. He then comes to the modern times and in a few paragraphs dwells on the Wahhābiya movement, the movement of Shāh Waliy Allāh and that of Jamāl al-Din al-Afghānī all of which were attempts to revive the true Islamic spirit and mould a society in accordance with the pristine teachings of Islam.

Coming to the formative phase of Mawlānā Mawdūdi’s work, the author traces the parallels between the Jamā‘at-e Islāmī and the Ikhwān al-Muslimīn, and says that both parties had been translating the literature of the other in their own respective languages. He also says that Mawlānā Mawdūdi derives his romanticism from Al-Tāf Husain Hālij and Mawlānā Abū’l Kalām Āzād. Further, he traces the influence of Iqbal on Mawdūdi.

The third chapter deals with the problem of constitution-making in Pakistan and Islam in which Dr. Riaz Ahmed discusses the stands of Jamā‘at-e Islāmī and the ‘Ulāmā in respect of various constitutional problems and the Hindū reaction to the constitutional proposals. In this chapter he makes some adverse remarks about the ‘Ulāmā and says that men of religion were of the opinion that Pakistan had been created for the specific purpose of bringing back the lost glory of Islam in the shape of the imposition of the Shari‘a which stipulates that the minorities may be considered as Ahl al-dhimmā and asked to pay the Jizya (p. 48). He forgets to mention that none of the ‘Ulāmā, including Mawlānā Mawdūdi, demanded the imposition of Jizya on the minorities. Neither does the Shari‘a require its imposition under all circumstances. He himself quotes Mawlānā Mawdūdi in a later chapter (VIII) where the latter refers to the case of Banū Taghlib who were exempted from the payment of Jizya.

In the chapter on Mawdūdi’s political involvement, Dr. Riaz Ahmed compares Mawdūdi’s views about the Islamic State with the views of such scholars as Khalifa ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm and Muḥammad Asad.

The fifth chapter deals with the principles of Law and Constitution. Here he discusses Mawdūdi’s views on the place of Islamic Fiqh in modern times. Mawdūdi, he says, is not in favour of rejecting Fiqh. His attitude towards the place of Fiqh in legislation is slightly more traditional, according to the author of the book. Nevertheless, he admits that there are also elements of liberalism in Mawdūdi’s attitude towards Islamic law.

In the chapter on the Concept of Jihād in Mawdūdi, the author makes some sweeping remarks. He says that the Islamic State had perforce to be an expanding state. It
refused to recognise the principle of co-existence with non-Muslims. It had to embark upon a ceaseless war for the sake of Islam.

Dealing with the economic structure of the Islamic State as envisaged by Mawlānā Mawdūdī, the author omits to mention the most important work of Mawdūdī on this subject, namely, his book on Islam and the problem of land proprietorship (Islam Awr Mas'ala'i Milkiyat-e-Zamin). Actually this book, in which Mawlānā Mawdūdī supported feudalism and landlordism, evoked much criticism in intellectual circles and alienated him from a large number of liberals and progressives. It set a seal on Mawlānā Mawdūdī’s conservatism. A discussion on Mawlānā Mawdūdī’s economic theories is incomplete without discussing his views on the system of land proprietorship. Similarly, in the ninth chapter on the position of women, the author mentions a few books written by Mawdūdī but he fails to mention one of his most important works, Huqūq al-Zawjān.

In the conclusion, he says that Mawdūdī derives his strength from the lower middle classes but predicts that, as economic opportunities widen and the lower middle classes rise in the social scale, the more liberal views of Iqbal are likely to influence them more and more rather than the conservatism of Mawdūdī. He does not discuss the question why Mawdūdī, starting as a liberal, turned more and more conservative with the passage of time.

The book is mainly descriptive and not sufficiently critical. It contains very little criticism of Mawlānā Mawdūdī and his thought.

The author does not disclose his own views about what an Islamic State should be. But as far as can be gathered from his few casual remarks, he leans dangerously towards secularism. For example, speaking about the non-religious factors involved in Pakistan’s effort to draw up a constitution, he says, “on the one hand it showed the failure of the ‘Ulāma’ to realize the importance of the matters involved in the nature of the legislature, and on the other hand, it showed that the Muslims could be divided and concerned with matters of representation which lies completely outside the scope of Islam. It also showed that political factors, which would be completely outside Islam, could divide a nation and Islam could stand impotent and helpless” (p. 63). Thus, true to the secular spirit, he divides matters into those which lie within the purview of Islam and those which lie outside it, forgetting that there is an Islamic attitude of toleration, justice and benevolence (Ihsān) even in those matters about which Islam gives no specific directions and it is precisely because political and economic problems were not tackled in the true Islamic spirit that there were divisions and quarrels which ultimately led to the secession of East Pakistan. Similarly, writing about the attitude of the Hindū members of the first Constituent Assembly towards the report of the Basic Principles Committee, he says, “the fear that Pakistan would become a theocratic state was uppermost in their minds and, therefore, quite justifiably they were sceptical of the Islamic bias of the report of the Basic Principles Committee” (p. 71). Thus, he justifies the attitude of the Hindū members of the first Constituent Assembly and disapproves of the Islamic bias of the Basic Principles Committee report. This is nothing but secularism.