VOLUME 23 FALL 2006 NUMBER 4

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC SOCIAL SCIENCES

ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT

VOLUME 23 FALL 2006 NUMBER 4

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC SOCIAL SCIENCES

ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT

www.icsbook.info

Note to Contributors

The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS) is an interdisciplinary journal that publishes a wide variety of scholarly research on all facets of Islam and the Muslim world: anthropology, economics, history, philosophy and metaphysics, politics, psychology, religious law, and traditional Islam. Submissions are subject to a blind peer review process.

Submissions must conform to the following guidelines:

- Be the author's original research. Simultaneous submissions to other journals, as well as previous publication in any format and language, are not accepted.
- Be between 7,000 and 10,000 words in length (shorter articles may be accepted when justified by their exceptionally high quality); book reviews and conference reports must be between 800-1,000 words;
- Include a 250 word (max) abstract;
- Cite all bibliographical information in endnotes. Provide full biographical information (e.g., full name(s) of author(s), complete title of the source, place of publication, publishing company, date of publication, and the specific page being cited) when the source is mentioned for the first time. For subsequent citations of the same source, list the author's last name, abbreviate the title, and give the relevant page number(s). Do not use footnotes or a bibliography;
- Avoid putting the author's name in headers or footers, and avoid any personal references in the body or the endnotes that might betray their identity to referees;
- Include a cover sheet with the author's full name, current university or professional affiliation, mailing address, phone/fax number(s), and current e-mail address. Provide a two-sentence biography;
- Transliterate Arabic words according to the style in AJISS, which is based upon that used by the Library of Congress;
- All submissions should be in MS-Word, double-spaced, and on single-sided numbered pages;
- AJISS does not return manuscripts to authors.

AJISS is indexed in the following publications: a) U.M.I. (16 mm microfilm, 35 mm microfilm, 105 mm microfiche for article copies of 1990 issues and after); b) Religion Index One: Periodicals and Index to Book Reviews in Religion (1987 and after). These indexes are part of the ATLA Religion Data-base, available on the WilsonDisc CD-ROM from H. W. Wilson Co., and online via WilsonLine, BRS Information Technologies, and Dialog Information Services; c) Public Affairs Information Service (December 1990 and after); d) Sociological Abstracts (1985 and after); and e) International Current Awareness Services (1992 and after). Selected material is indexed in the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences. Opinions expressed in AJISS are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or publishers. No photocopying is allowed without the express permission of the publisher. See last page for distributors and subscription rates.

The TranslitLS, TranslitSBL and TranslitLSAkk fonts used to create this work are © 1994-2002 Payne Loving Trust. They are available from Linguist's Software, Inc., www.linguist-software.com, PO Box 580, Edmonds, WA 98020-0580 USA, tel (425) 775-1130.

© The International Institute of Islamic Thought
ISSN 0742-6763

www.icsbook.info

CONTENTS

Editorial i

Articles

Classification of Abrogation in the Qur'an: A Critical Analysis
Israr Ahmad Khan 1

Comparative Religion in Medieval Muslim Literature
Hilman Latief 28

Islamicjerusalem: A Model for Multiculturalism
Maher Abu-Munshar 63

The Islamic Concept of Education Reconsidered
Khosrow Bagheri and *Zohreh Khosravi* 88

Review Essay

Contours of an Islamo-Christian Civilization
David Johnston 104

Book Reviews

Formations of the Secular
(by Talal Asad)
Amr G. E. Sabet 112

Stolen Youth: The Politics of Israel's Detention of Palestinian Children
(by Catherine Cook, Adam Hanieh, and Adah Kay)
K. Luisa Gandolfo 114

Islam, Memory, and Morality in Yemen: Ruling Families in Transition
(by Gabriele vom Bruck)
Daniel Martin Varisco 117

The Kemalists: Islamic Revival and the Fate of Secular Turkey
(by Muammer Kaylan)
Markus Dressler 120

Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History
(by David Arnold and Stuart Blackburn, eds.)
Jose Abraham 123

Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel, and the Ottoman Harem
(by Reina Lewis)
Amani Hamdan 126

Burned Alive: A Victim of the Laws of Men
(by Souad, tr. Judith Armbruster)
Maleeha Aslam 128

www.icsbook.info

A History of Islamic Philosophy, 3d ed.
(by Majid Fakhry)
Anita Mir 131

Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy, and Mysticism
in Muslim Thought. Essays in Honour of Hermann Landolt
(by Todd Lawson, ed.)
Andrew Rippin 134

Forum

Reflections from the Social Sciences on the Possible Causes
of Abusing Muslim Prisoners of War
Walter R. Schumm 136

Conference, Symposium, and Panel Reports

The First Annual Muslim Peacebuilding, Justice,
and Interfaith Dialogue
Ashleigh Zimmerman 149

Globalization and Trans-nationalism
Jay Willoughby 151

Should the U.S. Shut Down Gitmo?
Soha Srour 153

Abstracts

Doctoral Dissertations 156

www.icsbook.info

Editorial

As if to give the lie to my last editorial, in which I argued that the "war on terror" was a smokescreen covering the imperial ambitions of the United States' neo-conservative political elite, on the day that the issue went to press, Toronto's Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) announced the arrest of seventeen young Muslim men on terrorism-related charges. Five are under 18, several are over 30, and the rest are in their late teens and early 20s.

The shock permeated Toronto. Non-Muslims were shocked that "it could happen here," and Muslims were shocked that some of their own were willing to kill fellow Canadians. As can be imagined, the following media frenzy displayed the usual racism (disguised as attacks on multiculturalism) from commentaries, editorials, letters to the editor, and experts concerning the "threat" of Muslim extremism in Canada. Muslim organizations and those with links to the media were back on the media circuit (or is it circus?) doing interviews, hot on the heels of the cartoon controversy, trying to explain this and to distance themselves and Islam as a religion from attack. There was the usual spike in Islamophobic backlash, although this was largely contained by Toronto's Mayor David Miller and other leaders.

There was also the usual skepticism and claims of anti-Muslim discrimination from some Muslims. While we do not know the veracity of the evidence, and while it may be admirable that the belief is so strong that Islam prohibits terror that we cannot conceive of fellow Muslims doing such a thing, it ultimately harms the community that this kind of response is so widespread. For one thing, the media use this sentiment to mock us and portray us as cold and indifferent to the threat of terror. For another, although it seems to be painful for some to admit, our community has to take ownership of the extremism existing in its midst.

These men may be innocent and may have been framed or discriminated against, but we have to face up to the results of such extremist interpretations. It is all very well to say that "this is not Islam" and to worry about the media's portrayal of Islam as a religion of violence, but we must also talk to ourselves and our youths and show them that such actions are beyond the pale of Islam. Moreover, we need to debunk the arguments of those Muslims who challenge this view.

www.icsbook.info

By the same token, we must follow proper Islamic etiquette when engaging in such critiques. The "progressive Muslim" approach of attacking fellow Muslims and mainstream Muslim associations as "Wahhabist" extremists and portraying themselves as the only peaceful, moderate Muslims available to Canada was quite shameful. One radio documentary about Islamic extremism in Toronto played a clip from a prominent Toronto "progressive" Muslim spokesman followed by one from Steven Emerson, a known Islamophobe. One has to imagine that the Muslim community has reached a new low when such people are quoted supporting each other.

Following the case is hard, due to the publication ban, but the lawyers have revealed what they can. Incredibly, the young men were charged with planning to storm the Parliament in Ottawa, hold MPs hostage and decapitate Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and blow up the Canadian Security Intelligence Service's (CSIS) headquarters and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), among other targets. For the briefest moment, I considered the idea that these arrests had proven me and other skeptical scholars of the "war on terror" wrong: I have been in the CBC building before, and could have died had such an attack been successful. (Nothing like confronting one's own mortality to alter one's thinking.) "Thank God that the RCMP and CSIS investigations foiled this plot" was an early thought. But upon deeper investigation, my original position remains the most robust theory to understand this "war," even if it turns out that we should be grateful to the RCMP/CSIS for foiling indiscriminate bombings.

Before proceeding, I would like to state emphatically that Islam does not support the killing of civilians and that those who argue otherwise are perverting the Qur'anic text. While self-defense is enjoined, indiscriminate aggression is not. Moreover, the Prophet's prohibition on killing women and children, as well as those devoted to the religious life and old people, has been upheld by Islamic jurisprudence from the beginning.

However, let's not forget the "Project Thread" fiasco of 2003, in which twenty-one young South Asian men were arrested for "planning an attack" on the Pickering nuclear power station. Supposedly an al-Qaeda sleeper cell, the charges were dropped by the end of the month for lack of evidence. Even though they were never formally charged (or convicted) of a crime, most of them were deported to Pakistan. No apology or clearing of their names was issued. Their lives were ruined, and the Pakistani authorities continue to harass them (www.threadbare.tyo.ca).

And then there was the dramatic revelation about a month later by Mubin Shaikh, a Muslim informant. During an interview with the CBC

www.icsbook.info

about how the CSIS and then the RCMP had recruited him, as well as his role in the arrests, he stated:

> So I met with the CSIS guys and they were very interested in me now, so basically they put to me the prospect of working with them," he said … [I was asked to find out about] certain people, certain groups, getting close to leaders of certain groups, talking to them, seeing what kind of views they had and reporting on those views, what I thought those views to be, were they nefarious, weren't they nefarious." (Stewart Bell and Katie Rook, *National Post*, Friday, 14 July 2006.)

His revelations are troubling, because they suggest that the CSIS and the RCMP sought to influence these youths. Muslim community leaders recalled seeing him talking to and befriending these youths outside their mosques. Although they looked up to him as a role model, instead of guiding them and helping them understand the Qur'an properly, he encouraged their line of thinking … perhaps even directed it. This is entrapment, defined as when undercover law officials lure or encourage people to commit an illegal act that they may not otherwise have thought of doing.

In the East Vancouver newspaper *The Republic*, Michael Nenonen notes: "Noam Chomsky said that during the Vietnam era's anti-war protests, the easiest way to spot an FBI mole was to look for the person advocating the most violent strategies." A similar phenomenon may be occurring with western governments' undercover officers actually creating the so-called radical Islamist threat. In her report on the Muslim informant, *Toronto Star* reporter Michelle Shephard pointed out:

> Australia's first terrorism trial ended in an acquittal last year after jurors heard that a police agent working for the country's spy service, and posing as a journalist, had offered 21-year-old terrorism suspect Zek Mallah $3,000 for a videotape of him uttering threats against government buildings. In acquitting him of the terrorism charges, the jury concluded that Mallah was not a terrorist, but a troubled orphan full of bravado. The involvement of an FBI informant in the case of seven Miami men charged with terrorism offences two weeks ago has been criticized by some of the defence lawyers who argue that the agent had concocted part of the case. The men are accused of plotting to blow up Chicago's Sears Tower and federal buildings in five cities, and of having ties to Al Qaeda. Lawyer Nathan Clark told the *New York Times* that his client was "induced by the government," calling the case one of "entrapment." But the involvement of an undercover officer and informant in a New York case led to a conviction this May and was trumpeted as a milestone in the city's fight

www.icsbook.info

> against terrorism. The trial of Shahawar Matin Siraj, convicted of plotting to blow up a subway station, revealed that an Egyptian-born police officer and undercover agent were instrumental in the case. ("Mounties had mole in alleged terror cell Exclusive: Law prohibits publication of prominent member of Muslim community," *Toronto Star*, 13 July 2006.)

In the article cited above, Nenonen reminds us that the RCMP has played this kind of role before:

> During the 1970s, as part of the police action against the FLQ, the RCMP monitored election candidates, stole a Parti Quebecois membership list, opened mail without authorization, engaged in 400 break-ins, electronically spied on at least one member of Parliament, and even burned down a barn in Quebec.

These worrying signs recall the theory that the "war on terror" is a smokescreen for the imperial ambitions of an elite (supported by their followers in satellite countries): The general public remains distracted by supposed terror threats at home, while abroad the empire is being expanded. That fact that Ottawa has embarked on a massive military spending spree at the same time cannot be a coincidence: $2 billion for helicopters, $3.4 billion for cargo air, $2.1 billion for naval supply ships. Including maintenance, this adds up to $15 billion over 20 years. These announcements were made in June 2006, just as Canadians were feeling grateful that the RCMP and the CSIS had foiled a "terrorist plot" in Toronto.

The subsequent support in Washington, London, Ottawa, and Canberra for Israel's invasion of Lebanon, which deserves an editorial in its own right, simply "confirms" this theory. This tragedy was portrayed as democracies supporting the "only" democracy in the Middle East against the "terrorist" Hezbollah. That Lebanon is also a democracy, as well as Israel's actions that invite the appellation of "terrorist" (e.g., the July 30 attack on Qana), seem to be irrelevant. And thus we come back to a theory that exposes such moralizing for what it really is: territorial, expansionist, and imperialist.

This issue's first article, "Classification of Abrogation in the Qur'an: A Critical Analysis," tackles an important topic that implicitly addresses some of the themes alluded to above. Abrogation is the concept that later revelations cancel earlier ones, or that the Prophet's later practices cancel his earlier ones. The author uses the traditional methods (viz., examining the chain of narration and the text for logical consistency) to investigate the relevant hadiths. He argues that the reports of abrogation are not authentic, and that abrogation endangers the Qur'an's "safety and authenticity."

www.icsbook.info

Politically, we can see the importance of this kind of investigation in that some zealots, who like to resort to militancy to achieve their goals, often claim that the Qur'anic verses enjoining tolerance were abrogated by those enjoining fighting the enemy.

One of the more distressing aspects of the "war on terror" is its impact on human relations at the micro-level – neighbor to neighbor, colleague to colleague. A growing number of Americans favor racial profiling, and a July 2006 Gallup poll reported that nearly 22 percent would not like to have a Muslim neighbor. Hence, it is timely for AJISS to publish two articles dealing with Muslims and tolerance. Hilman Latief's comparative study of Abu Rayhan al-Biruni (d. 1048) and Abdul Karim al-Shahrastani (d. 1153) shows that Muslim civilization is not innately hostile to non-Muslims and so can cultivate sophisticated and respectful ways of relating to non-Muslims. While the modern West prides itself on having invented tolerance, this was a marked featured of medieval Islam. To be sure, many contemporary Muslims, along with their hostile or unaware non-Muslim western counterparts, need to be reminded of this. Many people might be surprised that al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani produced very sophisticated and objective analyses of Indian and Chinese religions, and that, as "Eric J. Sharpe writes, "the honor of writing the first history of religion in world literature seems in fact to belong to the Muslim Shahrastani."

Maher Abu-Munshar's "Islamicjerusalem: A Model for Multiculturalism" examines how these two rulers established a multicultural society in Jerusalem. He introduces the novel concept of "Islamicjerusalem" as a way to designate those periods of Muslim rule in which this city's Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived together in harmony. This essay is a timely reminder that when Muslims rule non-Muslims, they do not force them to convert or kill them on every street corner, as is commonly claimed in some quarters today. Indeed, Usama bin Laden would do well to reflect on the compassionate treatment that `Umar ibn al-Khattab and Salah al-Din (Saladin) extended to Jews and Christians, even as they signed treaties ending bloody wars. Salah al-Din was renowned in Europe for his military prowess tempered by his chivalry and merciful nature. In contrast, bin Laden is reviled and hated for his barbarity.

In their "Islamic Concept of Education Reconsidered," Khosrow Bagheri and Zohre Khosravi provide a thoughtful exploration of the assumptions about rationality that underpin liberal critiques of religious education. They conclude that, contrary to the liberal presumption that religious education is akin to indoctrination, "rationality is involved in all elements of the Islamic concept of education." They also argue that both modern Muslim madras-

www.icsbook.info

sahs and modern western classrooms rely more on indoctrination than on education through reason: "It must be noted that it is not too difficult to create a 'doctrine' from science and then indoctrinate the people with it."

We are pleased to include in this issue's "Forum" section a submission from Walter R. Schumm, a retired colonel and professor of family studies who has a unique perspective on the underlying sociological causes for the Bush administration's abuse of military prisoners. He presents a very strong argument that such abuse is morally wrong as well as pragmatically and strategically counter-productive. Most importantly, Schumm recognizes the disastrous impact that this abuse is having on the United States' relations with the Muslim world and offers the following very moving apology that deserves widespread publicity:

> If it were possible for me to apologize to the entire Islamic world for our errors and pray for their forgiveness, I surely would, though it would not be deserved and perhaps not likely to be granted. I can certainly say that abuse of EPWs is not consistent with the American military and moral principles that I was taught to respect and obey.

His essay reminds us that even in a time of war, people of different faiths can reach across the divide and grasp the hand of the "other" in order to bring about peace, justice, and mutual respect. AJISS is proud to be his companion in this.

To end on a sad note. Dilnawaz Siddiqui, a long-time member of the AJISS Editorial Board, passed away on 3 August 2006. *Inna lillāhi wa inna ilayhi rāji`ūn.* Always willing to make time to work for AJISS, he excelled in doing article peer reviews, writing book reviews, and offering guidance for the journal's editorial. Most recently, he had agreed to take over some of my responsibilities as editor during the birth of my last child, including writing the editorial for the AJISS 22:4 issue. He will be sorely missed. May Allah (swt) forgive his sins, give him ease in the grave, and grant him Paradise.

Katherine Bullock

www.icsbook.info

Classification of Abrogation in the Qur'an: A Critical Analysis

Israr Ahmad Khan

Abstract

Most classical-era Qur'anic studies scholars, among then Abu `Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam (d. 224 AH), Makki ibn Abi Talib (d. 437 AH), Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597 AH), Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi (d. 794 AH), and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH) were enthusiastic supporters of the theory of abrogation. They claimed that the Qur'an contains three types of abrogation[1]: suspension of certain verses' practical dimension only, expurgation of both the verses and their rulings, and exclusion of the verses even though their rulings are still valid. To substantiate their approach, they advanced hadiths comprising statements supposedly made by both the Companions (Sahabah) and the Followers (Tabi`un). A rational and critical scrutiny of these hadiths will reveal whether they can form the basis of such arguments.

I will check the nature of these hadiths' chains of narrators and weigh the views attributed to early Muslim scholars against reason. As regards the first category, several of my articles on these arguments have been published elsewhere.[2] This article, which examines the remaining two categories, consists of two dimensions: applying the hadith criticism principle to these hadiths and checking their information in a rational manner.

The Orientalists Review of Abrogation: A Clarification

Several western scholars have made great contributions to the discussion of abrogation in the Qur'an. The most respectable one is John Burton, author

Israr Ahmad Khan is an associate professor in the Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies, International Islamic University Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia.

www.icsbook.info

of several valuable works, such as *Sources of Islamic Law: Islamic Theories of Abrogation* (Edinburgh University Press: 1990) and *The Collection of the Qur'an* (Cambridge University Press: 1977), and editor and commentator on Abu `Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam's *Kitāb al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh* (Istanbul: 1987). While not everyone agrees with his ideas, his discussion remains within the general boundaries drawn by such traditional Muslim scholars as Abu `Ubayd al-Qasim.

Daniel W. Brown's *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought* (Cambridge University Press: 1996) analyzes matters related to abrogation, but not as a full-fledged discussion. Christopher Melchert's *The Formation of Sunni Schools of Law, 9th-10th Centuries C.E.* deals at length with abrogation as well as its types, particularly the stands of al-Shafi`i, Abu `Ubayd al-Qasim, Ibn Qutaybah, and other Sunni legal schools that hold that the Sunnah can abrogate Qur'anic verses. Daniel Madigam's *The Qur'an's Self Image: Writing and Authority in Islam's Scripture* (Princeton University Press: 2001) represents the latest attempt to analyze the Qur'an's position. Its first chapter, "The Qur'an as a Book," accommodates, among other things, the issue of abrogation and criticizes Burton's stand.

Although these western scholars have furthered the discussion on abrogation from various angles, none of them have looked at the hadiths concerned or the classification of abrogation in an attempt to determine whether they are authentic or not.

Expurgating the Verses and Their Rulings

Al-Suyuti posits three types of abrogation. The first one comprises those verses whose recitation and practice were annulled.[3] Al-Zarkashi rules that reciting and practicing such abrogated passages is unlawful.[4] According to Ibn al-Jawzi, the first category of abrogated verses consists of those verses that have had their documentation and practical implication canceled.[5] Makki ibn Abi Talib modifies this category slightly: This type is constituted by what Allah had lifted up in terms of writing and practicing as well as what had disappeared from people's memory.[6] Abu `Ubayd refers to this category as those abrogated verses that were lifted up after their revelation and omitted from people's memory and writing.[7] These scholars used seven hadiths to validate their views. A critical analysis of these hadiths is given below.

Hadith No. 1: `A'ishah reported that a verse prohibited ten foster relatives and that this was abrogated by a later verse that prohibited five foster relatives. When the Prophet (saw [peace be upon him]) died, this verse was still being recited.[8]

www.icsbook.info

Based upon the chain of narrators, this is an authentic hadith. However, there is an obvious flaw in the text: Two revelations concerning foster relatives came down, the first one comprising ten relations and the second one, comprising only five relations, that replaced the first verse. Therefore, the second verse should be present in the Qur'an as we know it today, since this Qur'an is the same Qur'an that was used by the Prophet (saw) and his pious political successors. But it contains no such verse. As such, despite its strong chain of transmission, the hadith is unacceptable because it contradicts the Qur'an and places its integrity in doubt.

Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalani (d. 852 AH) states that this hadith is unsuitable as evidence because what is claimed therein as part of the Qur'an was never found in the Qur'an.[9] Malik ibn Anas is said to have ignored the practical viability of the information given in this hadith.[10]

Hadith No. 2: Some people wanted to recite a certain surah during the night prayer, but they could not remember it. When they mentioned this to the Prophet (saw), he said: "It was abrogated last night."[11]

Abu Umamah ibn Sahl ibn Hunayf (d. 100 AH), who belonged to the Followers and was born two years before the Prophet's (saw) death, reported this hadith. However, scholars have shown that he never heard any hadiths from the Prophet (saw).[12] In other words, he learned about this event from another source(s). Since he did not disclose his source(s), his hadith is considered to be disconnected (*munqaṭi`*) and, hence, unreliable. Ibn al-Athir (d. 630 AH) writes that Abu Umamah reported no hadith from the Prophet[13]: The above hadith is from the Prophet (saw).

Based on the above hadith, this event appears to be of an extraordinary nature. Yet only Abu Umamah reports it. Since a solitary hadith cannot be used as an argument concerning the Qur'an's content, it may not be a strong hadith. In addition, its text clearly states that many Companions could not remember a particular surah. If this were true, it would have been reported through many sources and thus would have been considered continuous (*mutawātir*) and reliable. But in the absence of such continuity, it may not be a strong hadith.

This hadith has three chains of transmission: Yunus, al-Zuhri, Abu Umamah; `Uqayl, al-Zuhri, Abu Umamah; and Shu`ayb, al-Zuhri, Abu Umamah. The text given by the first two chains is almost the same. However, it differs slightly as reported by the third chain. This difference does not seem to be negative; rather, it seems that the hadith through Yunus (d. 159 AH) and `Uqayl (d. 141 AH) is brief and that the one through Shu`ayb (d. 162 AH) is a bit more detailed. According to Shu`ayb, after listening to these Compan-

www.icsbook.info

ions, the Prophet (saw) remained silent and replied only after a while. This delay shows that he learned of this surah's abrogation only after the Companions told him what had happened. Logically, this is rather strange. As the sole recipient of the Revelation, he should have known of any such modification before anyone else. The above hadith negates this hypothesis. In addition, it is hard to accept that the Prophet (saw) was unaware of such an abrogation until its erasure from other peoples' memory was reported to him.

Hadith No. 3: Abu Musa al-Ash`ari says: A surah like Surat al-Bara'ah came down but was lifted up later. Its verse ("Verily, Allah will soon help this religion through such people as have no interest in the good. If the son of Adam possessed two valleys of wealth, he would crave for the third one. The stomach of Adam's son cannot be filled but with clay. Allah forgives one who repents") remained in the people's memory.[14]

Its chain (Hammad ibn Salmah, `Ali ibn Zayd, Abu Harb ibn Abi al-Aswad, Abu Musa) is weak and unreliable. Yahya ibn Sa`id (d. 144 AH), Wuhayb (d. 165 AH), al-Nasa'i (d. 203 AH), Ibn Sa`d (d. 230 AH), Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241 AH), al-Juzjani (d. 259 AH), al-`Ajali, (d. 261 AH), and al-Duri (d. 271 AH) all consider `Ali ibn Zayd (d. 108 AH) to be a weak reporter and his hadiths as insufficient to form the basis of an argument.[15] Yahya ibn Sa`id always avoided his hadiths.[16] According to Ibn Hibban (d. 354 AH), `Ali ibn Zayd deserves to be abandoned because his hadiths contain too many errors.[17] Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH) says: "I do not use his hadith due to his weak memory."[18] Abu Hatim (d. 277 AH) says: "He is not strong; his hadith is written but not used as an argument."[19] Hammad ibn Zayd (d. 179 AH) had very strange experiences with him: "What `Ali ibn Zayd reported one day was contradicted by him the following day."[20] Obviously, the hadith's authenticity is doubtful.

Hadith No. 4: Mujahid ibn Jabr (d. 104 AH) reported that Surat al-Ahzab was like Surat al-Baqarah or longer.[21]

Its chain (Ibn Abi Da'ud and Muhammad ibn `Uthman al-`Ajli, Abu Nu`aym, `Asim ibn Bahdalah, Sayf ibn Sulayman, Mujahid) is strong. Although all of its narrators are considered highly authentic, in technical terms it is a disconnected hadith. Mujahid, one of the Followers, is a great scholar, but his source for this hadith is unclear. Moreover, the above hadith does not explain why Surat al-Ahzab was shortened, and Mujahid does not spell out whether this was due to abrogation.

www.icsbook.info

Hadith No. 5: Ubayy ibn Ka`b asked Zirr ibn Hubaysh (d. 83 AH) how he recited Surat al-Ahzab. He answered: "Seventy or seventy-one verses." Ubayy said: "By God, it came down to the Prophet (saw); it was like al-Baqarah or longer than it."[22]

This hadith has two different chains – `Abbad ibn Ya`qub, Sharik al-Nakha`i, `Asim, Zirr ibn Hubaysh, Ubayy ibn Ka`b[23]; and Isma`il ibn Ja`far, Mubarak ibn Fudalah, `Asim, Zirr, Ubayy[24] – both of which are defective. The first chain's problem lies with Sharik al-Nakha`i (d. 177 AH) and `Abbad ibn Ya`qub (d. 250 AH). Sharik's reports are divided into categories: "early" (when he lived in Wasit) and "later" (when he lived in Kufah).[25] Scholars are almost unanimous over the first category's authenticity, whereas they view the second category as doubtful, weak, and unreliable. Ibn Hibban included Sharik's name in the list of authentic reporters, but with the following clarification: "During his stay in Kufah, Sharik would err in his hadiths due to his weak memory. Hence, those who learned from him during this period learned things full of delusion."[26] In the above hadith, the narrator citing Sharik as an authority is `Abbad ibn Ya`qub of Kufah, who studied under him in Kufah. As this hadith was related during the last stage of Sharik's life, it is both weak and unreliable.

`Abbad ibn Ya`qub was another controversial figure. Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH) ultimately abandoned his hadiths.[27] `Abbad is accused of narrating, strangely enough, hadiths praising certain people and condemning others, including `Uthman ibn `Affan.[28] Ibn Hibban wrote that `Abbad's hadiths are to be avoided, because he used to narrate strange and unknown statements (*manākir*) from well-known authorities.[29] Although such scholars as Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 235 AH) and al-Darqutni (d. 385 AH) favored accepting his hadiths,[30] `Abbad's overall image seems to be reprehensible. He wrongly attributes to the Prophet (saw) such statements as "If you see Mu`awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan on my pulpit, kill him."[31] In addition, he cites a false hadith, based upon `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud's authority, concerning Qur'an 33:25, which differed from the original: "... and enough is Allah for the believers in their fight..." But according to `Abbad, it reads: "And Allah makes `Ali enough for the believers in their fight."[32] Someone who falsely attributes such statements to the Prophet (saw) and asserts that the Qur'an has been changed deserves to be condemned as unreliable.

The second chain's defect is Mubarak ibn Fudalah. Such scholars as al-Nasa'i, Ibn Sa`d, and al-Saji declared him to be weak (*ḍa`īf*)[33]; others, like Ibn Ma`in, al-`Ajli, al-Darqutni, and Abu Da'ud, considered him to be either acceptable or weak, depending upon the circumstances.[34] This is not a conflicting situation, for it represents two categories of hadiths. If he reports

www.icsbook.info

something from his immediate source with the phrase "he reported to us (*ḥaddathanā*)," it is reliable. But if he uses the term reflecting his indirect taking (e.g., *`an* [from]), his hadith may not be taken for granted. Abu Zur`ah and al-Ajurri deem him as reliable only when he says "*ḥaddathanā*".[35] In the hadith mentioned above, he uses *`an* to refer to his immediate [and therefore indirect] source: Asim ibn Bahdalah. But biographical dictionaries do not mention `Asim as one of Mubarak's sources. Thus, what Mubarak reported from `Asim may not be authentic.

Apart from these defects, the texts of the two hadiths conflict with each other. In Sharik's hadith, Surat al-Ahzab, as disclosed by Zirr ibn Hubaysh (d. 83 AH), has seventy or seventy-one verses. But in Mubarak's hadith, Zirr says it has seventy-two or seventy-three verses. This indicates that Zirr was not sure of the exact number. Given that Zirr was a highly recognized Qur'anic scholar[36] who had learned the Qur'an from `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud,[37] whose authority had been verified by the Prophet (saw) himself, how could he not know this surah's length?[38] If the above hadith is accepted as genuine, it would mean that Zirr did not know how many verses this surah contained and that he had not memorized the Qur'an. Thus, he could not have been a scholar of the Qur'an. But if the historical information about him is accepted as genuine, the above hadith will automatically be considered false.

There is another textual problem. In one hadith, Ubayy ibn Ka`b describes the original Surat al-Ahzab as having been as long as Surat al-Baqarah. But in the same vein, he refers to the possibility of the former having been longer than the latter. In the other hadith, he equates Surat al-Ahzab with Surat al-Baqarah in terms of their length. This hadith also calls Ubayy's authenticity as a Qur'anic scholar into question. However, the Prophet (saw) had included his name in the list of four scholars of the Qur'an.[39] Keeping this certification in view, Ubayy could not have forgotten the surah's precise length. These discrepancies render the hadith doubtful.

Hadith No. 6: `A'ishah said: "Surat al-Ahzab, as recited during the Prophet's (saw) life, consisted of 200 verses. When `Uthman [ibn `Affan] prepared [the official] copies of the Qur'an, he wrote it only with the current number of verses."[40]

This hadith's chain (Sa`id ibn Abi Maryam, Ibn Lahi`ah, Abu al-Aswad, `Urwah ibn al-Zubayr, `A'ishah) is weak because of Ibn Lahi`ah, whom the majority of hadith scholars consider to be weak. Yahya ibn Sa`id, `Abd al-Rahman ibn Mahdi, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ibn Ma`in, `Amr ibn `Ali, Abu Hatim, and Abu Zur`ah state that he is both weak and unreliable.[41] Others, among them al-Azdi and al-Saji, consider his hadiths acceptable if they

www.icsbook.info

come through `Abd Allah ibn al-Mubarak, `Abd Allah ibn Wahb, `Abd Allah ibn Yazid al-Muqri, and `Abd Allah ibn Maslamah al-Qa`anbi.[42]

The above hadith comes through Ibn Abi Maryam, who did not say that he heard this news directly from Ibn Lahi`ah. Ibn Abi Maryam met Ibn Lahi`ah during the last stage of the latter's life.[43] The scholars' general impression is that what Ibn Lahi`ah reported during the first part of his academic life may be accepted as authentic; however, the hadiths narrated by him during the later stage of his life may not be reliable.[44] Ibn Abi Maryam, who reports this hadith from Ibn Lahi`ah, also believes that Ibn Lahi`ah was unreliable.[45]

The hadith's text also has a serious defect. According the text, `Uthman shortened Surat al-Ahzab's original length of 200 verses to only seventy-three. However, we know that `Uthman had many copies of the Qur'an made from the copy prepared during Abu Bakr's reign. Thus, there was no difference between the two Qur'ans. Al-Bukhari records `Uthman's contribution to preserving the Qur'an in the following words:

> When Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman, an army commander at the battle of Armenia and Azerbaijan, found that the people recited the Qur'an differently, he became concerned and shared his feelings with `Uthman: "Check this ummah before it falls prey to differences over the Qur'an, just as the Jews and the Christians did [with the revelations given to them]. Then, `Uthman sent a message to Hafsah (the Prophet's wife): "Give us the copy of the Qur'an. We shall prepare other copies on its basis and then return it to you." Hafsah sent the Qur'an to `Uthman, who asked Zayd ibn Thabit, `Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr, Sa`id ibn al-`As, and `Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Harith ibn Hisham to prepare several copies. They did so.[46]

If this hadith is considered authentic, it means that Surat al-Ahzab consisted of 200 verses in Abu Bakr's copy and that `Uthman reduced them to seventy-three. Rationally, this is unacceptable because Abu Bakr's copy was the same as the Qur'an that the Prophet had memorized, documented, recited, and communicated to the ummah. This was also the case with `Uthman's copy. To say that such a change took place during `Uthman's time places the Qur'an's authenticity in doubt. If any such change had been made, it would have had to occur before its revelation ended. The Qur'an's length, as communicated to the ummah by the Prophet (saw), was the final length. Therefore, no changes could have been made in it at a later date.

Hadith No. 7: `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud says: "A verse was revealed to the Prophet (saw), and I wrote it down in my copy of the Qur'an (*muṣḥaf*). One

www.icsbook.info

morning, I found the space where I had written it down wiped clean. When I told the Prophet (saw) about it, he asked: 'Did you not know that it was lifted up the previous day?'"[47]

This hadith's chain is technically suspended (*mu`allaq*), for only the final narrator's name mentioned. According to the scholars, any gap at the beginning of a chain means that the hadith is considered suspended and, therefore, unreliable.[48] In this hadith, only `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud is mentioned. I checked almost all of the available sources on CD ROM and found no source that provided a detailed chain for this hadith, which was first recorded (without a chain) in Hibat Allah ibn Salamah al-Muqri's (d. 410 AH) *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh.*[49] It seems that other scholars, including Ibn al-Jawzi, just borrowed and quoted it without a chain.

A natural question arises: Did other Companions known to have been very regular in documenting the Qur'an, such as `Ali, Ubayy ibn Ka`b, Mu`adh ibn Jabal, and Zayd ibn Thabit, have the same experience as Ibn Mas`ud did? If the verse, was wiped from Ibn Mas`ud's document, was it wiped from all of their documents as well? We have no information about this. Moreover, such an event is totally unnatural and illogical.

Hadith No. 8: Once the Prophet (saw) led the morning prayer and omitted a verse from his recitation. Afterward, Ubayy ibn Ka`b asked him: "O Prophet of Allah. Was that particular verse abrogated, or you were caused to forget it?" The Prophet (saw) answered: "I was caused to forget it."[50]

There is no problem with this hadith's chain (Yahya ibn Da'ud al-Wasti, Ishaq ibn Yusuf al-Azraq, Sufyan al-Thawri, Salmah ibn Kuhayl, Dharr ibn `Abd Allah, Sa`id ibn `Abd al-Rahman, `Abd al-Rahman ibn Abza), for all of the narrators are highly reliable (*thiqah*). But its text does not appear to serve the purpose for which Abu `Ubayd has used it. This learned scholar quotes this hadith to prove the total abrogation of a revealed verse. The Prophet's (saw) answer is obvious: He had forgotten to recite it. In other words, leaving it out was not due to its abrogation, but rather to a slip of the mind. Therefore, that verse was still part of the Qur'an.

One more thing makes this hadith doubtful. Ibn Abza, who was praying behind the Prophet (saw) on this occasion, simply said: "The Prophet led the morning prayer and left out a verse." He realized this because he knew the verse. But he does not refer to it precisely in his hadith at all. Why did the sources not provide an accurate reference to the verse in question? Half of the information reported therein may be construed as the basis for considering the hadith as not so strong.

www.icsbook.info

Abrogating Verses But Keeping Their Practical Validity

Supporters of abrogation claim that certain verses were revealed, written in the Qur'an, recited by the ummah and then, sometime later, were removed from the Qur'an. However, their practical application remains in place.

Hadith No. 1: `Abd Allah ibn `Umar said: "No one should say that he has the Qur'an in full. He may not know what constitutes full Qur'an, for a considerable part of it is gone. Rather, he should say: 'I have therefrom only what appeared.'"[51]

This hadith's chain (Isma`il ibn Ibrahim, Ayyub ibn Khawt, Nafi`, and `Abd Allah ibn `Umar) is defective, for Ayyub is unreliable. Hadith scholars state unanimously that his hadiths should not be accepted. Ibn Ma`in decrees: "His hadiths are not written."[52] Al-Nasa'i and al-Darqutni considers him forsaken (*matrūk*),[53] and al-Azdi declares him to be a liar (*kadhdhāb*).[54] Abu Hatim finds him weak, unsound, and invalid in matters of hadith,[55] and al-Saji opines that Ayyub narrated unfounded hadiths (*aḥādīth bawāṭil*).[56] In fact, he is said to have fabricated hadiths and transmitted them by using well-known reporters' names.[57]

Its text is also highly objectionable, for it places the Qur'an's authenticity in doubt. It seems that this text was fabricated to support the belief of some deviationist movements that a certain part of the Qur'an is hidden and beyond the believers' access.[58] The above hadith is thus unreliable from both angles: its chain and its text.

Hadith No. 2: Hamidah bint Abi Yunus claims that before `Uthman made changes in the Qur'anic documents (*maṣāḥif*) her father would recite to her from `A'ishah's copy: "Verily, Allah and His angels bless the Prophet. O believers, bless him and give yourselves up in utter self-surrender, and also bless those praying in the first rows."[59]

This hadith's chain (Hajjaj ibn Muhammad al-Masisi, Ibn Jurayj, Muhammad ibn Abi Humayd, Hamidah bint Abi Yunus) is defective due to the presence of Muhammad ibn Abi Humayd, who is considered weak. Almost all hadith scholars, including Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Duri, al-Juzjani, al-Nasa'i, al-Bukhari, Ibn Ma`in, al-Saji, al-Darqutni, Abu Da'ud, and Ibn Hibban, express doubt about his authenticity.[60] For example, one statement in the hadith, "before `Uthman made changes in the Qur'anic documents," contrasts with the history of the Qur'an's compilation: `Uthman did not make any changes in the Qur'an; he simply established a committee to make

www.icsbook.info

ten to fifteen copies of the Qur'an, which had been codified during Abu Bakr's reign.[61]

Ibn al-Jawzi records the same hadith, but with a slight different text: "Hamidah reports that `A'ishah bequeathed to us some of her articles, including her copy of the Qur'an, in which the statement 'Verily, Allah and His angels bless the Prophet and also those who pray in the first rows' appears."[62] Its chain is the same, and Muhammad ibn Abi Humayd is the one who reports from Hamidah. From the angle of its chain, this hadith is weak. Moreover, the verse as reported by Hamidah is slightly different from what she states in the other hadith.

Hadith No. 3: Abu Waqid al-Laythi says: "We would go to the Prophet (saw) whenever he received revelation, and he would teach it to us. One day I went to him, and he said that Allah says: 'Verily, We granted wealth to establish prayer and pay in charity. If a son of Adam possessed a valley, he would love to have the second one; if he possessed the second one, he would love to have the third one. The stomach of Adam's son cannot fill but with dust, and Allah accepts the repentance of the one who repents.'"[63]

This hadith's chain is as follows: `Abd Allah ibn Salih, Hisham ibn Sa`d, Zayd ibn Aslam, `Ata ibn Yasar, Abu Waqid al-Laythi. Hisham is controversial. Yahya ibn Sa`id avoids his hadiths,[64] Ibn Ma`in considers him weak,[65] and Abu Hatim opines that his hadiths are untrustworthy.[66]

Even if this hadith is considered acceptable, it cannot be claimed with certainty that what the Prophet (saw) recited as Allah's statement was part of the Qur'an. The Prophet (saw) only said: "Allah says." Thus, it does not necessarily indicate that this was a Qur'anic verse. In a *ḥadīth qudsī*, defined as one in which Allah speaks, the Prophet (saw) also used the same phrase to attribute the statement to Allah. It is most probable that the Prophet's (saw) above teaching is a *ḥadīth qudsī* and not a Qur'anic verse.

Hadith No. 4: According to Ubayy ibn Ka`b, the Prophet (saw) told him that Allah commanded him to recite the Qur'an to him (Ubayy), so he recited Surat al-Bayyinah, which included the verses "If Adam's son asked for a valley of wealth and I granted it to him, he would ask for the second one. If he asked two and I gave it to him, he would ask for the third one. There is no way to fill the stomach of Adam's son except with dust, and Allah accepts the repentance of the one who repents. The religion in the eyes of Allah is *Ḥanīfiyah* (true and orthodox), and not Judaism nor Christianity. One who does a good deed, He will never let it go to waste."[67]

www.icsbook.info

Apparently, there is no problem with this hadith's chain (Adam ibn Abi Iyas, Shu`bah ibn al-Hajjaj, `Asim ibn Bahdalah, Zirr ibn Hubaysh, and Ubayy ibn Ka`b). But a minute examination of each reporter will show some defect in it; hence, the hadith turns out to be weak. The problem lies with `Asim, who reports from Zirr. Although his general identity is considered acceptable and reliable (*thiqah*),[68] this recognition is accompanied by the following comment: "He made too many errors in his reporting (*kānā kathīr al-khatā' fī ḥadīthihi*)."[69] Technically, this observation signifies that his erroneous hadiths are far more numerous than his accurate hadiths.[70] In addition, `Asim's memory was defective. Ibn `Ulayyah, al-Nasa'i, al-Darqutni, and Abu Bakr al-Bazzar consider his memory weak.[71] Ya`qub ibn Sufyan describes him as a reliable reporter, but makes it clear that his hadiths contain some discrepancies (*iḍṭirāb*).[72]

Its text contains several objectionable things. The Prophet's (saw) statement to Ubayy, "Allah has commanded me to recite the Qur'an to you," raises several questions. What was so special about Ubayy that Allah commanded His Prophet to recite the Revelation to him first? In response, al-Qurtubi (d. 671 AH) quotes two general observations. First, the Prophet (saw) recited to Ubayy because he wanted to teach the people humility by making it clear that no one should refrain from teaching and reciting to any person in an inferior position. Second, since Ubayy was swifter in memorizing the Prophet's words than others, the Prophet (saw) wanted him to take his words, recite them precisely just as he had heard them, and then teach them to the others.[73]

However, these reasons are so general that they cannot be considered specific to any particular Companion. To teach people humility, the Prophet (saw) would have done better to choose Bilal, a freed black African slave. To say that Ubayy had the most infallible and sharpest memory cannot be accepted as true, for many others (e.g., `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud, Mu`adh ibn Jabal, Abu Darda', and Zayd ibn Thabit) had highly accurate memories and were fully capable of receiving the Qur'an from the Prophet (saw) and teaching it to other people correctly. It seems that "Allah has commanded me to recite the Qur'an to you" is a later insertion.

Moreover, why was this hadith only reported by `Asim from Zirr? Zirr was a great Qur'anic scholar, and a number of people benefited from his knowledge, the most prominent being Ibrahim al-Nakha`i (d. 96 AH), `Adi ibn Thabit (d. 116 AH), Amir al-Sha`bi (d. 103 AH), and Abu Ishaq al-Shaybani (d. 141 AH). But only `Asim mentions this hadith concerning Surat al-Bayyinah. This situation makes it solitary (*gharīb*), and if a solitary hadith contrasts with a well-known hadith, it must be rejected as unreliable. Abu

www.icsbook.info

Bakr al-Anbari (d. 328 AH) considers `Asim's hadith to be contrary to Ubayy's authentically reported recitation of Surat al-Bayyinah, which contains no reference to the verses other than those in the Qur'an, and thus classifies it as false (*bāṭil*).[74]

What this hadith presents as the Qur'an has been recorded by other sources, including al-Bukhari and Muslim, as the Prophet's (saw) statement and not as a part of the Qur'an. The former has recorded it as a hadith on the authority of three Companions (Ibn `Abbas, Ibn al-Zubayr, and Anas ibn Malik) who say very clearly that they heard the Prophet (saw) say it. However, they do not say that he recited it to them as part of the Qur'an.[75] After quoting it from the Prophet (saw), Ibn `Abbas said: "I do not know whether it is from the Qur'an or not."[76] Since he heard it directly from the Prophet (saw), who certainly did not mention that it was from the Qur'an, the question of whether it belongs to the Qur'an does not arise. Had the Prophet (saw) indicated that it was a Qur'anic verse, Ibn `Abbas would not have doubted its status.

Muslim records the same hadith as a hadith of the Prophet (saw) only through Anas ibn Malik and Ibn `Abbas.[77] But he also records a hadith, on Abu Musa al-Ash`ari's authority, according to which the above-mentioned statement was part of a long surah that Allah had caused to be forgotten.[78] This hadith in Muslim is unacceptable, because his direct source for it is Suwayd ibn Sa`id (d. 240 AH) who, according to al-Bukhari and al-Nasa'i, is weak.[79] There is also a conflict between `Asim's statement and that of Suwayd. The former says these verses were from Surat al-Bayyinah, a small surah; the latter reports them as part of a long surah, one that was as long as Surat al-Tawbah.

Al-Bukhari records a statement made by Ubayy ibn Ka`b through Anas ibn Malik: "We considered it (the above verses) part of the Qur'an until Surat al-Takathur came down."[80] This statement is ambiguous, because there is no apparent connection between the revelation of those verses in Surat al-Bayyinah and that of Surat al-Takathur. Also, there is no strong evidence that other Companions considered these verses as part of the Qur'an. As shown above, it is in clear conflict with several hadiths in which these sentences are stated to be the Prophet's (saw) own observation.

Hadith No. 5: Abu Musa al-Ash`ari said: "We used to recite a surah that we likened to a surah from the category of *musabbiḥāt* (surahs that begin with *sabbaḥa* or *yusabbiḥu*). Later on we forgot it, except for this verse: "O believers, do not say what you do not do. Evidence will be written on your necks, so you will be asked about it on the Day of Judgment."[81]

www.icsbook.info

All of the narrators in its chain (Farwah ibn Abi al-Maghra', `Ali ibn Mushir, Da'ud ibn Abi Hind, Abu Harb, his father), as given by Ibn Abi Hatim in his *Tafsīr*, are reliable. But from the detailed hadith, several questions emerge. According to Abu Musa, Allah caused this surah to be forgotten by lifting it up. Hence, it was no longer part of the Qur'an. So, why did the Companions recite part of it to the people of Basrah? What Allah had removed from the Qur'an should not have been recited. As the hadith spells out, Abu Musa, despite the fact that the Companions had "forgotten" this surah, managed to retain in his memory some part thereof. What Allah has removed from one's memory cannot be remembered. This hadith is another example of an extremely solitary hadith (*gharīb jiddan*). No other Companion reported it, which is very strange.

Hadith No. 6: One day, Maslamah ibn Makhlad al-Ansari (d. 60 AH) asked some people whether they were aware of two verses that were not included in the official copy of the Qur'an (*muṣḥaf*). When they said that they were not, he recited them: "Verily, those who attained to faith, made hijrah, and fought in the path of Allah with their wealth and lives – there is good news for you: You are successful. And those who sheltered them, helped them, and fought for them against those upon whom was the wrath of Allah do not know what blissful delights, as yet hidden, await them as a reward for all that they did."[82]

This hadith's chain (Sa`id ibn Abi Maryam, `Abd Allah ibn Lahi`ah, Yazid ibn `Amr al-Mu`afiriy, Abi Sufyan al-Kila`i) appears to be defective due to the presence of `Abd Allah. As stated above, he is considered unreliable. Most hadith scholars consider him weak and avoid his hadiths.[83]

Its text is also objectionable. As Maslamah ibn Makhlad points out, asserting that two verses were not written down in the *muṣḥaf* is a serious accusation against Abu Bakr, who formed a committee to compile the Qur'an in a book form, and against `Uthman, who assigned the task of preparing several copies of the Qur'an to a committee. Does the reporter want to say that Abu Bakr or `Uthman excluded the two above-mentioned verses from the Qur'an? History attests to the extra care taken by the committee members appointed by Abu Bakr, the most prominent of which were `Umar and Zayd ibn Thabit, both of whom had memorized the Qur'an. All hadiths suggesting that these two honest men made any changes in the Qur'an seem to have been fabricated to malign their good names and to create doubt about the Qur'an's authenticity.

www.icsbook.info

Hadith No. 7: `Umar once asked `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf: "Do you find what had been revealed about us: 'You continue making the utmost endeavor, as you did the first time'"? When the latter said that he did not, the former said: "It is one of those verses that were dropped from the Qur'an."[84]

All of the reporters in this hadith's chain (Sa`id ibn Abi Maryam, Nafi` ibn `Umar al-Jumhi, Ibn Abi Mulaykah, al-Miswar ibn Makhramah) are highly reliable. However, its text may not easily be accepted as correct. `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf's statement shows that he was not aware of such a revelation. It is strange that a revelation should come down concerning prominent Companions and then be excluded from the Qur'an, and that such a great Companion as `Abd al-Rahman would be totally ignorant of this incident – especially since he was one of the ten Companions to whom the Prophet (saw) promised Paradise. Moreover, the Prophet (saw) even prayed behind him.[85] Keeping his important status in mind, it is hard to imagine that he could have been unaware of a revelation that came down in praise of people like him. This would suggest that no such revelation took place.

The text also gives rise to another question about excluding certain verses. For instance, `Umar refers to this verse as one of those revelations that were dropped from the Qur'an. He does not use "lifted up" (*rufi`at*) "abrogated," (*nusikhat*), or "caused to be forgotten" (*unsiyat*), but "dropped" (*usqiṭat*), which seems to be a human – as opposed to a divine – act. If this is the case, then he is referring to the Qur'an's compilation undertaken during Abu Bakr's reign. This committee included `Umar. Nothing in the historical record suggests that `Umar and other committee members were free to include or drop Qur'anic verses as they wished. Rather, their task was to prepare a copy of the Qur'an that the Prophet (saw) had delivered to the ummah. Therefore, such people as `Umar, Zayd ibn Thabit, and others could not modify the Book of Allah. It seems that some unknown person used `Umar's name to create doubt about the Qur'an.

Hadith No. 8: Anas ibn Malik says: "Allah revealed a verse to His Prophet (saw) about those killed at Bi'r Ma`unah, and we recited it until it was abrogated. The verse was: 'Convey to our people that we reached our Lord, and that He was pleased with us and we were pleased with Him.'"[86]

Both al-Bukhari and Muslim, among others, include this hadith in their works.[87] All of the reporters in the chains used by these two hadith scholars are reliable. The last source in each chain is Anas ibn Malik, who says that the verse was revealed about the martyrs of Bi'r Ma`unah. `A'ishah's hadith about this event which is recorded in al-Bukhari's work, sheds a great deal

www.icsbook.info

of light on the nature of this verse. It is a rather long hadith. I relate its relevant portion, as narrated by `Urwah ibn al-Zubayr, here:

> So when the news about the martyrdom of his Companions at Bi'r Ma`unah reached the Prophet (saw), he informed the people: "Your people have been killed. They said to their Lord: 'O our Lord. Tell our brothers about us, that we are pleased with You and that You are pleased with us.' Upon this, He informed them about their status."[88]

Based on this narration, it appears that Allah revealed the martyrs' fate to the Prophet (saw). When the Prophet (saw) relayed this incident to his people, Anas ibn Malik, who was only fourteen at that time,[89] took it to be part of the Qur'an. Thus, when it was not included in the Qur'an, he concluded that it had been abrogated.

Al-Bukhari recorded four hadiths related to this event; Muslim recorded one. It is strange that this verse, as quoted, was reported differently in these two sources. While these differences do not change the meaning, this is a very serious matter, for the Qur'an is being quoted. Such a situation is not logical. According these hadiths, people recited this before it was annulled. Therefore, Anas and others had also memorized it. But when it was reported, its preciseness was, for some reason, lost. This suggests that what has been referred to as the Qur'an is not actually the Qur'an.

In each of these five hadiths, two sources quote Anas' statement: Qatadah ibn Di`amah (d. 117 AH) and Ishaq ibn `Abd Allah ibn Abi Talhah (d. 132 AH). Both of them use the term "from Anas" (*`an Anas)*, which suggests that they did not receive this information directly from Anas. Had this been the case, they would certainly have used *ḥaddathanī* (he told me) or *akhbaranī* (he informed me). Most hadith scholars have no problem with "from" (*`an*), for they consider this word as suggesting a direct taking, provided that the reporter's meeting with his source on some occasion has been established and that the reporter is not considered *mudallis* (one who deliberately changes his or her source's name).[90] This view, held by a majority of scholars, might be deemed valid only when the matter reported is not about the revelation of a Qur'anic verse. Such a revelation needs to be reported in a very precise manner.

Hadith No. 9: One verse, known as the *āyat al-rajm* ("If the old man and woman commit adultery, stone them both to death as an exemplary punishment prescribed by Allah. Allah is all-powerful, all-wise"), was revealed.[91] Makki ibn Abi Talib says: "This verse was lifted up from the Qur'an. Its recitation was not made permanent. Its practical applicability remained in

www.icsbook.info

place, and its words were not forgotten.'"[92] This hadith was recorded on the authority of four Companions: Abu Umamah ibn Sahl's aunt, Zayd ibn Thabit, Ubayy ibn Ka`b, and `Umar ibn al-Khattab. Its chain and text are given below.

ABU UMAMAH IBN SAHL'S AUNT

THE CHAIN: Al-Layth ibn Sa`d, Khalid ibn Yazid, Sa`id ibn Abi Hilal, Marwan ibn `Uthman, Abu Umamah ibn Sahl, his aunt.

THE TEXT: "She says: 'The Prophet (saw) taught us the *āyat al-rajm*: The old man and old woman, stone them both for satisfying their pleasure (*Al-shaykh wa al-shaykhah, farjumūhumā al-battah bimā qaḍiyā min al-ladhdhah*).[93]

Its chain is not reliable, for Marwan's presence makes it defective and doubtful. Abu Hatim declares him to be weak (*ḍa`īf*).[94] The text also seems to be dubious, because it does not contain the word "adultery" (*zinā'*); it simply refers to satisfying one's pleasure, which is a very general and abstract phrase that does not necessarily signify sexual intercourse.

ZAYD IBN THABIT

THE CHAIN: Shu`bah ibn Hajjaj, Qatadah ibn Di`amah, Yunus ibn Jubayr, Kathir ibn al-Salt, Zayd ibn Thabit.

THE TEXT: Zayd ibn Thabit says that he heard the Prophet (saw) say: "The old man and the old woman: If they commit adultery, stone them both certainly to death.'"[95]

There is no problem in its chain, for all of its reporters are considered highly authentic. In the text, Zayd is not reported to have said that the Prophet (saw) recited the Qur'an. He says: "I heard the Prophet (saw) say this or that." Such phraseology suggests that the Prophet (saw) might have uttered it as his own hadith.

The same hadith's detailed text, as recorded by Ahmad ibn Hanbal and al-Hakim, is: "Kathir ibn al-Salt reports: 'When Sa`id ibn al-`As and Zayd ibn Thabit, while making the copies of the Qur'an, reached this verse, Zayd said: "I heard the Prophet (saw) say it" (here he quotes the Prophet's statement, as mentioned above). `Umar said: 'When it was revealed, I went to the Prophet and asked him to recite it to me. But it seemed that the Prophet (saw) disliked it. Do not you see that an old man, if unmarried, was flogged with lashes, and a young married man, if committed adultery, was stoned to death?'"[96]

There is a certain discrepancy in this text from the historical angle: The hadith claims that Sa`id ibn al-`As and Zayd ibn Thabit came across this

www.icsbook.info

verse while copying the Qur'an, an undertaking that took place during the reign of `Uthman,[97] who had formed a committee for that specific purpose. Both men were members of this committee. These scribes were entrusted not with editing the Qur'an, but with making several copies of the first official copy, which had been codified during Abu Bakr's reign.[98] Thus, this incident suggests that this verse was in the first copy of the Qur'an. If this was the case, then why did they not include it? Today's copy of the Qur'an is the same as the copies made during `Uthman's reign. As it does not appear in today's Qur'an, and given the fact the first copy of the Qur'an precisely represented the Qur'an that the Prophet (saw) delivered to the ummah, this can only mean that this verse never appeared in the Qur'an. So, how did the two scribes come across it?

Another discrepancy is `Umar's statement. The hadith states that `Umar shared his own experience concerning the *āyat al-rajm* only when Zayd mentioned it. This cannot be accepted, for `Umar died before Zayd and Sa`id were entrusted with this task. (`Umar died in 23 AH; Zayd and Sa`id copied the Qur'an after the conquest of Armenia and Azerbaijan in 24 AH.[99]) Perhaps this task, as stated in the hadith, took place during Abu Bakr's reign, for `Umar had been a member of that committee. But this is impossible for two reasons: First, the Qur'an was compiled, not written down, into a single copy during Abu Bakr's reign with the help of already available documents of the Qur'an. Second, Sa`id was not a member of Abu Bakr's compilation committee.

This hadith says that upon `Umar's request, the Prophet (saw) did not like to recite the *āyat al-rajm.* If it was part of the Qur'an, why did the Prophet (saw) disapprove? This disapproval suggests that it was not a verse, but rather a non-Qur'anic judgment made by the Prophet (saw). Here, it may be proposed that the Prophet (saw) did not like to recite this verse because it had already been abrogated. But this might not be tenable, because the hadith says that `Umar approached the Prophet almost immediately after the verse's revelation. It is ridiculous to imagine that a verse would be annulled immediately after its revelation.

Due to these problems, the hadith is doubtful and so cannot form the basis of any argument pertaining to the Qur'an's revelation.

Ubayy ibn Ka`b

The Chain: Qatadah ibn Di`amah or Sufyan al-Thawri or Hammad ibn Zayd or Mansur ibn al-Mu`tamar or Shu`bah ibn al-Hajjaj or Isra'il ibn Yunus or Hammad ibn Salmah or Zayd ibn Abi Unaysah or Mis`ar ibn Kidam – all from `Asim ibn Bahdalah, Zirr ibn Hubaysh, Ubayy ibn Ka`b.

www.icsbook.info

THE TEXT: According to Zirr, Ubayy asked him about the length of Surat al-Ahzab. When he said that it contained seventy-three verses, Ubayy said: "It was equal to Surat al-Baqarah in length, and it contained *āyat al-rajm*: 'The old man and the old woman: stone them both certainly, as an exemplary punishment from Allah, and Allah is All-Powerful and All-Wise.'"[100]

The chain is almost free from major defects. However, there is a minor problem with `Asim. As stated above, he had a fallible memory, his hadiths contained discrepancies, and he made too many mistakes while reporting.[101] Despite these problems, `Asim is considered authentic. This is very strange, and reflects on the hadith scholars' double standards.

A question arises: Why does only Zirr report this important news from Ubayy, who was a major figure in Madinah? Many people learned the Qur'an and its related knowledge from him, the most prominent being his three sons (Muhammad, al-Tufayl, and `Abd Allah[102]), Abu al-`Aliyah, Zayd ibn Aslam, and Muhammad ibn Ka`b al-Quradi.[103] None of them report from him what Zirr does. Moreover, only `Asim reports from Zirr, who was another great Qur'anic scholar frequently visited by people who wanted to learn about the Qur'an. How could only one person have heard the above information from him?

The most prominent scholars who benefited from Zirr were Ibrahim al-Nakha`i, al-Minhal ibn `Amr, `Isa ibn `Asim, `Amir al-Sha`bi, and `Adi ibn Thabit.[104] None of them reported anything from Zirr about the *āyat al-rajm's* presence in Surat al-Ahzab. Although this verse is mentioned in several hadiths through different chains, `Asim's hadith is considered solitary due to his assertion that the verse was revealed in Surat al-Ahzab. Thus, his hadith is strange not only from the angle of its chain, but also from that of its text. Abu Yusuf warns against such strange (*gharīb*) hadiths: "He who follows strange hadiths (*gharīb al-ḥadīth*) utters a lie." Ahmad ibn Hanbal also told students "not [to] write these strange hadiths (*al-aḥādīth al-gharā'ib*)."[105]

`Umar ibn al-Khattab

THE CHAIN: The sources have generally used two chains of narrators to report `Umar's assertion: that of Malik ibn Anas, Yahya ibn Sa`id, Sa`id ibn al-Musayyib, `Umar ibn al-Khattab; and that of Sufyan ibn `Uyaynah, Muhammad ibn Shahab al-Zuhri, `Ubayd Allah ibn `Abd Allah ibn `Utbah ibn Mas`ud, `Abd Allah ibn `Abbas, `Umar ibn al-Khattab.

THE TEXT: `Umar ibn al-Khattab delivered the Friday sermon from the pulpit of Madinah's mosque. He said: "I am afraid that after a long period of time, people will say: 'We do not find "stoning to death" (*al-rajm*) in the Book of Allah' and will thus deviate from the right path by abandoning an

www.icsbook.info

obligation Allah had revealed. Remember that if the offence is established through evidence or pregnancy or confession, stoning to death is prescribed for a married adulterer. We recite the verse: 'The old man and old the woman: if they commit adultery, stone them both certainly.' The Prophet (saw) enforced this sentence, and after him we continued it."[106]

The chains contain no problems, except for a minor and negligible controversy. All the hadiths of `Umar's statement that have been recorded through any chain and in any source are derived from the speech he delivered in Madinah a few days before he died. Only al-Bukhari recorded that particular speech in detail. In order to determine the nature of `Umar's statement, it is enough to check and analyze al-Bukhari's hadith, as follows:

> After `Umar performed hajj, someone told him that somebody had stated: "If `Umar died, I would pledge allegiance to so-and-so (probably Talhah ibn `Ubayd Allah[107]). By God, Abu Bakr's election was merely an unexpected incident that soon came to an end." `Umar became so angry that he decided to address the people in order to caution them against those who wanted to usurp the leadership. But `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf advised him to postpone his plan until he returned to Madinah, on the grounds that the masses might not take it seriously. `Umar agreed. On Friday, he delivered the following sermon: "Verily, Allah raised Prophet Muhammad (saw) with truth and revealed to him the Book, in which was contained the *āyat al-rajm* (stoning to death). We recited it, understood it, and memorized it. The Prophet (saw) enforced it, and we followed his example after he died. I am afraid that after a long period of time, someone will say: 'By God, we do not find the *āyat al-rajm* in the Book of Allah' and deviate from the right path by abandoning an obligation that Allah has revealed. Stoning to death is prescribed in the Book of Allah for the married adulterer, whether male or female, provided that the offence has been established through evidence or pregnancy or confession. We also used to recite in the Book of Allah: 'Do not associate your biological link with any [person] other than your ancestors. It is blasphemy to do so.' Remember, the Prophet (saw) said: 'Do not extol me as `Isa, the son of Mary, was extolled, and say a servant of Allah and His Prophet.' (After this, he touched on the main issue, namely, the nature of Abu Bakr's election, and related how he had been elected and how the impending chaos had been averted.) `Umar ended his speech with this advice: 'He who pledges allegiance to a person without consulting the Muslims, as well as the one who accepts the pledge by trick, should not be followed. Rather, they should both be killed."[108]

The first question that arises here is the relevance of the *āyat al-rajm.* Moreover, this verse and Abu Bakr's election have nothing to do with each other. From the angle of the Arabs' eloquence and rhetoric, it seems ridicu-

www.icsbook.info

lous to speak on these two issues at the same time. Ibn Hajar tried to explain this anomaly by quoting al-Muhallab, who said that `Umar had mentioed the *āyat al-rajm* and another verse at the beginning to remind the audience that no one has the right to speak in an absolute manner about something that the Qur'an and the Sunnah do not mention, and that no one had right to speak independently on his/her own accord or to do something in accordance with his/her wish and whim, such as commenting on Abu Bakr's election.[109]

This is a rather far-fetched explanation. If `Umar really wanted to do this, why did he not do so directly? By referring to two abrogated verses, the speaker weakened his case. Given that a contextual link is an intrinsic part of eloquence and that `Umar had been a man of eloquence and rhetoric even before embracing Islam, it seems that he did not actually mention this abrogated verse. Perhaps it was tactfully inserted later on by someone with a vested interest. Since `Umar had selected his topic, he devoted it to explaining how Abu Bakr had been elected and how the ummah had been saved from an unseen crisis. Given that his main focus was the collective approach to solving the ummah's problems, including the caliph's election, he warned the audience that individual dissent would lead to chaos.

Claiming that the Book of Allah mandates that married adulterers be stoned to death does not seem to be rational. If a verse has already been excluded from the Qur'an, it has no significance for Muslims. It should have been enough for `Umar to remind the audience that such a punishment was part of the Prophet's Sunnah. Muslims of that period were not supposed to have any doubt about the Sunnah's role in their life. Interestingly, no hadith quotes the Prophet as having said that a revealed verse had ever prescribed the death penalty for adulterers.

The View of Imam Malik and Amin Ahsan Islahi

The words of the *āyat al-rajm* do not appear to be eloquent. *Al-shaykh wa al-shaykhah* (old man and old woman) are interpreted as a married man and a married woman. But this may not be correct. Did the pre-Islamic Arabs use these words in the sense of married couples? Sources explain *al-shaykh* as a man who is somewhere between fifty and eighty years old.[110] *Al-shaykhah* is clearly the feminine of *al-shaykh*. But an old person is not necessarily married. A person with a good mastery of Arabic, particularly Qur'anic Arabic, may find that *al-shaykh wa al-shaykhah* violate the Qur'anic diction and the principle of eloquence. Imam Malik opined that *al-shaykh wa al-shaykhah* signifies *al-thayyib wa al-thayyibah* (married man and married woman).[111] This interpretation shows that even he was a bit uncertain about these words' legitimacy and so had to clarify their given meaning.

www.icsbook.info

In his *Tafsīr*, Amin Ahsan Islahi (d. 1997 C.E.) commented:

> This hadith, from every angle, seems to be a fabrication of some hypocrite. The objective behind it is to render the authenticity of the Qur'an doubtful and cast suspicion into the hearts of the unsuspecting people that some verses have been excluded from the Qur'an. Consider, first of all, its linguistic dimension. Can anyone with [a] right taste of Arabic accept it as a verse of the Qur'an? This cannot be attributed even to the Prophet (saw). Where will you, then, put this patch in the velvet of the Qur'an? There is no link between this reported verse and the supernatural language and the most eloquent style of the Qur'an."[112]

Hadith No. 10: `Umar said: "We recite from the Qur'an: 'Do not associate your biological link with any [one] other than your ancestors. It is blasphemy to do so."[113]

This statement is part of his sermon, as mentioned above. We have already seen that the reference to this verse, which does not appear in the Qur'an, seems to be a later interpolation. In this sermon, `Umar wanted to enlighten the people as to how Abu Bakr was elected as caliph, and did so. If this is the case, then why did he mention this so-called abrogated verse? A man as eloquent as `Umar would not have done such an anomalous thing, for it seems to be entirely irrelevant to the sermon's theme. Reason says that `Umar did not say it. Therefore, it must be a fabrication.

Hadith No. 11: `A'ishah says: "The *āyat al-rajm* and the verses on ten foster relations were revealed, and these were available in the document kept under the bed in my house. When the Prophet fell sick and we were busy with him, the goat entered and ate it."[114]

The sources provide two chains for this hadith: Muhammad ibn Ishaq, `Abd Allah ibn Abi Bakr ibn `Amr ibn Hazm, `Amrah bint `Abd al-Rahman, `A'ishah[115]; and Muhammad ibn Ishaq, `Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Qasim, his father, `A'ishah.[116]

Although both chains are acceptable as good, the text seems highly objectionable: How could a pet goat have been allowed to eat part of the Qur'an? Al-Qurtubi (d. 671 AH) decrees that the supposed presence of these extra verses in `A'ishah's document and their loss was fabricated by atheists and deviationists.[117] Al-Alusi (d. 1270 AH) also refers to the above hadith as a concoction and a lie spread by infidels.[118] Any hadith concerning the Qur'an's loss is rejected as a lie. In fact, Allah makes it crystal clear that the Qur'an cannot be lost because He has guaranteed its safety: "Verily, We revealed the Reminder (*al-Dhikr* [al-Qur'an]) and shall safeguard it" (15:9).

www.icsbook.info

Hadith No. 12: Al-Husayn ibn al-Munadi claims that two surahs, Surat al-Khal` and Surat al-Hafd were revealed and then lifted up in terms of writing, but remained safe in the Muslims' memory.[119]

The reference here is to what the Hanafis say is to be recited during *ṣalāt al-witr*, as regards a special invocation known as *qunūt*. In his *Tafsīr*, al-Suyuti recorded several hadiths on this matter.[120] According to him, the reasons for considering the *qunūt* as part of the Qur'an are four: `Ali's and Anas' statements to that effect; the presence of the word *qunūt* in the copies of the Qur'an made by Ubayy ibn Ka`b, `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud, and Ibn `Abbas; the Prophet's (saw) and the Companions' (including `Umar and `Ali) recitation of *qunūt* during *ṣalāt al-witr*; and the Companions' teaching *qunūt* to others.

The statement attributed to `Ali and Anas may not be considered authentic, because their chains are weak. In `Ali's case, `Abd Allah ibn Abi Razin's presence makes the chain defective because he is an unknown person.[121] In the chain transmitting Anas' statement, the person who reports from Anas is Aban ibn Abi `Ayyash, whom the hadith scholars state is totally unreliable.[122]

Some people have claimed that Ubayy ibn Ka`b, `Abd Allah ibn Mas`ud, and Ibn `Abbas had written the above-mentioned *qunūt* in their Qur'anic documents. This does not necessarily mean that they wrote it as part of the Revelation; they might have written it as *du`ā'* (supplication). Those who considered *qunūt* to be part of the Qur'an merely because of its inclusion in some copies of the Qur'an were deluded (*wahm*).

The Prophet's (saw) and his Companions' recitation of *qunūt* during *ṣalāt al-witr* may not be used as evidence to support the above-mentioned claim, for not everything recited in that particular *ṣalāt* is invariably part of the Qur'an. *Qunut* is a well-known *du`ā* that Archangel Gabriel taught to the Prophet (saw). In his *Sunan*, al-Bayhaqi recorded an authentic hadith according to which Gabriel once taught the Prophet the *qunūt* that he should recite regularly during *ṣalāt al-witr*.[123] If the Companions taught the *qunūt* to others, it does not necessarily mean that it was part of the Qur'an, for they taught both the Qur'an and the Sunnah. And, as al-Bayhaqi's hadith makes clear, *qunūt* is part of the Sunnah.

Conclusion

The various claims that certain Qur'anic verses and chapters were revealed but then removed later on is based on certain hadiths that quote some of the Companions' and the Followers' statements to that effect. When checked and analyzed, these hadiths are shown to be weak either from the angle of

www.icsbook.info

their chains or from that of their texts. Most of these hadiths seem to have been fabricated by people with vested interests. In certain cases, errors occurred due to one or the other reporter's delusion (*wahm*).

The theory of abrogation and its classification seem to be very dangerous, for they affect the Qur'an's authenticity and safety. Anything that negatively affects the Qur'an's originality and authenticity is to be rejected as totally baseless. Scholars today are advised to be extra careful when reading and explaining any material related to abrogation. It is their pious duty to thoroughly scrutinize the hadiths concerned before they take any stand on the matter. In addition, the discipline of *`ulūm al-Qur'ān* (the sciences of the Qur'an) needs a thorough refurbishing, and textbooks on this subject should include discussions from new angles, as I have attempted to do here.

Endnotes

1. Makki ibn Abi Talib divided the abrogated verses into seven categories. However, his divisions can easily be readjusted into three categories. For details, see his *Al-`Udah li Nāsikh al-Qur'ān wa Mansūkhihi* (Jeddah: Dar al-Minarah, 1986), 67-71.
2. See my "A Critique of the Theory of Al-Naskh in the Qur'an," *Law Journal IIUM* 11, no. 1 (2003) and "Al-Suyuti's Selection of Abrogated Ayat: A Critical Evaluation," *Journal of Islam in Asia*, no. 1 (2004).
3. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān fī `Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 2000), 2:42.
4. Badr al-Din al-Zarkashi, *Al-Burhān fī `Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1994), 2:170.
5. Abu al-Farj `Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, n.d.), 33.
6. Makki ibn Abi Talib, *Al-`Udah li Nāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 68.
7. Abu `Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam, *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh fī al-Qur'ān al-`Azīz* (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Rushd, 1990), 14.
8. Makki ibn Abi Talib, *Al-`Udah li Nāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 69; al-Zarkashi, *Al-Burhān*, 2:170; al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:42. This hadith was originally recorded in Malik ibn Anas, "Kitāb al-Riḍā'," in *Al-Muwaṭṭā'* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1985), 2:608, serial no. 17; and Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), vol. 5, hadith no. 3582. Al-Suyuti says that both al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded this hadith. He is mistaken, because it does not appear in al-Bukhari.
9. Ahmad ibn `Ali ibn Hajar, *Fatḥ al-Bārī* (Riyadh: Dar al-Salam, 2000), 9:184.
10. Malik ibn Anas, *Al-Muwaṭṭa'*, 2:608.
11. Abu `Ubayd al-Qasim, *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh*, 14-15; Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 33-34.

www.icsbook.info

12. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* (Beirut: Dar al-Marifah, 1996), 1:228.
13. Ali ibn Muhammad ibn al-Athir, *Usd al-Ghābah fi Ma`rifat al-Ṣaḥābah* (Beirut: Dar al-Marifah, 1997), 1:85.
14. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 34; al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:49.
15. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 4:195.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Hatim, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta`dīl* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 2002), 6:241, under serial no. 10271.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 34.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:48.
25. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2493.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 3:71.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahbi, *Mizān al-I`tidāl* (Beirut: Dar al-Marifah, n.d.), 2:380, serial no. 4149.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 5:342-43.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Yusuf ibn Abd Allah ibn Abd al-Barr, *Al-Isti`āb fi Ma`rifat al-Aṣḥāb* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1995), 2:131, serial no. 873.
37. Ibid.
38. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān," in *Al-Jāmi` al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-Arabi, 1400 ah), hadith no. 4999.
39. Ibid. The four authorities of the Qur'an, as certified by the Prophet (saw), were Abd Allah ibn Masud (d. 33 AH), Salim ibn Miqal (d. 12 AH), Muadh ibn Jabal (d. 18 AH), and Ubayy ibn Kab (d. 32 AH).
40. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:48.
41. Ibn Abi Hatim, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta`dīl*, 5:180-81, serial no. 8016.
42. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 3:229; Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahbi, *Mizān al-I`tidāl*, 2:482, serial no. 4530.
43. Ibn Abi Hatim, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta`dīl*, 5:180, serial no. 8016.
44. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 3:230.
45. Ibn Abi Hatim, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta`dīl*, 5:180, serial no. 8016.
46. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān," in *Sāhīh*, vol. 3, hadith no. 4987.
47. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 34.

www.icsbook.info

48. `Ali ibn Muhammad al-Jurjani, *Al-Ta`rifāt* (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-`Arabi, 1405 AH), 2:283.
49. Hibat Allah ibn Salamah, *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh* (Beirut: Al-Maktab al-Islami, 1404 AH), 21.
50. Abu `Ubayd, *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh*, 15-16. This hadith is not available in full in this source. The editor of Abu `Ubayd's work, Muhammad ibn Salih, identified the full text of this hadith from Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1994), vol. 6, hadith no. 20637.
51. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:48.
52. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 1:312.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Muhammad Husayn al-Dhahbi, *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufassirūn* (n.p.: n.d.), 2:35.
59. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:48.
60. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 581.
61. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān," in *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, hadith no. 4987.
62. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 36.
63. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 248.
64. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 6:28.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibn Abi Hatim, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta`dīl*, 9:78, serial no. 15896.
67. Al-Suyuti quoted this hadith from al-Hakim, "Kitāb al-Tafsīr," in *Al-Mustadrak*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1990), hadith no. 2889. The same hadith appears in Ahmad ibn Hanbal, "Zirr ibn Hubaysh `an Ubayy ibn Ka`b," in *Musnad*, vol. 7, hadith nos. 20697-98. But there are differences in wordings between al-Hakim's and Ibn Hanbal's hadiths.
68. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 3:28-29.
69. Ibid. This is basically Ibn Sa`d's comment.
70. Mohamed Abullais al-Khayrabadi, *Mu`jam al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Ḥadīthīyah* (Kuala Lumpur: Dar al-Shakir, 2004), 67.
71. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 3:29.
72. Ibid.
73. Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jāmi` li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 2000), vol. 10, part 20, 94.
74. Ibid., 94-95.
75. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb al-Riqāq," in *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, hadith nos. 6436-39.
76. Ibid., hadith no. 6437.
77. Muslim, "Kitāb al-Zakāt," *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4 (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), hadith nos. 2412-15.
78. Ibid., hadith no. 2416.

www.icsbook.info

79. Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahbi, *Mizān al-I`tidāl*, 2:248, serial no. 3621.
80. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb al-Riqāq," in *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, hadith no. 6440.
81. Al-Suyuti has quoted it from Ibn Abi Hatim, *Tafsīr*, 10:3353, hadith no. 18881.
82. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:49.
83. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 3:227-30.
84. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:49; Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 36.
85. Ibn `Abd al-Barr, *Al-Isti`āb*, 2:388, serial no. 1455.
86. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:49; Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 36-37.
87. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb al-Maghāzī," *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, hadith nos. 4090, 4091, and 4095, also vol. 2, *Kitāb al-Jihād*, hadith no. 2801; Muslim, in "Kitāb al-Masājid," *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, hadith no.1547.
88. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb al-Maghāzī," in *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, hadith no. 4093.
89. When the Prophet entered, Anas was only ten years old. The Bi'r Ma`unah incident occurred during 4 AH; hence, he was fourteen years old at that time. For Anas ibn Malik, see Ibn `Abd al-Barr, *Al-Isti`āb*, 1:198-99, serial no. 84. For this incident, also see Ibn Hisham, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1997), 3:204.
90. Nur al-Din `Atar, *Manhaj al-Naqd fī `Ulūm al-Ḥadīth* (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr 1992), 351.
91. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:48; Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 35-36.
92. Makki ibn Abi Talib, *Al-`Udah li Nāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 65.
93. Ahmad ibn Shu`ayb al-Nasa'i, "Kitāb al-Rajm," in *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1991), vol. 4, hadith nos. 7146-47; Al-Hakim, "Kitāb al-Hudud," in *Al-Mustadrak*, vol. 4, hadith no. 8070.
94. Ibn Abi Hatim, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta`dīl*, 8:310, serial no. 14551.
95. Al-Nasa'i, "Kitāb al-Ḥudūd," *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 4, hadith no. 7145; `Abd Allah ibn `Abd al-Rahman al-Darimi, "Kitāb al-Ḥudūd," in *Sunan* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1996), vol. 2, hadith no.2323; Ibn Hanbal, "Hadith Zayd ibn Thābit," in Musnad, vol. 6, hadith no. 21086.
96. Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, hadith no. 21086; Al-Hakim, *Al-Mustadrak*, hadith no. 8071.
97. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān," in *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3, hadith no. 4987.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid. For the date of the conquest of Armenia and Azerbaijan, see Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *Tārīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1997), 2:591.
100. Al-Nasa'i, "Kitāb al-Rajm," in *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 4, hadith no. 7150; al-Hakim, "Kitāb al-Tafsīr," in *Al-Mustadrak*, vol. 2, hadith no. 3554 and "Kitāb Ḥudūd," vol. 4, hadith no. 8068; al-Bayhaqi, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, "Kitāb al-Ḥudūd," part 8 (Makkah: Dar al-Baz, 1994), hadith no. 16688.
101. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 3:28-29.
102. Ibid., 1:182.
103. Al-Dhahbi, *Al-Tafsīr* (n.p.: n.d.), 1:114.

www.icsbook.info

104. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2:194.
105. `Atar, *Manhaj al-Naqd*, 402.
106. Al-Nasa'i, "Kitāb al-Rajm," in *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 4, hadith no. 7156; Malik ibn Anas, "Kitāb al-Ḥudūd," in *Al-Muwaṭṭā'*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1985), hadith no. 10; al-Bayhaqi, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, part 8, hadith nos. 16687 & 16697.
107. Ibn Hajar, "Kitāb al-Ḥudūd," in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, vol. 12 (Riyadh: Dar al-Salam, 2000), 180.
108. Al-Bukhari, "Kitāb al-Ḥudūd," in *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, hadith no. 6830.
109. Ibn Hajar, *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, 12:192.
110. Muhammad ibn Ya`qub al-Firozabadi, *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1997), 1:378.
111. Malik ibn Anas, *Al-Muwaṭṭā'*, 2:41.
112. Amin Ahsan Islahi, *Tadabbur-e-Qur'ān* (Delhi: Taj Company, 1997), 5:366-67.
113. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:49.
114. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Nawāsikh al-Qur'ān*, 37.
115. Ibn Hanbal, "Ḥadīth al-Sayyidah `Ā'ishah," in *Musnad*, vol. 7, hadith no. 25784.
116. Al-Darqutni, `Ali ibn `Umar, "Kitāb al-Riḍā'," in *Sunan*, vol. 2, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1996), part 4, hadith no. 4330; Muhammad ibn Yazid ibn Majah, "Kitāb al-Nikāḥ," in *Sunan*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dar al-Ma`rifah, 1997), hadith no. 1944.
117. Al-Qurtubi, *Al-Jāmi`*, vol. 7, part 14, p. 76.
118. Al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, *Rūḥ al-Ma`ānī* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-`Arabi, 1999), vol. 16, part 1, p. 191.
119. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Itqān*, 2:49.
120. Al-Suyuti, *Al-Durr al-Manthūr* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1990), 6:722-24.
121. Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahbi, *Mizān al-I`tidāl*, 2:422, serial no. 4313.
122. Ibid., 1:10-15.
123. Al-Bayhaqi, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 2, hadith no. 2961.

www.icsbook.info

Comparative Religion in Medieval Muslim Literature

Hilman Latief

Abstract

This article investigates medieval Muslim literature on the study of non-Islamic religions through the writings of al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani in their dealing with Hind (India) and the nomenclature of world religions. I focus on their perceptions of monotheism and polytheism. My findings show that they used different approaches, categories, and classification models of world religious traditions in general, and of Hind's religious traditions in particular. Al-Biruni classifies Indian religions according to the religious outlooks found in Hindu texts or sayings of Hindu philosophers/theologians and in the attitudes of ordinary people in a popular context. Al-Shahrastani categorizes the divisions and subdivisions of Hindu beliefs and practices according to types of "idol worshippers." This article points out that they dealt with some conceptual issues in their presentations, such as "religious representation," "intermediaries," and "anthropomorphism."

Introduction

This article examines medieval Muslim literature on the study of religions, with specific reference to the works of Abu Rayhan al-Biruni (d. 1048) and Abd al-Karim al-Shahrastani (d. 1153). These scholars are comparable, since

---

Hilman Latief is a lecturer in the School of Islamic Studies at the Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta-Indonesia. He graduated from the State Institute of Islamic Studies Sunan Kalijaga-Yogyakarta (1999) and earned his M.A. (comparative religion) from the Center for Religion and Cross-Cultural Studies, Gadjah Mada University (2003) and the Department of Comparative Religion, Western Michigan University (2005). He would like to thank David Ede, Stephen G. Covell, Brian C. Wilson, Nancy Aur Falk (all of Western Michigan University), Adam A. Sabra (University of Georgia), Bruce C. Lawrence (Duke University), Ahmad Syafii Maarif (State University of Yogyakarta), Muhammad Amin Abdullah (Islamic State University-Sunan Kalijaga), and Mahmoud Ayoub (Temple University) for their valuable encouragement and inspiration.

www.icsbook.info

they discuss "major" and "minor" world religious traditions in general, and deal with the nomenclature of the religious traditions of Hind [India] in particular. Long known as important and admirable medieval Muslim scholars of comparative religion,[1] they wrote distinctive works that became primary references for modern Muslim religious historians and heresiographers. Yet, medieval Islam was likely the key developing period of religious and cross-cultural studies in Islamic intellectual history. As Franz Rosenthal points out, "the comparative study of religions has been rightly acclaimed as one of the great contributions of Muslim civilization to mankind's *[sic]* intellectual progress."[2] From the eight to tenth centuries, for example, Muslim historians, geographers, and travelers focused on seven great ancient civilizations: the Persians, Chaldeans, Greeks, Egyptians, Turks, Indians, and Chinese.[3]

Modern scholars have recognized the two men's scholarly contributions. For example, Arthur Jeffery states that al-Biruni's contribution to the study of religion by establishing such scrupulous scientific principles as completeness, accuracy, and unbiased treatment is rare in his era and "unique in the history of his own faith."[4] And Eric J. Sharpe writes: "The honor of writing the first history of religion in world literature seems in fact to belong to the Muslim Shahrastani, whose *Religious Parties and Schools of Philosophy* describes and systematizes all religions of the then known world, as far as the boundaries of China."[5]

Although many scholars have studied al-Biruni's and al-Shahrastani's treatises, among them Edward Sachau, Arthur Jeffery, Kamar Oniah Kamaruzzaman, Franz Rosenthal, Bruce Lawrence, and Jaques Waardenburg, a specific comparison of their works remains rare. Therefore, to contribute to the above larger framework of the Muslims' erudition of Hind, a comparative study should focus on a special theme. I have chosen the models of classifying Hind's religious divisions and their theological thought in al-Biruni's and al-Shahrastani's works. How do these scholars portray the divisions of Hind's religious communities, what approach do they use, and how do they perceive the doctrines of Hind's religious traditions?

To derive a more elaborate assessment, this article analyzes the foremost writings of both scholars. For al-Biruni, I use his *Taḥqīq Mā li al-Hind min Maqūlah Maqbūlah fī al-`Aql al-Mardhūlah*[6] and *Kitāb al-Āthār al-Bāqīyah 'an al-Qurūn al-Khālīyah.*[7] The former discusses India's religious belief systems, metaphysical views, cosmological doctrines, literary traditions, mythical heritages, and artistic inheritances; the latter elucidates the history and tradition of former nations and generations (*akhbār al-umam al-sālifah wa anbā' al-qurūn al-māḍīyah*) in dealing with the eras with which cultural and religious events were associated. For al-Shahrastani, I choose his *Kitāb al-*

www.icsbook.info

Milal wa al-Niḥal,[8] which establishes him as an outstanding Muslim historian of religions. This book primarily elaborates the range of religious sects, cults, and philosophical schools in Islam and other religious traditions. To complement his normative insight, philosophical exploration, and, perhaps, theological discourse toward other religious traditions, I also discuss his *Kitāb Nihāyat al-Iqdām fi `Ilm Kalām*,[9] in which he assesses foundations (*qawā'id*) of theological science.

Several ideological, political, and intellectual factors might have caused medieval Muslim scholars to analyze religions and religious sects. As to the ideological or doctrinal factor, some Qur'anic verses highlighting other religious communities, especially the Sabians (al-Sabi`un), Zoroastrians (al-Majusiyah), and People of the Book (Ahl al-Kitab), have led Muslim theologians and exegetes to elaborate on the existence, status, and position of religions according to Islamic perspectives.[10] Meanwhile, politically speaking, when Muslim power began to expand throughout South and Central Asia, North Africa, and Europe, the need to recognize other religions, either in terms of political conflict or polemical discourse, increased rapidly.

In line with the nature of political motivation and under imperial protection, certain scholars undertook "regional studies" that covered the materials of religious communities in the given regions. Moreover, after the "wave of Hellenism,"[11] interfaith discourse and the investigation of other religions became a main concern of medieval Muslim scholars. Translating Greek works on philosophy and logic into Arabic and Persian during the `Abbasid period contributed tremendously to the development of theological and philosophical thought. Above all, this activity significantly enhanced the variety of scholarly works in the fields of mysticism, literature, intercultural studies, and religious studies. This period was also characterized by the emergence of prolific writers influenced by Greek thought, Arabic culture, and Persian intellectual environments, respectively.[12]

Indeed, scholars prior to al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani had penned more than a few works related to religious and inter-cultural studies. However, while the majority of scholars focused on the "biblical religions" or "Muslim heresies,"[13] al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani elaborated on Hind's religious traditions. The first group's works were mostly polemical and apologetic. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, for instance, some prominent scholars elaborated on *taḥrīf* (falsification of scripture)[14] to criticize Jewish and Christian scriptures as well as to define Islam's superiority over other religions.[15]

www.icsbook.info

Medieval Muslims' Recognition of Hind

As a result of the close and intensive interaction between Islamic civilization and Hind in medieval times, a number of Arab-Muslim scholars wrote on aspects of Indian civilization. According to al-Baladhuri's reports, `Uthman ibn `Affan asked `Abd Allah ibn `Amir ibn Kurayz to send a knowledgeable person to Hind's harbor and report on what he saw. Other reports mention that the idea of reaching Hind existed during `Umar ibn al-Khattab's reign.[16]

Al-Hind was the Arabic term for India. Medieval Muslim writers might have used this word to mean "India" in proportion to the Arab-Persian conception. André Wink points out that this term was taken from "a pre-existing Persian term, not a Sanskrit term."[17] In the Umayyad and `Abbasid times, it referred to some areas in South Asia.[18] The geographical term *al-Sind* was also used.

In his *Historical Encyclopedia*, al-Mas`udi (d. 957) says: "The Hindu nations extend from the mountains of Kurasan and of es-Sind as far as et-Tubbet."[19] Maqbul Ahmad notes that while al-Hind encompasses certain areas from the Indus river up to border of Burma/Myanmar, *al-Sind* includes some areas from Makran up to the lower course of the Indus.[20] The Arabs later modified its scope by including the Bay of Bengal archipelagos as well as the areas of mainland Southeast Asia and the nearby islands of Southeast Asia that had been culturally Indianized since the seventh century. Some Buddhist areas, such as Central Asia, China, Japan, and Korea, were included in the term *al-Ṣīn* (China), while Tibet and Mongolia were, for the most part, classified as *al-Hind*.[21]

Even though Arab-Indian interactions were probably deep rooted before Islamic civilization, especially through commercial contacts (*al-`alāqāt al-tijārīyah*),[22] the Muslims' knowledge of Indian culture developed rapidly around the ninth and tenth centuries due to their military expeditions and considerable influence on the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean trade routes. Their recognition of Indian culture was engendered not merely by the resulting interaction between Arabian and Indian traders, but, more importantly, grew after the Arab-Muslims conquered the Persian regions where Persians were intermingled (*imtizāj*) with Indian culture (*al-thaqāfah al-hindīyah*).[23]

In addition to trade contacts, medieval Muslim scholars obtained information through largely regional and cross-cultural studies that occasionally covered discussions of religious ideas or religious communities. In line with Muslim political and cultural expansion, the observations of Muslim travelers and writers were not restricted to the societies, religions, and cultures of

www.icsbook.info

the Arab peninsula and Persia, but extended to Hind[24] and even China.[25] As for Hind's religious traditions, at least three categories of information can be seen in their works: cultural studies, eyewitness accounts of a certain region and its geographical information, and encyclopedic works and digests.[26]

For instance, in his *Ta'rīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* (The History of Prophets and Kings), al-Tabari (d. 923) incorporates material on Hind's regions and religious traditions in connection with early human history. He presents various reports indicating that Adam was cast down from Heaven to the land of Hind, especially at a mountain called Budh. Adam left Hind after God told him to perform a pilgrimage to Makkah.[27] Accordingly, idolatry began when his descendants, the sons of Seth and Cain, worshiped their ancestors' bodies. During Noah's time, the flood carried the objects of worship from Hind to Arab territory.

By citing al-Tabari's account, I point out that the narrative of Hind was included in early Muslim literature. Yet this narrative also shows the long-standing interaction between Arabia and India, for Adam went to Makkah for pilgrimage and to find Eve, who, according to some accounts in al-Tabari, settled in Muzdalifah. The idea of idol worship in Arabia, based on al-Tabari's description, actually originated in Hind.[28]

Other medieval Muslim travelers and geographers, in part, discuss Hind's religious traditions. The geographer Ibn Khurdadhbih (d. 912) briefly reports the types of Indian castes (*ajnās al-hind*) and their forty-two religious sects (*milal ahl al-hind*). Without presenting his supportive information, in his *Al-Masālik wa al-Mamālik* (The Book of Roads and Kingdoms) he classifies those sects into three main groups: Those who believe in the Creator, the Glorious and Powerful (*man yuthbitu al-khāliq `azza wa jalla*); those who reject the Prophet (*man yanfā al-rusūl*); and those who do not believe in all the above (*wa minhum al-nāfī li kulli dhālik*).[29]

In his commentary on Ibn Khurdadhbih's book, S. Maqbul Ahmad explains that Ibn Khurdadhbih's perception of these sects probably refers to Gardizi's *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa al-Hind* (Accounts of China and India). Gardizi classifies the Indian religious philosophies and beliefs into ninety-nine divisions that can be simplified into forty-two sects. Based on this work, what Ibn Khurdadhbih means by the first type of sects can possibly be associated with the Brahmans, the second sects with Sramanas, and the last sects can be connected to the Hinayana Buddhists.[30]

Another account of Hind appears in the traveler Sulayman al-Tajir's *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa al-Hind*, which presents a broad comparison between the geography, culture, and society of Hind and China. However, his attention to Hind's religion is not quite as deep as Gardizi's.[31] He highlights the two

www.icsbook.info

lands' cultural and religious connection by asserting that China's religious traditions, especially Buddhism, originated in Hind (*wa innamā aṣlu dayānatihim min al-hind*). Then, the Indians moved their idols to China. Furthermore, he notes that both the Chinese (*ahl al-ṣin*) and the Indians (*ahl al-hind*) have similar belief systems, since they affirm that they communicate with their idols (*yaz'amūna anna al-bidādah takallamahum*). He also draws attention to the mystical dimensions of their religious systems. Although they practice their beliefs in their own ways, both peoples believe in metempsychosis or the transmigration of souls (*tanāsukh*).[32]

A brief presentation of Muslim works on Hind may reveal some profound descriptions and frameworks that will enrich our investigation of al-Biruni's and al-Shahrastani's opinions of its religious traditions. Their insights may have been influenced by their contemporaries' intellectual inclinations: either ideological–polemical discourse or historical–cross-cultural trends. Both scholars' investigations of this subject have contributed greatly to the Islamic intellectual traditions' theoretical framework of the study of religions.

The Intellectual Biographies of al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani

Al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani lived when medieval Islamic civilization had just passed its "golden age."[33] This period was delineated intellectually by the appearance of abundant scientific literature and characterized sociopolitically by intensive encounters with other civilizations. Al-Biruni's and al-Shahrastani's investigation of Hind's religious traditions have variations and resemblances, depending upon their intellectual and sociocultural backgrounds, as well as, perhaps, the political situation in the regions of their era. This section provides intellectual sketches of these two scholars, explain why they decided to study this particular fields and the significance of their intellectual contribution to their fellow Muslims and political patrons.

Al-Biruni: A Scholar and Religious Historian

Al-Biruni[34] is the popular name of Abu Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Khwarizm, who was born in 362/973 in Khwarizm, located in present-day Uzbekistan. According to a Persian lexicographer, the root *b-r-n* means "the outside" (noun) and "outside" (preposition), indicating that al-Biruni came from a suburb of Khawarizm. Muslim genealogists offer no further information about his ancestors,[35] religious life, or childhood. His first teacher was an anonymous Greek scholar. Afterward, he studied with 'Abd al-Samad ibn

www.icsbook.info

`Abd al-Samad, who introduced him to scientific knowledge. At the age of twenty, he traveled to Jurjan (Hyrcania) and met Abu Sahl 'Isa al-Masih, an astronomer and physician. In addition, he was trained by Abu al-Wafa' (a.k.a. Nasr ibn `Ali ibn `Iraqi al-Jabali);[36] an astronomer and mathematician. Al-Biruni lived in Jurjan for many years and enjoyed the protection of Qabus ibn Washmgir Shams al-Ma'ali, a prince who ruled this city from 366-71 AH and 388-403 AH and to whom he dedicated his *Al-Āthār al-Bāqīyah `an al-Qurūn al-Khālīyah.*[37]

Al-Biruni later returned to Khawarizm and stayed there until Mahmud of Ghazna conquered it and established his political authority throughout South and Central Asia in 1022. Mahmud carried off scholars and respected people from Khawarizm, including al-Biruni, to India/Afghanistan. Among the savants were the physician Abu al-Khayr ibn Khammar and Abu Nasr ibn `Iraqi. Mahmud also attempted to bring Abu Sahl `Isa al-Masih and Abu `Ali ibn Sina; however, they had already fled Jurjan and Khwarizm.[38]

Although al-Biruni's knowledge of Hind's civilization grew rapidly while he served Mahmud in northern India, he had already acquired some knowledge of it by the time he learned astrology and astronomy in Khawarizm or Jurjan. For instance, his concise scrutiny in his *Kitāb al-Āthār* regarding the Indians' lunar system (*sami`tu anna al-hind, yasta'milūna ru'yat al-ahillah fī shuhūrihim*) indicates that he was acquainted with aspects of Indian civilization.[39] His duties at that time were to explore Hind's sciences and geography, observe the people's customs and religious traditions, and discover their literature and philosophical thought.[40]

As a versatile scientist, prolific writer, and enthusiastic traveler, al-Biruni made extensive contributions to various branches of knowledge[41] and enlightened his intellectual contemporaries as regards inter-cultural studies. Most of his scholarly works were written in Arabic; a few were in Persian.[42] For him, Arabic was superior because it was the scriptural language, the *lingua franca* of the Muslim world, and the language of science (*lughat al-`ilm wa al-fikr wa al-ḥaḍārah*).[43] During the tenth and eleventh centuries, Persian was also commonly used as "a vehicle of literary expression and satisfied Persian national aspirations,"[44] given that the `Abbasid cultural and intellectual movements employed and recruited countless Persian intellectuals. Nevertheless, the scientific and Islamic literature constantly developed in Arabic. In addition, the ongoing inter-cultural dialogues and intellectual encounters helped Muslim scholars master various languages. Therefore, al-Biruni, as his scholarly works show, was well versed in several languages, primarily Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, and probably Greek.[45]

www.icsbook.info

Al-Biruni wrote numerous natural and social science books. He wrote *Kitāb al-Āthār* (390/999) mainly to satisfy his curiosity as to why different people used different calendrical systems and to clarify why certain nations preferred certain times and events for their festivals and commemoration days.[46] In addition, this book pays great attention to various civilizations' festivals. On the other hand, *Kitāb al-Hind* (1030) is based on his journey to Hind while Mahmud (998-1030) was setting up his political institutions in northern India.[47]

Although al-Biruni was a part of Mahmud's mission, as a scientist he had his own view of Hind. For Mahmud, as Sachau notes, "the Hindus were infidels, to be dispatched to hell as soon as they refused to be plundered," while for al-Biruni, "the Hindus were excellent philosophers, good mathematicians and astronomers."[48] His interest in studying their religious traditions apparently could not be separated from his role as a geographer, astronomer, astrologer, and historian who sought to grasp Hind's natural/physical geography and cultural and historical dimensions.[49] Thus, *Kitāb al-Hind* presents extensive descriptions of Indian culture, including its scholars' scientific knowledge of cosmology and astronomy.

Both *Kitāb al-Hind* and *Kitāb al-Āthār* have different emphases: the former offers a precise analysis of Hind's religious traditions, and the latter includes material on other religious communities, primarily the Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. In addition, although both books deal with different subjects, they are, in light of the methodology used, complementary. During his journey in Hind, al-Biruni wrote *Kitāb al-Tafhīm li Awā'il Ṣinā`at al-Tanjīm* (The Principle of the Art of Astrology). Astrology (*`ilm al-tanjīm, `ilm aḥkām al-nujūm*) was among the basic works of eleventh-century science, in addition to geometry (*`ilm al-handasah*) and astronomy (*`ilm al-falak*).[50] This material also can be found in his *Kitāb al-Qānūn al-Mas`ūdī*, an encyclopedic treatise of astronomical sciences.[51] Several of his other books focus on the natural sciences.[52]

Al-Shahrastani: A Theologian and Heresiographer

Al-Shahrastani (b. 479/1086) was born in Shahristan, located in northern Khurasan,[53] and lived in Persia about a century after al-Biruni's death. He was also known as *al-Imām (the Leader), al-`Allāmah* (the Knowledgeable), *al-Afḍal,* (the Most Precious One), *and Tāj al-Millah wa al-Dīn* (the Crown of [Sepcialist on] Creed and Religion), reflecting his expertise in religious knowledge. Unlike al-Biruni, whose educational background was largely in the natural and pure sciences, his was influenced by honored religious schol-

www.icsbook.info

ars. The formative period of his intellectual development began when his parents taught him Qur'anic recitation and exegesis (*tafsīr*). After memorizing the Qur'an before his tenth birthday, his father sent him to study with some shaykhs in Khurasan who had a better collection of religious books for studying Qur'anic exegesis. His enthusiastic quest for knowledge led him to travel to Naisapur, Khawarizm, and Makkah. In Naisapur, al-Shahrastani studied hadith and *'ulūm al-ḥadīth* with 'Ali ibn Ahmad al-Madani (d. 494/1100); Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) with Ahmad al-Khuwafi (d. 500/1106); and theology (*'ilm al-kalām*), exegesis, and the foundations of Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) with Imam Abu Nasr al-Qusayri (d. 514/1120). He also met Abu al-Qasim Sulayman ibn Nasr al-Ansari, who taught him theology, Islamic mysticism (*taṣawwuf*), and all about the history of the House of the Prophet's (Ahl al-Bayt) nobility and graciousness.[54]

Al-Shahrastani continued his intellectual wandering, moving from Naisapur to Khawarizm, where he studied with As'ad ibn Abi Nasr al-Mayhani (d. 527/1129) and Muhammad ibn Mahmud al-Khawarizm (d. 568/1172). At this time, his intellectual maturity encouraged him to study and criticize philosophy and philosophical schools. (Philosophy was to become one of the main concerns.) He stayed there for ten years and then made hajj in 510/1116. After that, he went to Baghdad, where he stayed for three years,[55] and where Ash'arite theology was predominant. Ibn Khallikan (d. 681/1282), as cited by Diane Steigerwald, ranks al-Shahrastani as an Ash'arite theologian (*al-mutakallim 'alā madhhab al-Ash'arī*).[56] Finally, he returned to his hometown in Persia around 514/1117 and stayed there until his death in 548/1153.

Al-Shahrastani's intellectual adventure indicates that he learned the religious science from teachers whose religious backgrounds were quite varied. As for his religious affiliation, Wilfred Madelung writes:

> Born and educated as a Shafi'ite Sunnite, he continued to identify with the Sunnite community and followed the Shafi'ite ritual and legal practice to the end of his life. Yet his concept of Sunnism evidently moved far away from the contemporaneous orthodox understanding of it and expanded to allow Shi'ite veneration of the Family of the Prophet and recognition of the religious authority of the Shi'ite Imams.[57]

He was appointed a chancellor of the chancellery (*dīwān al-rasā'il*) when Sanjar, the Saljuq sovereign, ruled Khurasan in 511/1118. The *Kitāb al-Milal*, considered al-Shahrastani's most influential work on Muslim heresiography, was dedicated to his two patrons: Nasr al-Din Mahmud ibn Abi Tawba al-Marwazi and, upon his imprisonment in 529/1132, to Sayyid Majd al-Din Abu al-Qasim 'Ali ibn Ja'far al-Musawi (his new patron).[58]

www.icsbook.info

According to Bruce Lawrence, *Kitāb al-Milal* "surpasses its predecessor in objectivity and insight as well as detail and scope."[59] Similarly, George C. Anawati explains: "In contrast to Ibn Hazm, the author (Shahrastani) does not aim at refuting errors, but merely strives to state the doctrines as objectively as possible."[60] Even though the book describes Islamic theology's divisions and subdivisions, the discussion is more concerned with each division's uniqueness. He presented several Islamic theological divisions, based upon his system of categorization, but failed to elaborate upon the main theological and philosophical theme in a comprehensive manner.

Specific themes with which Muslim theologians and philosophers primarily dealt, such as the assertion of divine unity (*tawḥīd*), the problem of divine predestination, free will, the issues of prophecy and the concept of imamate, were elaborated upon in his *Kitāb Nihāyat al-Iqdām fī `Ilm Kalām*. As Guillaume states, it "was clearly designated by al-Shahrastani as a complementary sequel to his *Kitāb al-Milal*."[61] Although his *Kitāb Nihāyat al-Iqdām* covers a vast scope of Islamic theological and philosophical discourse, al-Shahrastani expanded his concern with "theological philosophy" by presenting a special analysis of Ibn Sina's (Avicenna) works and thought in his *Kitāb al-Muṣāra'ah*, which he dedicated to Majd al-Din al-Musawi.

While al-Biruni spotlighted and criticized Ibn Sina's concept of the nature of the universe, al-Shahrastani tried to refute Ibn Sina's concept of metaphysics.[62] In this refutation, however, he did not include al-Ghazali, even though al-Ghazali was among the foremost medieval Muslim scholars to criticize philosophers and his *Al-Tahāfut al-Falāsifah*, as Wilfred Madelung and Toby Mayer have noted, "provided the most persuasive answer to Ibn Sina's philosophy from the Sunni point of view."[63] The impact of Isma'ili teachings on al-Shahrastani can be observed in *Al-Majlis*, in which he discusses the theory of creation (*khalq*) in the context of God's divine order (*al-amr*).

Al-Shahrastani wrote most of his works in Arabic; however, *Al-Majlis*, compiled by Muhammad Rida Jalali Na'ini and based on al-Shahrastani's speech delivered in Khwarizm, is in Persian.[64] Al-Shahrastani also wrote a commentary on the Qur'an, *Mafātiḥ al-Asrār wa Masābiḥ al-Abrār*,[65] and other works mentioned by al-Bayhaqi, which are apparently lost, such as *Al-Manāhij wa al-Āyat* and *Qiṣṣāt Mūsā wa al-Khaydir*.

Approaches to Hind's Religious Traditions

Some information on Hind had circulated among Muslim scholars during and prior to al-Biruni's time. However, in his *Kitāb al-Hind*, al-Biruni does not mention the works of al-Mas`udi, al-Tabari, Ibn Khurdadhbih, and Sulayman

www.icsbook.info

al-Tajir as his sources, perhaps because he was able to conduct actual field research. We do not have much information about why he did not refer to these earlier works. He probably, borrowing Ainslie T. Embree, "mistrusted them" and preferred "to work from the Sanskrit original."[66] Yet, this does not seem to be a sufficient answer. Perhaps his decision was also a geographical matter. Overall, it is worth noting that in his *Kitāb al-Hind*, al-Biruni mentions Abu Sahl `Abd al-Mun`im ibn `Ali ibn Nuh al-Tiflisi, Zarqan, and Abu al-`Abbas al-Iranshahri.[67] It seems that he could access and interact with the works of earlier Muslim writers, given that he does offer some comments, appreciations, and critiques of them.[68]

Al-Biruni analyzed Hind's religious traditions closely, conducted field observation in certain Indian regions, and referred to Zarqan and Iranshahri, both of whom provided a lot of data about Buddhist cosmology. However, he dealt mainly with Hinduism. This is quite strange, considering that he did not give enough space to Buddhism in both *Kitāb al-Hind* and *Kitāb al-Āthār* and yet discussed at least twelve religions and religious communities. The majority of scholars, among them Sachau, Jeffery, Lawrence, Kamaruzzaman, and Waardenburg, speculate that he did this because Buddhism probably had largely disappeared from northern India by that time (the end of the eleventh century).[69]

This speculation is quite acceptable, especially if we consider that al-Biruni sought to be consistent with his methodology by conducting field research and that he did not find enough Buddhist informants.[70] Yet this leaves a room for a further question: Did al-Biruni, as a historian or historiographer, only focus on existing religions in composing his *Kitāb al-Āthār*? Unlike such earlier Muslim scholars as Zarqan and Iranshahri or such later ones as Rashid al-Din, was al-Biruni not interested in Buddhism, given that he discusses other major and minor religious traditions?

Similarly, in his *Kitāb al-Milal* al-Shahrastani did not explicitly mention his sources. This occurrence is slightly unusual, because he said in this book: "These are what I can achieve from the sayings of the experts, and I have quoted [such information] as they are" (*Hadhā mā wajadtu min maqālāt ahl al-`ālim, wa nuqiltuhu `alā mā wajadtuhu.*).[71] This signifies that he used other sources, although he did not present them explicitly in his work. For the same reason, Lawrence notes:

> Whatever Shahrastani's sources may have contained about India was derivative, and Shahrastani himself did not supplement its data through conversation with Hindus or Buddhists nor did he consult with Muslim

www.icsbook.info

> travelers who had gone to India and been exposed to the beliefs and practices of Indians. Though he wrote in the first half of the twelfth century A.D., Shahrastani obtained the bulk of his information on Indian sects from a report compiled at the beginning of the ninth century.[72]

In regards to this case, Lawrence shares two themes that illustrate al-Shahrastani's connection to his predecessors based on the similar types of works that they wrote. Minorski, as cited by Lawrence, writes that al-Shahrastani, similar to al-Biruni, might refer to Zarqan, who paid attention specifically to Hind's religious tradition, rather than to other such Muslim geographers as Ibn Khurradadhbih, Jayhani, Gardizi, or Marvazi. However, according to Lawrence, the connection between Zurqan and al-Shahrastani is difficult to establish.

But in a certain manuscript version of the *Kitāb al-Milal* (ed. Muhammad Badran), al-Shahrastani refers to Jayhani while discussing Zoroastrianism. Thus, he could have been in touch with Jayhani, even though he does not explicitly mention this scholar when exploring Hind's religious tradition.[73] However, the resemblances between al-Shahrastani's "Ārā al-Hind" and other sources do not automatically signify that he really referred to them, since the *Kitāb al-Milal's* chapter on Indian religious divisions covers various aspects that are not discussed in his predecessors' works. Thus, it is probable that al-Shahrastani selected some material from several available sources of information on Hind.

In contrast, al-Biruni offers a more detailed explanation about his methodological approach. He suggests five crucial elements of Indian culture that must be considered by observers in general, and Muslim readers in particular, to understand its people's religious life: the characteristics of the main Indian language (Sanskrit) and the land's major religious treatises, the Indian religious attitudes, their customs, the religious types, and the Hindus' attitudes toward others.[74] Moreover, in *Kitāb al-Hind* al-Biruni reveals himself as a dispassionate scholar who seeks to study other religions as they are. In his introductory remarks, he says: "This book is not a polemical one (*laysā al-kitāb, kitāb ḥujjāj wa jidāl*) … My book is nothing but a simple historic record of fact (*wa innama huwa kitāb ḥikāyat*)."[75] This dispassionate demeanor is a major reason why he is considered a distinguished scholar and religious historian of his time. Regarding his intention as a Muslim to study the Hindu belief system, he justly remarks:

> I have done and written this book on the doctrines of the Hindus, never making any unfounded imputations against those, our religious antago-

www.icsbook.info

> nists, and at the same time not considering it inconsistent with my duties as a Muslim to quote their own word at full length when I thought they would contribute to elucidate a subject. If the contents of these quotations happen to be utterly heathenish, and the followers of the truth, i.e. the Muslims, find them objectionable, we can only say that such is the belief of the Hindus, and that they themselves are the best qualified to defend it.[76]

Compared to al-Biruni's model of investigation, which tends to be anthropological, al-Shahrastani's description of Hind is more theological. Al-Shahrastani consistently employs his heresiographical approach in categorizing and classifying that land's religious belief systems. Accordingly, there are at least two modes of categorization: a division of regions or a division of people. The former principle divides regions into four main classes: the East, West, South, and North, and includes the characteristic of each one's natures (*al-ṭabā`i*) and laws (*al-sharā`i*); the latter principle divides the world into four major nations (*kibār al-umam*): "the Arabs, `Ajam (Persians), Romans, and Indians."[77]

Therefore, al-Shahrastani analyzes and categorizes Hind's religious tradition in a slightly different way than al-Biruni does, although they might have a similar theological outlook as regards its religious tradition. While al-Shahrastani tries to show his neutrality as a scholar, his bias is evident when he discusses the various Islamic sects:

> I impose upon myself the obligation of giving the views of each sect as I find them in their works without favour or prejudice, without declaring which are correct and which are incorrect, which are true and which are false; although, indeed, the glimpses of the truth and the odour of lies will not remain undetected by minds versed in intellectual matters. And God will be our help.[78]

We cannot generalize this view as being entirely applicable to non-Islamic religious traditions, since al-Shahrastani uses certain terms and methods to classify other religions and philosophies. Nevertheless, he says: "The Indian people constitute a large nation (*ummah kabīrah*) and a great religious community (*millah al-`aḍīmah*), and they vary in their views (*wa ārāwhum mukhtalifah*)."[79] Similar to al-Biruni, whose views are considered relatively moderate, al-Shahrastani approaches the Indian religions "sympathetically" and, as Lawrence points out, "employs a unique analytical model (Sabianism) to portray Indian idol worship."[80]

www.icsbook.info

Defining Traditions and Religions: Some Methodological Issues

In his *Kitāb al-Āthār*, al-Biruni collects information on various civilizations' calendrical systems, which are related to religious events, and arranges them into certain themes. Some of the topics correspond solely to his curiosity and competency as an astronomer and astrologer. Other topics elaborate upon the religious events and festivals in various religious traditions. Since this book seeks to observe the chronology of ancient nations, as opposed to inspect world religious traditions, he provides no precise method of classification as al-Shahrastani does. For the most part, the topics of discussion are derived from festivals or religious events. Even so, he presents a wide-ranging discussion of the divisions of religious festivals by describing the similarities and differences of traditions, religious institutions, and opinions found within various groups or nations.

The festivals and feast days, the main topics in addition to the calendrical systems that so interest al-Biruni, are fine instances of how he effectively portrays the differences and resemblances among the religious traditions of the Jews, Persians, Christians, pre-Islamic Arabs, Sabians, and Muslims. His method of selection implies that he formulated a classification based on how people deal with religious festivals, dates, and calendars.

Furthermore, if we take the modern-day study of religion into account, we may say that his mode of presentation in *Kitāb al-Āthār* tends to be more "functionalist," for he begins with a discussion based on "religious events" as the main issue, rather then "substantivist,"[81] meaning one who is concerned mainly with religious doctrines. In the functionalist point of view, religious practices may reflect what people believe. For al-Biruni, in this case perhaps, a portion of religious doctrine is presented as the supportive information, not as the main argument, needed to give a religious event's theological background. We may also say that this book is written from his perspective as an astronomer, astrologer, and geographer, and not especially as a religionist. Therefore, his failure to elaborate further upon the significant types of each religious tradition's theological doctrines mentioned in *Kitāb al-Āthār* is not so strange.

Another comparative method used by al-Biruni can be traced back to his *Kitāb al-Hind*, in which he conducts a profound investigation of Hind's religious tradition and compares its theological and philosophical thought with those of the classical Greek religions, Christianity and Judaism, and also confronts their opinions so that he can reach a certain conclusion. To be sure, one who applies a comparative method must have critical insight, a careful

www.icsbook.info

outlook, and an accurate stance in looking at one or more religious traditions so that one can reach a reasonable conclusion. Regarding al-Biruni's comparative method when studying Hind, Jeffery notes,

> [H]e will place before the reader the theories of the Hindus exactly as they are, and where there are similar theories among the Greeks, or in the teaching of the Christian sects, or the Sufis, as for example in the matter of transmigration of souls, or pantheistic doctrines of the unity of God with his creatures, he will accurately report their theories also for comparison.[82]

Though al-Biruni makes no attempt to locate Hind's religious traditions within the world's religious traditions, we can deduce his perspective of the general classification of religion. In *Kitāb al-Hind*, he argues that the idolatry found in Hind and classical Greece can be measured as a kind of tradition that deviates from the truth (*al-ḥaqq*). On this subject, Kamaruzzaman concludes that al-Biruni implicitly offers two typologies of religions: (1) *al-ḥaqq* (the Truth) or Islam, and (2) *kufr* (rejection of, or deviation from, the Truth) or *inḥirāf* (deviation from the Truth). Here, Kamaruzzaman interprets *al-ḥaqq* as "Islam," since Muslims often employ this term to identify their own religion.[83] However, since al-Biruni's statements refer to the people of Hind and pre-Christian Greece who held idolatrous views, it is more accurate, in my opinion, to interpret *al-ḥaqq* as "the pure truth" or "monotheism" as employed by Sachau, rather then as "Islam" as used by Kamaruzzaman and based upon Naquib al-Attas' translation.[84] My argument is that in this passage al-Biruni simply talks about the idolatry of Hind and classical Greece vis-à-vis the monotheistic tradition.

Al-Biruni uses *inḥirāf* in the context of deviating from monotheism, as opposed to deviating from Islam. As we shall see below, he distinguishes between the *khawāṣṣ* (elites) and the *`āmmah* (ordinary) of Hindu believers, which also deals with the monotheistic view and the deviation from it. Moreover, Kamaruzzaman's above argument is beyond the scope of this discussion, because al-Biruni also talks about Socrates, "who died faithful to the truth (*al-ḥaqq*)" for not partaking in his people's idolatry. In sum, al-Biruni employs *al-ḥaqq* not only to distinguish monotheism from idolatry, but also for the "truth" (*al-ḥaqq*) that Socrates defended. Thus, the "truth" in this case is not simply Islam as an "organized religion," but rather Islam as a monotheistic tradition.

Nevertheless, in another place he discusses the divisions of Hind's society from a theological point of view and its cultural castes or social classes (*al-ṭabaqāt*). In addition to his two types of Hindus, mentioned above, he also recognizes that castes or colors (Sans. *varna*; Ar. *alwān*) are an important cul-

www.icsbook.info

tural aspect and that Muslims will perhaps find this feature difficult to understand, since these sociocultural classes determine the Hindus' spiritual types and rights. "We Muslims," al-Biruni states, "stand entirely on the other side of the question, considering all men as equal, except in piety (*taqwā*)."[85]

Such social classes or castes are not unique to Hind. Before describing its castes, for instance, he mentions a sort of caste system found in ancient Persia that bears certain similarities to that of Hind. For example, along with his effort to restore the Persian empire, Ardhasir ben Babak resurrected the following social hierarchy: the knights (*al-usāwirah*) and princes (*abnā' al-mulūk*); the monks or pious men (*al-nussāk*), fire-priests (*sadanat al-nayyirān*), and lawyers (*arbāb al-dīn*); the physicians (*al-aṭibbā'*), astronomers (*al-munajjimīn*), and scientists (*aṣḥāb al-`ulūm*); and, finally, the farmers or peasants (*al-zarrā`i*) and artisans (*al-ṣunnā`i*).[86] The Hindus, as al-Biruni explains, have four major castes, each of which is determined by their texts and associated with Brahman's primordial existence: *brahmana* (brahmins [priests and teachers]), *kshatria* (warriors and rulers), *vaisya* (farmers, merchants, artisans), and *sudra* (laborers) and other low-caste people.

In contrast to al-Biruni, who offers no precise taxonomy of world religious traditions, al-Shahrastani arranges them through a precise model of classification. In addition, as a heresiographer, he offers various technical and theological terms associated with Islamic and other religious sects. First, he proposes a general classification of world religions by presenting what "scholars" have posited, such as a classification based on the great ancient regions and great nations,[87] of which Hind is one. His classification is not restricted to regions or nations, because he also classifies world religious traditions according to their belief systems, especially when elaborating upon various sects within each religion.

Indeed, his *Kitāb al-Milal* mainly seeks to arrange world religious traditions based on their opinion (*al-ārā'*) and doctrines (*al-madhdhāhib*).[88] To display his taxonomy sharply and systematically, he proposes such technical terms as "people of religions and sects" (*ahl al-dayānāt wa al-milal*) and "people of opinion" (*ahl al-ahwā wa al-niḥal*). While the former comprises the Magians, Jews, Christians, and Muslims, the latter comprises the philosophers, materialists, Sabians, star and idol worshippers, and Brahmans.[89]

While al-Biruni's discussion of each religion's theological or philosophical view is not profound, al-Shahrastani, as a theologian or a heresiographer, makes a clearer distinction between their doctrines. In defining and categorizing religions or philosophical thought, he formulates such concepts as rationality, regulation or law, body of laws (*sharī`ah*), and prophecies that each tradition may have rejected or accepted.[90] In addition, he mentions

www.icsbook.info

another one of religion's important and necessary aspect: scripture. In this case, he distinguishes world religious traditions based on their scriptures and divides them into categories: those that have books (*Ahl al-Kitāb*), those who have "pseudo-books" (*man lahū shubhat kitāb*), and those who have laws and regulations "without books." Hind's religious traditions, especially those of the Brahmans and the star worshippers, appear to belong to the third category. Apparently, al-Shahrastani had limited direct access to Hindus, so some Hindu scriptures are missing from his *Kitāb al-Milal*. This is in contrast to al-Biruni, who elaborates to a great extent upon several Hindu scriptures to which he refers in his *Kitāb al-Hind*.

One more issue I would like to highlight here concerns both scholars' insights on the relationship between philosophy and theology. This issue, in my opinion, is relevant because both of their investigations embrace several philosophers when discussing religions. Al-Shahrastani describes several philosophical systems in his *Kitāb al-Milal* and incorporates an extensive discussion of Greek, Arab, and Hindu thought in his *Kitāb Nihāyat al-Itqān*. On the other hand, Greek thought becomes the object of al-Biruni's comparative analysis of Hind's religious and philosophical thought.

In the Islamic scientific tradition, philosophy and theology are considered rational sciences (*'ulūm al-'aqlīyah*) instead of transmitted sciences (*al-'ulūm al-naqlīyah*). Even so, they have different concerns or objects of study: "While theological discourse (*kalām*) is concerned with God's existence and attributes and with human's destiny, philosophy is concerned with rational truth, being and non-being, and the nature of things, of God, and of the cosmos."[91] Yet al-Biruni is better recognized as a scientist, astrologer, and religionist than as a philosopher or theologian, while it is just the opposite with al-Shahrastani. However, their works imply that philosophy can somehow be a kind of theological thought. Therefore, studying religion and theology must involve a discussion of philosophy.

In regards to the terminological ambiguity of philosophy and theology in Islamic intellectual history, Seyyed Hossein Nasr notes:

> In the context of classical Islamic civilization the name "philosophy" (*al-falsafah* or *al-ḥikmah*) is reserved for a particular set of disciplines associate with the well-known schools of "Islamic philosophy" such as the Peripatetic (*mashshā'ī*), Illuminationists (*ishrāqī*) and the like, and not other schools, like theology (*kalām*), which often deal with philosophic ideas but are not officially recognized as philosophy. Therefore, the title of "philosopher" (*al-faylasuf*) is usually reserved for those who are masters of the doctrines of one these "philosophical" schools with all the different ramifications and nuances that various branches of these schools contain.[92]

www.icsbook.info

Whether al-Biruni and al-Sharastani should more appropriately be regarded as philosophers or theologians is beyond the scope of this paper. My point here is how they distinguish philosophy from religion, since philosophical thought is intimately embodied within and attached to religious judgments. According to al-Shahrastani, the philosophers (*al-falāsifah al-ūlā*), along with the Brahmans and the star worshippers, are those who may have laws and regulations without a scripture (*min man lahū ḥudūd wa aḥkām dūna kitāb*).[93] By including philosophers in his discussion of religion, he shows that he considers philosophy as a sort of religion.

Muhammad Kamal Ja'far mentions that al-Shahrastani connects philosophy to religion in the context of their objective (*fī niṭāq al-ghāyah*) and compares the positions of prophets (*al-anbiyā'*) and philosophers (*al-ḥukamā'*).[94] Accordingly, prophets confirm the spiritual support for establishing the matter of practical purposes and also take a stand as regards the logical dimension (*al-anbiyā' ayyadū bi imdādāt rūḥānīyat li taqrīr al-qism al-`amalī, wa bi ṭurafi ma min al-qism al-`ilm*), while philosophers provide sensible supports for establishing the logical or scientific dimensions and also take a stand on the matter of practices (*ta'rudhū li imdādāt `aqlīyah, taqīran li qism al-`ilm, wa bi ṭurafi ma min al-qism al-`amalī*).[95]

This means that both religion and philosophy have an equivalent goal: the quest for the truth. Therefore, the fundamental correspondence in terms of purpose between religion (prophets) and philosophy (philosophers), as described by al-Shahrastani, is coherent with his method of classification, which includes spiritual and philosophical traditions that have no book or prophets. In this regard, Ahmad Khalifah assumes that "according to the arrangement of this classification, religion seems to be rooted in philosophy." Al-Shahrastani even points out that Sabianism's essence lies somewhere between religion and philosophy.[96]

As a result, the way al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani categorize religions and define religious elements influence how they examine Hind's religious tradition. Even though al-Shahrastani is more systematic and "comprehensive" then al-Biruni in arranging and examining world religious traditions and each of their sects, some important aspects of religion (e.g., religious practices and religious festivals) are missing from his work. The idea of comprehensibility in examining religion, however, is not entirely plausible, especially when we observe how al-Biruni deals with Hind's religious tradition, since he conducted actual field research in Hind. Al-Biruni's work covers various aspects of the Hindu traditions, such as society, theology, scripture, and festivals.

www.icsbook.info

The Hindus: Between Monotheism and Polytheism

One issue that can be discussed about Hinduism's divisions and theological doctrines in both scholars' writings is their opinion on the monotheism-polytheism discourse. Since Islamic theology stresses the Higher Being's unity (*tawḥīd*) and purity, it is probable that they might attach dissimilar theological evaluations to Hind's religious traditions. As Rosenthal notes, "monotheism in al-Biruni's time," and perhaps in al-Shahrastani's, "did not allow of reconciliation with any form of pagan idol worship or theology."[97]

Tawḥīd is a core Islamic belief, as seen in the *shahādah* (the testimony of faith): "There is no deity but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God." Even though Muslims agree on God's oneness, their understanding of His attributes, manifestation, and authority differ. The resulting heated theological debates are long-standing and were especially vigorous during the eighth to the tenth centuries.[98] Given that both scholars recognize that Hind's religious traditions are among the oldest living traditions, the Islamic creed can apply only "partially," namely, the concept of God's oneness, and not the concept of Muhammad's prophethood. Even so, the concept of prophecy is one to which al-Shahrastani devotes a great deal of major attention.

Both men raise different opinions concerning the Hindus' monotheistic or polytheistic tendencies. Although al-Biruni does not connect the Hindus directly with the Sabians, a religious community that allegedly had a monotheistic inclination, he sees that Hinduism is monotheistic in nature. As a matter of course, some Hindu texts contain opinions indicating that God is the One, the highest reality, eternal, unique, and beyond all likeness and unlikeness. Therefore, he sees polytheism as a common accidental deviation from the monotheistic outlook, one that is caused mainly by the people's inability to understand "non-symbolic" philosophical and theological matters. Thus, in this case polytheism is simply a matter of the "symbolic shapes" of religiosity that typically exist when people need a concrete manifestation or representation of the Higher Beings.

Moreover, al-Biruni identifies two hypotheses of idolatry's origin: it existed before God sent His Messenger, and it might be a deviation from the "true religion." His opinion of the types of idolatry appears to be quite similar to al-Shahrastani's idea that idolatry does not come in just one form. The pagan Arabs, Greeks, Romans, and Indians all have the same tradition of worshipping idols; however, some of them think that the idol becomes a mediator, an intercessor with God, His manifestation, as well as His representation,[99] whereas others see it only as a memorial.[100] "The classical Greeks also considered idols as mediators between themselves and the first cause,"

www.icsbook.info

states al-Biruni, "and worshipped them under the names of the stars and the highest substances."[101] Furthermore, he explicates: "The Hindus honor their idols on account of those who erected them, not account of the material of which they are made."[102]

In connection with the above case, al-Shahrastani observes the variety of Hindu perceptions as regards the Higher Beings' symbolic representation by presenting his types of idol worshippers. According to him, their perception of idols is not monolithic. Some perceive them as God's representation or manifestation through divine messengers in the form of human beings and, at the same time, use them as intermediaries; others regard idols or such things as water, fire, and tree as "angels" or "the higher beings." Even though al-Shahrastani does not claim that the Hindus are monotheists, he implies that some of them need symbolical representation while worshiping the higher beings, such as when he describes the followers of spiritual beings (i.e., the Basawiya, Bahuwadiya, Kabaliya, and Bahaduniya) and the star worshippers (i.e., the Dinakitiya and Jandrikaniya). His opinion on their idolatry is, in short, based on the types of idol worshippers and their basic understanding of the relevant idols.

The variety of Hind's religious traditions shows that Hindus differ both culturally and spiritually. The structure of Hindu theological doctrines, as articulated by Hindu theologians and philosophers through their holy books and respected scriptures, still leaves room for the ordinary people to modify and contextualize such doctrines in accordance with popular points of view. The gap between philosophical-theological formulations and [popular] religious practices exists in almost all religious traditions.

From al-Biruni's and al-Shahrastani's investigations, we may also see that each religion, including Hinduism, has a philosophical dimension and a popular manifestation. For the elites, the religious tradition, like that of other religious communities, is monotheistic, especially with regard to defining the concept of the Highest Being. At the popular level, namely, that of religious symbols, the iconographic representation and figurative symbols (e.g., idols or statues) is also expressed in other religious traditions. In both scholars' opinion, the particularity of religious traditions can be observed in how the religious communities connect the Highest Reality to the figurative symbols they have created to represent the highest (monotheistic) Reality.

Conclusion

The relevance and contribution of medieval Muslim scholars and theologians to the study of religion cannot be disregarded in forming the modes of

www.icsbook.info

comparative religion (*muqāranat al-adyān*), especially in modern Muslim literature and, perhaps, in contemporary western scholarship. In our case, the classifications or categorizations of religions made by these two scholars can be regarded as their contribution to the modern study of religion.

Before exploring Hind's religious tradition, they discussed other religions. Al-Biruni wrote *Kitāb al-Hind* after *Kitāb al-Āthār*; al-Shahrastani's chapter "*Ā*r ā al-Hind" is the last chapter of his *Kitāb al-Milal*. Differences are also apparent in how they investigate each religious tradition. Whereas al-Biruni focuses on the history of religion and religious rituals/festivals, al-Shahrastani is more interested in the divisions of theological doctrines and religious sects. Thus they present different insights in classifying world religions. It is hard to find a systematic and detailed explanation of each religion's doctrinal teachings in al-Biruni's writings, excluding his exploration of Hind, because his interest is the ancient nations' religious festivals and calendrical systems. In contrast, while we can easily read a detailed narrative of the doctrines of world religions in al-Shahrastani, it is hard to find any attention given to religious festivals or practices in his work. Therefore, I would say that their approaches to world religious traditions are complementary.

This also can be seen in their discussion of Sabianism. Al-Biruni presents data about several ancient religious communities that Muslim scholars have considered to be Sabian. In the context of our discussion, it is correct, as modern scholars say, that al-Shahrastani was the first Muslim scholar to connect the Sabians with Hind's religious communities, since he discovered that their teachings are similar to those of the Brahmans. On the other hand, there is no clear clue that al-Biruni ever brought up such an issue when discussing Hind's religious tradition. However, in regards to the discourse of Sabianism, al-Biruni, al-Shahrastani, and other Muslim scholars opined that the Sabians might have had monotheistic tendencies or at least had "deviated" from or "modified" their monotheistic views.

In presenting the types of Hindu believers, al-Biruni differentiates between philosophers and ordinary people. This workable categorization is still used by modern scholars of religion and, perhaps, some anthropologists who study religious systems. Al-Biruni's journey in Hind and his chance to examine some Hindu scriptures and investigate Hindu religious practices allow him to make such a distinction by presenting a categorization of Hind's religions at both the philosophical and the popular levels. More importantly, he introduces the distinction between *khawāṣṣ* and *`āmmah*, as a general theory, to show how the theologians and the philosophers or "the elites" (*khawāṣṣ*) apprehend religious ideas and how "the vulgar" (*`āmmah*) might perceive and actualize such religious doctrines in the popular context.[103]

www.icsbook.info

Moreover, from this categorization we may draw some theoretical notes as to why and how, according to al-Biruni, a monotheistic view can diverge within a given society. First, people may "deviate" due to their limited ability. Different people with different educational backgrounds might produce different views about philosophical and abstract concepts.[104] His conclusion that the Hindus' theological concept is monotheistic is unusual and surprising, but his assertion of an intellectual gap between the educated and the uneducated believers is a common phenomenon and can be used to analyze other religious communities. Second, a "natural process" may also generate the "deviation." Human beings have a propensity to decode such abstract concepts as "supernatural," "God," "angel," and "demon" by presenting them as figurative objects. Therefore, anthropomorphism is very common and can be found in almost all religious traditions. Even the elites have a tendency to be anthropomorphist.

Third, it still relates to the previous point: People venerate religious symbols, statues, or temples long after they forget the original motive of the given symbol's creation. An earlier community builds a sculpture to honor and commemorate a specific person (e.g., the Buddha) and give him respect, and a later community transforms that tradition into a "religious ritual."[105] Finally, anthropomorphism as a "deviation" from monotheism can occur due to linguistic limitations within societies. Al-Biruni's comparative explanation about this, as in the case of Greek, Arab-Islam, Hebrew, and among Christians, reveals different probabilities in producing anthropomorphism. Interestingly, as modern scholars point out, theology (i.e., doctrinal systems) is also constructed by the structure of a given society's language.[106]

As al-Biruni explains, idolatry is a major tradition within Hind's religious traditions, especially among those Hindus who need symbolic and iconographic representations of the Highest Being, various deities, and angels. This tradition absolutely contravenes Islam, which is totally against idolatry and all other iconographic symbols. Even so, al-Biruni highlights another viewpoint of Hinduism: At its philosophical core, Hinduism exhibits a monotheistic tendency. Monotheism is not the only theological inclination among Hindu philosophers, since there is also a pantheistic mystical view. When al-Biruni writes that idolatry is a "deviation" from the truth, it echoes his Islamic perspective (the idea of monotheism) as a central theological tool in his investigation of other religions. Nevertheless, this field observation, which led him to encounter Hindu religious ideas and practices objectively, is not very popular among Muslim scholars and heresiographers, who traditionally have considered religions from a doctrinal point of view.

www.icsbook.info

In contrast, al-Shahrastani's classification represents how Muslim heresiographers classify sects and Islamic theological schools of thought. He presents the founder of each religious sect and then examines its subsets' characteristics. Such heresiographers as Ibn Hazm, Tahir ibn Muhammad al-Baghdadi, and Muhammad ibn Isfara'ini use a similar style. He also formulates some criteria of religions and religious communities in their dealings with scriptures, prophets, and a deity/deities.

Al-Shahrastani's distinction reveals that his model of classification determines his view. We may summarize his view as follows: First, almost all of these divisions and subdivisions deal closely with the concept of "idol." As depicted by al-Shahrastani, the Hindus have different ways of perceiving their idols; some consider them to be the actual deity/deities, while others just see them as the "representation" of the Higher Being. Therefore, the existence of an idol does not necessarily indicate that all Hindus worship it; instead, some of them use it as a symbol of a higher being and so may worship what the symbol represents.[107] Second, he distinguishes between idol worshippers (i.e., the tree-water-fire worshippers) and star worshippers (i.e., the Sun and Moon worshippers). But it is hard to discover this difference, as perhaps the only difference between them is the way they associate their "respect" or "admiration" with the Moon, the Sun, water, fire, or a tree. However, as regards their creating and honoring the idol and performing rituals, there is no fundamental disparity.[108]

In this case, we may say that he discusses idol worshippers as a special case. However, worshipping stars is not unique to Hindus: ancient religions or the Sabians in Mesopotamia, Iraq, or Syria also had such a tradition.[109] Therefore, this categorization is probably his way of emphasizing his concern with differentiating this group from the tradition that purely worships idols. Third, there is a connection between the Brahman (*al-barāhimah*) and Indian philosophers (*ḥukamā' al-hind*) in the matter of thought and tradition: Both deal primarily with reason and wisdom.[110] The highest potentiality of human beings is found in their endeavors by using reason to distinguish between right and wrong, as well as between true and false.

In al-Sharastani's depiction, the concepts of "intermediaries" and "representation" in the context of the human–divine relationship within Hind's religious sects and subsects is discussed frequently. Through this point, he offers a basic supposition of how Hindus conceptualize their theological ideas and attaches the concept of intermediaries to the notion of iconographical representation of the higher beings (e.g., gods, goddesses, and angels). Therefore, idolatry is one of his main concerns. Al-Shahrastani presents five main sects or religions, some of which, especially among the star worshippers and idol

www.icsbook.info

worshippers, deal with idolatry, while other main "sects," especially the Brahmans and Indian philosophers, mainly deal with either "reason" or mysticism and therefore do not really involve themselves with idols.[111]

Even though both scholars employ different approaches, the intersecting notion between them of Hind's idolatry is seen in some conceptual keys: religious representation, intermediaries, anthropomorphism, and "deviation" from monotheism. It is understandable that their investigations would reveal a common phenomenon within a religious discourse: the distinction between philosophical thinking and religious practice. Idolatry, as far as they are concerned, is a natural human tendency, especially among religious communities that are faced with describing abstract ideas.

Their works may also represent a typical study of religion conducted by medieval Muslim scholars who used their own frameworks. Al-Biruni's concept of "deviation" from monotheism and al-Shahrastani's refutation of the Brahmans concerning prophecy show that Islam's basic teachings are still in play in their analyses. It may say that their arguments and judgments regarding other religions are polemical and apologetic. However, this is not really the case, for their description, evaluation, and analysis of other religious beliefs and practices reveal a genuine interest in understanding non-Islamic religions through comparison.

Furthermore, critical notes can be addressed to both scholars and their perceptions or judgments of how the Hindus perceive monotheism and polytheism. I mentioned above that al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani issued some conceptual terms in their divisions, such as "deviation," the "elites" and the "vulgar," "representation," and "intermediaries." Such an approach, borrowing Peter Brown's term, is called the "two-tiered model" and is still used today. Without neglecting the two scholars' efforts to study non-Islamic religions as they are, both still used their own religious and theological views to judge other religions.

Moreover, we can raise some questions regarding their classifications: Is it true that polytheism is a "deviation" from monotheism? Do polytheistic views and monotheistic doctrines exist independently? Can we say that monotheism is a perfect form and a result of the "evolution" of religious belief systems? Why do al-Biruni and al-Shahrastani say that paganism or polytheism is a "deviation" from monotheism? Is it true that the "vulgar" or "ordinary people" are commonly ignorant? Who has the right to say that "popular religion" is worse than "formalized religion"? What is the standard? Do religious beliefs and practices require philosophical thinking?

Other Muslim theologians have used this two-tiered model of analysis. As Brown rightly observes, Christian scholars working in Late Antiquity

www.icsbook.info

(after Christianity became the Roman Empire's official religion) and the early Middle Ages (1096-1270) were already using this perspective. This standpoint even appeared in modern western scholarship in the 1750s when David Hume, in his essay "The Natural History of Religion," discussed the "intellectual limitation of human mind."[112] For Hume, the history of religions is characterized "by the tension between theistic and polytheistic ways of thinking." Hume assumes that there are "intellectual and cultural limitations among the masses" concerning the original monotheism and, therefore, "the vulgar" (borrowing from al-Biruni) have fallen into anthropomorphism and (borrowing from al-Shahrastani) needed "representation."

In the case of Christianity's Late Antiquity era, this "intellectual limitation" engendred the cult of saints. But if we employ Brown's findings to analyze al-Biruni's and al-Shahrastani's viewpoints, we may say that this cult does not simply represent "the vulgar" or comes from "the masses" who, due to their intellectual limitations, need "representation." Instead, the cult of saints, burial practices, and the veneration of idols, temples and shrines are elitist in nature, for the clergy formulates them to bridge the gap between the elites and the masses. Although the majority of modern scholars have accepted Brown's critical remarks, the two-tiered model remains popular and continues to be used by many contemporary Muslim scholars.

Endnotes

1. The term *comparative religion* was first used as an academic term by Joachim Wach in 1952, when he taught courses on the religions of India. He saw that the term *science of religions* or *history of religions* could distort his students' understanding, since he would discuss many religions. Therefore, he used a more descriptive and non-technical term: *the comparative study of religion*. See M Joseph Kitagawa, "Introduction: The Life and Thought of Joachim Wach," in Joachim Wach, *The Comparative Study of Religion* (New York & London: Columbia University Press, 1958), xiii.
2. Franz Rosenthal, "Preface," in Bruce B. Lawrence, *Shahrastani on the Indian Religions* (Moulton: Moulton & Co., 1976), 5.
3. Tarif Khalidi, *Classical Arab Islam: The Culture and Heritage of the Golden Age* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1985), 62.
4. A. Jeffery, "Al-Biruni's Contribution to Comparative Religion," in *Al-Biruni: Commemoration Volume* (Calcutta: Iran Society, 1951), 125.
5. Eric J. Sharpe, *Comparative Religion: A History*, 2d ed. (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1991), 11.
6. Al-Biruni, *Taḥqīq mā li al-Hind min Maqūlah Maqbūlah fi al-`Aql al-Mardhūlah*, ed. Edward C. Sachau (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1925). In this paper, I use *Alberuni's India: An Account of the Religion, Philosophy, Litera-*

www.icsbook.info

ture, Geography, Chronology, Astronomy, Customs, Laws, and Astrology of India about AD 1030, 2 vols., tr. Edward Sachau (Delhi: Low Price Pub., 2003).

7. Al-Biruni, *Al-Āthār al-Bāqīyah `an al-Qurūn al-Khāliyah*, ed. P. Azkaei (Tehran: Miras al-Maktub, 2001). In this article, I use *The Chronology of Ancient Nations: An English Version of the Arabic Text of the Athar al-Baqiya of Al-Biruni or Vestiges of the Past*, tr. Edward C. Sachau (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1879).
8. For the Arabic version, I use al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal,* 2 vols., ed. Abd. Latif Muhammad al-`Abd (Cairo: Maktabah al-Anjlu al-Misriyyah, 1977). Bruce Lawrence's *Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, which focuses mainly on the *Milal wa al-Niḥal's* chapter on Hind's religions, is a valuable case study in how modern scholarship acquires and evaluates medieval Muslim sources in the study of religion. Lawrence has done work with the observation of Muslim literature on Hinduism prior to al-Shahrastani. He translates part II, book III, and section B of al-Shahrastani's "Ārā al-Hind." More importantly, in the last part of his book, Lawrence offers detailed commentaries and comparisons of various aspects of Indian religion reflected in al-Shahrastani's book with other Muslim literature, such as Ibn al-Nadim's *Al-Fihrist*, Gardizi's *Zayn al-Akhbār*, Marvazi's *Ṭabā'i` al-Ḥayawān*, and Maqdisi's *Kitāb wa al-Bad' wa al-Tārīkh*. For the translation of *Al-Milal's* section on Islam, see al-Shahrastani, "Muslim Sects and Divisions," in *Kitāb al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, tr. A. K. Kazi and J. G. Flynn (London and Boston: Kegan Paul Intl., 1984).
9. Alfred Guillaume, tr. and ed., *Kitāb Nihāyat al-Iqdām fī 'Ilm al-Kalām* and *The Summa Philosophiae of al-Shahrastani* (bilingual) (London: Humprey Milford, 1934).
10. There are some basic categories in the Islamic medieval era regarding non-Muslims. By referring to the Qur'an's general notions, Jacques Waardenburg divides these categories into three: (1) the Qur'an distinguishes between believers and unbelievers as well as Muslims and non-Muslims. The latter have three specific characteristics: they do not confess God's oneness, they deny Muhammad's prophetic attribute, and they do not accept the Qur'an as a definitive word of God revealed to Prophet Muhammad; (2) The Qur'an also divides non-Muslims into two categories: such religious communities as Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Sabians are included in the first one, whereas the polytheists (*al-mushrikūn*) are in the second category; and (3) The dissimilarities between those who believe in God's oneness and those who believe in and worship something or somebody in addition to God. Jaques Waardenburg, *Muslim Perception of Other Religions: A Historical Survey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). For Muslim works, see, for example, Mahmoud ibn Sharif, *Al-Adyān fī al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma`arif, 1970); `Abbas ibn Mansur al-Saksaki, *Al-Burhān fī Ma`rifah `Aqā'id Ahl al-Adyān*, ed. Khalil Ahmad Ibrahim al-Haj (Dar al-Turath al-`Arabi li al-Taba`i wa li al-Nashr, 1980); Sulayman ibn Abd al-Qawi al-Tufi, *Al-Intisārāt al-Islāmīyah fī 'Ilm Muqāra-nah al-Adyān* (Cairo: Matba`ah Dar al-Bayan, 1983).

www.icsbook.info

11. "The wave of Hellenism" is used by western scholars, especially William Montgomery Watt, to describe the great impact of the scientific and philosophical views of Greece and other countries of the eastern Mediterranean on the Arab intellectual tradition. W. Montgomery Watt, *Islamic Theology and Philosophy* (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1987); Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 1, *The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 437.
12. Baghdad's Bayt al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom) is an appropriate example of how a fine research library existed during the `Abbasid period where Greek thought, Arabic cultures, and Persian intellectual environments intermingled. See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, ed. by Mehdi Amin Razavi (Surrey, UK: Curzon Press, 1996), esp. chapter 1, "Islamic Thought and Persian Culture," 3-58.
13. See, for example, Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi, *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq wa Bayān al-Firqah al-Nājīyah minhum: `Aqā'id al-Firq al-Islāmīyah wa Ārā Kibār A`lāmahā* (Cairo: Maktabah Ibn Sina li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi` wa al-Tasdir, n.d.); also *Muslim Schisms and Sects*, tr. Kate Chambers Seeley (New York: AMS Press, 1966); Abu al-Muzaffar Tahir ibn Muhammad al-Isfarayni, *Tabsīr fī al-Dīn wa Tamyīz al-Firqah al-Nājīyah `an al-Firq al-Hālikīn* (Cairo: Matba`ah al-Anwar, 1940); 'Ali ibn Ahmad Ibn Hazm, *Al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal*, eds. Muhammad Ibrahim Nasr and `Abd al-Rahman Umayrah (Jeddah: Shairkah Maktabah Ukad, 1982).
14. Muslim theologians have accused Jews and Christians of *taḥrīf*, namely, "having modified, falsified" and misinterpreted their scriptures "to suppress predictions of the prophet." See *Encyclopedia of Islam*, "Taḥrīf," 445.
15. For the variety of Muslims interpretations of *taḥrīf* and their perceptions of Hebrew Bible, see Camilla Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and The Hebrew Bible: From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm* (Leiden, New York, and Koln: E. J. Brill, 1996).
16. Abu al-Futuh Muhammad al-Tawanisi, *Abū Rayḥān Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī: Al-` Ālim al-Falakī, al-Jiyālūjī, wa al-Riyāḍī al-Mu'arrikh Mutarajim Thāqafah al-Hind* (Mu'assasah Dar al-Tahrir li Tab`i wa al-Nashr, 1968), 15.
17. André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 1, *Early Medieval India and the Expansion of Islam 7th-11th Centuries* (Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1997), 190.
18. K. A. Mubarakpuri, *Al-`Arab wa al-Hind fī `Ahd al-Risālah*, tr. Abd al-`Aziz `Izzat `Abd al-Jalil (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-`Ammah li al-Kitāb, 1973), 13. Elsewhere, he briefly describes the `Abbasids' political, cultural, and intellectual policies in regards to Hind from Abu al-Abbas al-Saffah (750-754) until al-Mu'tadid (892-902). See his *Al-Hind fī `Ahd al-`Abbāsīyīn* (Cairo: Dar al-Ansar, 1980).
19. Al-Mas`udi, *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma`ādin al-Jawhar* (Beirut: Manshurat al-Jami`ah al-Libaniyah, 1966), 1:91. See also *Meadows of Gold and Mines of*

www.icsbook.info

Gems, tr. Aloys Springer (London: The Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1841), 1:177.

20. For a further discussion of the early Muslim geographical accounts of Hind, see Maqbul Ahmad, *Indo-Arab Relations: An Account of India's Relations with the Arab World from Ancient up to Modern Times* (New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations; Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1969), 95-106.
21. Wink, *Al-Hind*, 1:191-92; Karl Jahn, *Rashid al-Din's History of India: Collected Essays with Facsimiles and Indice* (London and Paris: The Hague, Mouton and Co., 1965). In his *Jāmi` a-Tavarikh*, Rashid al-Din is more concerned with Buddhism than Hinduism.
22. Mubarakpuri, *Al-`Arab wa al-Hind*, 10.
23. Al-Tawanisi, *Abū Rayḥān Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī*, 19-20; Wink, *Al-Hind*, 1:7-9.
24. Even before the "wave of Hellenism" in the eight and ninth centuries, Arab-Persian Muslim scholars had interacted with the Indian scientific materials in the fields of astronomy, astrology, mathematics, and medicine, for some of these texts had been translated from Sanskrit into Arabic or Persian. See Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early `Abbasid Society [2nd-4th/8th-10th Centuries]* (London: Routledge, 1998), 24.
25. Sulayman al-Tajir and Abi Zayd Hasan al-Sirafi, *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa al-Hind*, ed. Yusuf al-Sharuni (Cairo: al-Dar al-Misriyyah al-Bananiyyah, 1999).
26. Bruce B. Lawrence presents some important works written by Muslim travelers, geographers, and writers on Indian civilization. Among them were such ninth-tenth century scholars as Suhrab (*Kitāb `Ajā'ib al-Aqālīm as-Sab'a*), Ibrahim ibn Wasif Shah (*Mukhtaṣar al-`Ajā'ib*), Buzurg ibn Shahriyar (*Kitāb al-`Ajā'ib al-Hind*), Abu Zayd Hasan al-Sirafi (*Silsilah al-Tawārikh*), al-Mas`udi (*Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma`ādin al-Jawāhir*), and Ibn al-Nadim (*Fihrist*). In addition, al-Maqdisi's (d. 985) *Kitāb al-Bad' wa al-Tārīkh* contains a discussion about Brahmans. He also mentions some Indian religious sects. According to Lawrence, most of the materials on Indian religion in Maqdisi's book are similar to al-Nadim's report in his *Fihrist*, even though it also provides some new information. For further discussion, see Lawrence, *Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, 18-25 and Waardenburg, *Muslim Perception of Other Religions*, esp. chapter 2, "The Medieval Period (650-1500)."
27. Al-Tabari, *The History of al-Tabari* (*Ta'rīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, tr. and annotated by Franz Rosenthal) (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 1:291-92, 308.
28. See Yohanan Freidmann, "Medieval Muslim Views of Indian Religions," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, no. 95 (1975): 214.
29. See Ibn Khurdadhbih, *Al-Masālik wa al-Mamālik* (Damascus: Manshurat wa Zarat al-Thaqafah, 1999), 105. See also S. Maqbul Ahmad, *Arabic Classical Accounts of India and China* (Calcutta: Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, 1989), book 1, 7.

www.icsbook.info

30. Maqbul Ahmad, *Arabic Classical Accounts*, 29
31. Sulayman al-Tajir and Hasan al-Sirafi used the same title for their treatises. The book version I use, edited by Yusuf al-Sharuni, is divided into two parts. The first part belongs to Sulayman al-Tajir, while the second one belongs to Abi Zayd Hasan al-Sirafi. See *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa al-Hind*, ed. Yusuf al-Sharuni (Cairo: al-Dar al-Misriyyah al-Bananiyah, 1999).
32. Al-Tajir, *Akhbār al-Ṣīn wa al-Hind*, 56; Maqbul Ahmad, *Arabic Classical Accounts*, 55-56 and 79. See also al-Mas`udi, *Murūj al-Dhahab*, 91.
33. See Maurice Lombard, *The Golden Age of Islam*, tr. Joan Spenser (Amsterdam: North-Holland Pub. Co. and New York: Oxford American Elsevier Pub. Co., 1975).
34. While the majority of historians and biographers agree with this date, some sources mention that al-Biruni was born in 364 AH. In addition, some pronounce his name as al-Birawni or al-Bayruni instead of al-Biruni.
35. Amin Sulayman Sidu, *Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī: Dirāsah `an Ḥayātihi wa Nitājih al-Fikrī*, 1st ed. (Riyadh: Markaz al-Malik Fa'al li al-Bu', 1999), 15.
36. Ibid., 1:16-19; Ahmad Said Dimirdash, *Abū Rayḥān Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1980), 18.
37. Al-Biruni, *Al-Āthār al-Bāqīyah*, 3; Sachau, *The Chronology*, 2-3.
38. Ibn Sina (Avicenna) is one of the leading philosophers of the Islamic tradition's golden age. The young Ibn Sina corresponded with al-Biruni. See Ramsay Right, "Preface," in al-Biruni, *The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology*, tr. R. Ramsay Right (London: Luzac & Co., 1934), iv-v. Seyyed Hossein Nasr briefly discusses the debate between Ibn Sina and al-Biruni on cosmology in his *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition*, esp. subchapter 2, "Biruni versus Ibn Sina on the Nature of the Universe."
39. Al-Biruni, *Al-Āthār al-Bāqīyah*, 16; Shacau, *The Chronology*, 15.
40. Badr `Abd al-Rahman Muhammad, *Al-Mujtama` al-Hindī fī al-Qarnayn al-Rābi` wa al-Khāmis al-Hijrīyayn: Ka mā Sawwarahu al-Bīrūnī fī Kitābihi "Taḥqīq Mā li al-Hind min Maqūlah Maqbūlah fī al-`Aql aw Mardhūlah" al-Ma`rūf fī "Tārīkh [a]l-Hind"* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Anjlu al-Misriyyah, 1990), 8-9.
41. For a further elaboration about the scope of al-Biruni's works, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Al-Biruni: An Annotated Bibliography* (Tehran: High Council of Culture and Art, 1973).
42. Historians differ over al-Biruni's religious affiliation, since he does not say whether he was a Sunni or Shi`i. His identity as a Muslim can be traced to his claims of Islam's superiority over Brahmanic India. His ancestors were considered Persian, and al-Biruni is critical of the Arabs. Even so, this does not automatically mean he was a Shi`i. Concerning al-Biruni's examination in *Kitāb al-Āthār*, Sachau notes in his introduction to al-Biruni's works that "he reproaches the ancient Muslims with having destroyed the civilization of Eran, and gives us to understand that the ancient Arabs were certainly nothing better than the Zoroastrian Eranian." Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, xix. See also M. A. Saleem Khan, *Al-Biruni's Discovery of India: An Interpretative Study* (Denver:

www.icsbook.info

Jamia Hamdard and iAcademicBooks, 2001), 12. Abdus Salam Nadvi, without providing any adequate evidence or supporting argument, claims that al-Biruni was inclined to be a Shi`i, while E. S. Kennedy, in line with Sachau's investigation, asserts that nothing indicates that al-Biruni was affiliated to any particular Islamic sect. Khan, *Al-Biruni's Discovery*, 12-13. The latter argument has been supported by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who underlines the difficulties in determining al-Biruni's religious sincerity. Nasr reasonably notes that "the writings of Abu Rayhan do not specify in a clear manner whether he was a Sunni or a Shi'i. He writes of both parties with much knowledge and insight but rarely gives any indication that of his own preference." Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines: Conceptions of Nature and Methods Used for Its Study by the Ikhwan al-Safa, al-Biruni, and Ibn Sina* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 114.

43. Since his mother tongue was neither Arabic nor Persian, al-Biruni said, "writing in Arabic is more preferable for me, even though I found a better way in Persian" (*wa al-hajū bi al-`arabīyah aḥabba ilayya min al-madḥ bi al-fārisīyah*). See Muhammad Yusuf Zaid, "Ba`ḍa Jawanib min al-Thaqafat al-Biruni," in *Al-Biruni: Commemorative Volume*, ed. Said, 791-92; see also Shalahuddin al-Munjid, "Al-Bīrūnī wa al-Lughah al-`Arabiyyah," *Al-Biruni: Commemorative Volume*, 784-86; Dimirdash, *Abu Rayhan*, 18-19.

44. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (New York, Chicago, and San Fransisco: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1966), 4; Nasr, *Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, esp. chapter 5, "The Life, Works, and Significance of al-Biruni."

45. Arvind Sharma elaborates on al-Biruni's technique and method in working on Hindu texts, especially the *Bhagavad Gita*. In his analysis about the correspondences between the *Bhagavad Gita* quoted by al-Biruni in the eleventh century and the *Bhagavad Gita's* present text, Sharma discovers four types of correspondences: (1) cases of both literal and ideological correspondence; (2) cases of ideological rather than literal correspondence; (3) cases of literal rather than ideological correspondence; and (4) cases of neither literal nor ideological correspondence. Arvind Sharma, *Studies in Alberuni's India,* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, 1983), 9:4-74. Although Sharma gives a detailed analysis of how al-Biruni employed and quoted the *Bhagavad Gita* and has raised some critiques for al-Biruni's accuracy in doing so, Kamar Kamaruzzaman does not fully accept Sharmas' critiques. He argues that Sharma's critiques are not based on al-Biruni's original works, thus lacking an explanation about what he means by "the *Bhagavad Gita* as we know today," and out of context in reading al-Biruni's comment on Hindu sociocultural aspects during the eleventh century. Kamar Oniah Kamaruzzaman, *Early Muslim Scholarship in Religionswissenschaft: Work and Contribution of Abu Rayhan Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Biruni* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC IIUM, 2003), 72. In addition, Gonda, in his article "Remarks on al-Biruni Quotation from Sanskrit Text," discovers that al-Biruni's quotation from the *Puranas* is more accurate than al-Biruni's quotation on Sanskrit astronomical texts. See also David Pingree, "Brahmagupta, Bala-

www.icsbook.info

bhadra, Prthudaka, and al-Biruni," *Journal of American Oriental Society* 103, no. 2 (April-June, 1983): 353.

46. Sachau, *The Chronology*, 2; Adang, *Muslim Writers*, 58-59.
47. Sultan Mahmud, under the superiority and hegemony of the Turko-Persian empire, invaded many strategic places in northern India. See Khalid Ahmad Nizami, *Some Aspects of Religion and Politics in India during the Thirteenth Century* (London and New York: Asia Publishing House, 1961), 75-76; see also André Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, vol. 2, *The Slave Kings and the Islamic Conquest 11th-13th Centuries* (Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1997), esp. chapter 2: "The Coming of the Turks," 43-78; Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 5-7; Muhammad, *Al-Mujtama` al-Hindī*, 8.
48. Sachau, "Preface," *Alberuni's India*, xvii.
49. In describing the sources and characteristics of Hind's rivers and mountains, for instance, al-Biruni gives information of each place's mythological background and explains how they become sacred places for the local people. See, for example, Nafis Ahmad, "Some Glimpses of al-Biruni as a Geographer," in *Al-Biruni: Commemorative Volume*, 143; Ahmad Hasan Dani, *Alberuni's Indica: A Record of the Cultural History of South Asia about 1030* (Islamabad: University of Islamabad Press, 1973), chapters 2 and 3.
50. Al-Biruni, *The Book of Instruction*, vii. Concerning astrology's important position in medieval Islam, see George Saliba, "The Role of the Astrologer in Medieval Islamic Society," in Emilie Savage-Smith, *Magic and Divination in Early Islam* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, Variorum, 2004), 341-363.
51. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Qānūn al-Mas`ūdī* (Haydarabad al-Dakkan: Matba`at Majlis Da'irat al-Ma`arif al-`Uthmaniyah, 1954-56).
52. A study of an Arabic treatise entitled *Tamḥīd al-Mustaqarr li Taḥqīq Ma`nā al-Mamar,* trs. Muhammad Saffouri and Adnan Ifram, with a commentary by E. S. Kennedy (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1959); Al-Biruni, *Ṣaydanah fī al-Ṭibb* (*Al-Biruni's Book on Pharmacy and Materia Medica*), ed. Hakim Mohammed Said (Karachi, Hamdard Academy: 1973); Al-Biruni, *Al-Jamāhir fī al-Jawāhir*, ed. Yusuf al-Hadi, 1st ed. (Iran: Sharikat al-Nashr al-`Ilmi wa-al-Thaqafi, 1995).
53. Guy Monnot, "Sa Vie, Ses Œuvres, Son Secret," in *Shahrastani: Livre Des Religions et Des Sectes*, tr., intro., and notes by Daniel Gimaret et Guy Monnot (Paris: Peeters/UNESCO, 1984), 3
54. Muhammad Husayni Abu S̲a'dah, *Al-Shahrastānī wa Manhajuhu al-Naqd: Dirāsah Muqāranah ma'a Ārā al-Falāsifah wa al-Mutakallimīn,* 1st ed. (Beirut: al-Mu'assasah al-Jam`iyyah li al-Dirasat wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi`, 2002), 21-22.
55. Ibid., 23.
56. Diane Steigerwald, *La Pensée Philosophique et Théologique de Shahrastani* (Canada: Le Presses de l 'Université Laval: 1997), 53.

www.icsbook.info

57. Al-Shahrasthani, *Struggling with the Philosopher: A Refutation of Avicenna's Metaphysics* (a new Arabic edition and English translation of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Karim ibn Ahmad al-Shahrastani's *Kitāb al-Musāra'ah*), trs. Wilferd Madelung and Toby Mayer (London: I.B. Tauris in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2001), 3-4. See esp. the translators' "Introduction: Al-Shahrastani, Ismailism, and Philosophy."
58. Al-Shahrasthani, *Struggling with the Philosopher*, 7; Guy Monnot, "Sa Vie, Ses Œuvres, Son Secret," 4.
59. Bruce C. Lawrence, "Al-Shahrastānī (1086-1153)," in *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: Macmillan Pub. Co., 1987), 13:199-200; Lawrence, *Al-Shahrastani on the Indian Religion*, 15. See also Steigerwald, *La Pensée Philosophique*, 59-60; Alfred Guillaume, "Introduction," in al-Shahrastani, *The Summa Philosophiae*, xi.
60. Georges C. Anawati, "Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism," in *The Legacy of Islam*, ed. Joseph Schacht with C. E. Bosworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 362; Muhammad Khalifah Ahmad Khalifah, "Medieval Jewish-Muslim Contribution to the Academic Study of Religion: A Study in the Methodology of Saadia al-Fayyumi and Muhammad al-Shahrastani" (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 1976), 278.
61. Based on this book, Guillaume opines that al-Shahrastani was a deeply religious man. Any one who reads this work, which in itself is a sufficient refutation of the calumnies of his detractors, cannot doubt the intensity of his devotion to Islam: "It would not be germane to this presentation of the author's book to discuss the gulf between the learned and uneducated Muslim which may well account for the suspicion which gathered round his memory." Guillaume, *The Summa Philosophiae*, xi.
62. Madelung and Mayer, "Introduction: Al-Shahrastani, Ismailism, and Philosophy," 8; Steigerwald, *La Pensée Philosophique*, 66-67; Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, 100-02.
63. Madelung and Mayer, "Introduction: Al-Shahrastani, Isma'ilism, and Philosophy,"14
64. See al-Shahrastani, *Majlis: Discours sur l'Ordre et la Création,* tr. with intro. and notes of the last edition of Jalali Na'ini by Diane Steigerwald] (Canada: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1998); Steigerwald, *La Pensée Philosophique*, 68-69.
65. Al-Shahrastani, *Mafātiḥ al-Asrār wa Masābiḥ al-Abrār* (Tehran: Center for the Publication of Manuscripts, 1989). This article uses the facsimile edition of the unique manuscript at the Library of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, which was edited by Parviz Adhkaki and contains an introduction by 'Abd al-Husayn Ha'iri.
66. Ainslei T. Embree, "Introduction," in Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, x-xi.
67. Jeffery, "Al-Biruni's Contribution," 126.
68. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 3-4; Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, 1:5-7.
69. Waardenburg, *Muslim Perception*, 33.

www.icsbook.info

70. See Bruce B. Lawrence, "Shahrastani on Indian Idol Worship," *Studia Islamica*, no. 3, (1973): 63-64.
71. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 2:613. Al-Shaybani also state: "We mention these writings as we have achieved from their famous works (*wa naḥnu nadhkuru maqālāti hāwlāi kamā qad wajadnā fī kutubihim al-mashūrah*). Muhammad ibn Nasr ibn Shalih al-Suhaibani, *Manhaj al-Shahrastānī fī Kitābihi al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (Riyadh: Dar al-Watan, 1417 AH), 647.
72. Lawrence, "Shahrastani on Indian Idol Worship," 29.
73. For further investigation see Lawrence, *Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, 29. See also al-Suhaybani, *Manhaj al-Shahrastānī*, 647-48.
74. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 9; Sachau, trans., *Alberuni's India*, 1:17-19.
75. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 4; Sachau, trans., *Alberuni's India*, 1:7.
76. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 4; Sachau, trans., *Alberuni's India*, 1:7.
77. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1:12; Khalifah, "Medieval Jewish-Muslim Contribution," 278. Also A. K. Kazi and J. G. Flynn, trs., *Muslim Sects and Divisions*, 9.
78. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1:6-7; A. K. Kazi and J. G. Flynn, trs., *Muslim Sects and Divisions*, 12
79. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 2:593.
80. Lawrence, "Shahrastani on Indian Idol Worship," 65.
81. For the distinction between *functionalist* and *substantivist* in the study of religion, see Malcolm Hamilton, *The Sociology of Religion: Theoretical and Comparative Persective,* 2d ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 12-24.
82. Jeffery, "Al-Biruni's Contribution to Comparative Religions," 128.
83. Kamaruzzaman, *Early Muslim Scholarship*, 81. See also al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind,* 24; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:12.
84. Kamaruzzaman, *Early Muslim Scholarship*, 81, footnote 20.
85. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 48; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:100.
86. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 48; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:100.
87. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1:12.
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid.
90. Khalifah, "Medieval Jewish-Muslim Contribution," 285-86.
91. Mahmoud M. Ayoub, *Islam: Faith and History* (Oxford: One World, 2004), 168.
92. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Al-Biruni as Philosopher," *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, 92. This article, which also appeared in *Al-Biruni: Commemorative Volume,* also deals with the thought of al-Biruni that causes his to be viewed as a "philosopher."
93. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1:12. In another context, Khalifah's findings of al-Shahrastani's categorization of religion show that the third category (laws and regulations without a scripture), applies to the Sabians, while the philosophers, Brahmans, materialists, and star worshippers are classified in

www.icsbook.info

the forth category (those who do not have book, laws, or legal principles). See Khalifah, "Medieval Jewish-Muslim Contribution," 288.

94. Muhammad Kamal Ja'far, *Al-Insān wa al-Adyān: Dirāsah Muqāranah* (Qatar: Dar al-Thaqafah, 1985), 142.
95. Ibid.
96. Ahmad Khalifah, "Medieval Jewish-Muslim Contribution," 287.
97. Franz Rosenthal, "Al-Biruni between Greece and India," in Biruni Symposium, Ehsan Yarshater, ed., 5.
98. Some Muslim heresiograhers have recorded the variety of Islamic theological views, such as al-Baghdadi's *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, al-Shahrastani's *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, Ibn Hazm's *Al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal*, and al-Isfara'ini's *Al-Tabsīr fī al-Dīn*. Unlike Christian theology, which developed systematically and was mainly the product of theoretical reflection, Islamic theology (*kalām*), for the most part, appeared as the result of political and social tensions among Muslims or between Muslims and non-Muslims. Fazlur Rahman, *Islam*, esp. chapters 5 and 10; Madjid Fakhry, "Philosophy and Theology," in Oxford History of Islam, ed. John L. Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), chapter 6.
99. Jeffery, "Al-Biruni's Contribution, 137.
100. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 60; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:124.
101. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 59; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:123.
102. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 58; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:121.
103. In this case, "the educated believers" or the elites (*al-khawāṣṣ*) al-Biruni means those Hindu scholars or theologians who can "conceive abstract ideas and define general principles (*yunāzi'ū al-ma'qūl wa yuqṣadū al-taḥqīq fī al-uṣūl*)," while "the uneducated believers" are the common and ordinary people (*al-`āmmah*). Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 13; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:27; Muhammad Murad, *Al-Bīrūnī Faylasūfa*, 48.
104. To support his conclusion as to the educated believers' theological conception, al-Biruni, quotes some verses from Hindu texts, primarily the *Yôgasutra*, the *Bhagvata Gita*, and the *Samkhya*. Some scholars have discovered al-Biruni's intellectual contribution, such as in his direct citation of original Hindu texts. First, he introduced the Hindu belief system as directly reflected by Hindu texts to his fellow Muslim. This contribution of interfaith discourse and comparative religion can be traced to when he translated the *Yôgasutra* and the *Samkhya* into Arabic. The former consists of "the emancipation of the soul from the fetters of the body (*wa takhlīs al-nafs min ribāth al-badan*)"; the latter describes "the origins and a description of all created beings (*fī al-mabādī wa sifāt al-mawjūdāt*)." According to al-Biruni, these two books might represent the elements of the Hindus' worldviews. See al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 4; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 8. See also Pines Shlomo and Tuvia Gelblum, "Al-Biruni's Arabic Version of Patanjali's Yoga Sutra: A Translation of the Fourth Chapter and a Comparison with Related Text," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (University of London) 52, no. 2 (1989).

www.icsbook.info

105. Interestingly, al-Biruni goes further by theoretically explaining idolatry's origin as a deviation from "the right path." The veneration of idols or temples continues because people find it difficult to comprehend abstract matters. In addition, they forget the history of why such idols or temples were built. Above all, such a phenomena is the result of a natural human tendency to commemorate one's ancestors. Al-Biruni clarifies: "This is the cause which leads to the manufacture of idols, monuments in honour of certain much venerated persons, prophets, sages, angels, destined to keep a live their memory when they are absent or dead, to create for them a lasting place of grateful veneration in the heart of men when they die. But when much time passes by after the setting up of the monument, generations and centuries, its origin is forgotten; it becomes a matter of custom, and its veneration a rule for general practice." Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 53-54; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:111-12.
106. To support his insight on the variety of theological doctrines, al-Biruni makes a theological and a philosophical comparison between religious traditions by highlighting the term *God* semantically and conceptually in Greek, Arabic, Hebrew/Syriac, and Sanskrit, as well as applying each concept in the discourse of idol worship and anthropomorphic notions. His account implies that the variety of the concept of God in every tradition, at least within major religious traditions, have been generated by the differences in the scope of linguistic concepts applying to God. Al-Biruni, *Kitāb al-Hind*, 16-19; Sachau, tr., *Alberuni's India*, 1:31-37.
107. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 2:601-02; Lawrence, *Al-Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, 48-50.
108. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 2:604-11; Lawrence, *Al-Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, 50-59.
109. See also their discussion on Sabianism; al-Biruni, *Al-Āthār al-Bāqīyah*, 244; Sachau, tr., *Chronology*, 188; al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 2:281-345. For a comparison, see also Jane Dammen McAulife, "Exegetical Identification of the Sabiun," *The Muslim World* 72, no. 2 (April 1982): 95-99; Christopher Buck, "The Identity of the Sabiun," *The Muslim World*, 76, nos. 3-4 (July-October 1986): 173-74; see also J. Waardenburg, "World Religions as Seen in the Light of Islam," in *Islam: Past Influence and Present Challenge*, ed. A. Welch and P. Cachia (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1979), 248; Mahmoud M. Ayoub, *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 109.
110. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 2:611; Lawrence, *Al-Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, 58-59. See also al-Suhaybani, *Manhaj al-Shahrastani*, 636.
111. Al-Shahrastani, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 2:594; Lawrence, *Al-Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, 40-41; also his *Kitāb al-Nihāyat al-Iqdām*, 428; Guillaume, *The Summa Philosophiae*, 137.
112. See Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 13.

www.icsbook.info

Islamicjerusalem:
A Model for Multiculturalism

Maher Abu-Munshar

Abstract

This paper examines the extent to which `Umar ibn al-Khattab and Salah al-Din adhered to the Islamic vision toward non-Muslims and determines whether they established a multicultural society in Islamicjerusalem after the city's first and second conquests. In addition, it provides a historical perspective to these two important events, focuses on their attitudes toward Islamicjerusalem's non-Muslims inhabitants, and investigates whether the Muslims' understanding of other religions is possible and whether it is an integral part of a pluralist, multicultural society.

Introduction

Islamicjerusalem (*Bayt al-Maqdis*) has a special place in the hearts of the three major monotheistic religions. During the course of its history, followers of these religions have made intensive efforts to conquer it. It has been argued that under Muslim rule, Islamicjerusalem allowed adherents of different religions to live together and could be considered a model for multiculturalism, as El-`Awaisi[2] concluded in his definition of Islamicjerusalem.[1] In his newly published monograph *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, he articulated a challenge when he defined Islamicjerusalem as:

> ... a new terminology for a new concept, which may be translated into the Arabic language as *Bayt al-Maqdis*. It can be fairly and eventually characterised and defined as a unique region laden with rich historical background, religious significances, cultural attachments, competing political and religious claims, international interests and various aspects that affect

Maher Abu-Munshar is a lecturer in Islamicjerusalem studies, Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, Dundee, United Kingdom.

www.icsbook.info

> the rest of the world in both historical and contemporary contexts. It has a central frame of reference and a vital nature with three principal intertwined elements: its geographical location (land and boundaries), its people (population), and its unique and creative inclusive vision, to administrate that land and its people, as a model for multiculturalism.[3]

In this paper, I examine the validity of his argument by focusing on the situation of the city's Jewish and Christian inhabitants under Muslim rule and how the Muslims treated them during the reigns of `Umar ibn al-Khattab (d. 24/645) and Salah al-Din (d. 589/1193). I chose these two periods because they are the most important examples of a multicultural society in Islamicjerusalem's history. In the first period, El-`Awaisi argues, the Muslim conquest liberated the native Christians from Byzantine domination and persecution and allowed the Jews to return after a nearly 500-year exile.[4] In the second period, the conquest liberated the Muslims, Eastern Christians, and Jews from the domination of the Latin Crusaders.[5]

During these two periods, Islamic rule enabled Muslims, Christians, and Jews to live together side by side peacefully. Nevertheless, during certain periods of Islamicjerusalem's history non-Muslims were mistreated by certain leaders – particularly the Fatimids,[6] due to their own agendas and violations of Islamic precepts.

As this raises a set of critical questions regarding Muslim attitudes toward others and Islamic tolerance, I examine and discuss how Muslim conquerors aspired to implement multicultural policies in Islamicjerusalem by addressing the following question: Did the Muslims provide a foundation for a multicultural Islamicjerusalem during these two periods? Furthermore, I respond to such Israeli scholars as Shlomo Goitein, who have portrayed the first Muslim conquest as an occupation similar to any other occupation of Jerusalem during its long history and one that placed the lives of its non-Muslims in complete disarray.[7]

After defining multiculturalism, I review and highlight historical examples by classifying them under the different criteria on which a multicultural society is based. I then focus on several of the themes related to the basis of a multicultural society in parallel with the theoretical framework. `Umar and Salah al-Din's rule of Islamicjerusalem provide a particularly illustrative case study of a multicultural society. In conclusion, I reflect on both rulers' treatment of the city's non-Muslims to offer a model for a multicultural society. Generally, I address such issues as how discourses of multiculturalism, diversity, and cultural sensitivity, when combined with the prevailing practices of

www.icsbook.info

how Muslims treat non-Muslims, shape a multicultural society. This answers the major question of this article: Do multicultural societies ruled by Muslims protect cultural diversity for all group members, or do they accomplish this at the expense of some segments of the population?

Criteria for a Multicultural Society

In this paper, terms like *multiculturalism* and *diversity* are used in a descriptive way to highlight the presence of "the other." Multiculturalism can imply different things to different people and, as a result, many interpretations exist. To avoid any ambiguity, I ascertain, within the context of this paper, the criteria needed to establish a multicultural society. W. C. Watson notes that a multicultural society is "a society, state, a nation, a region, composed of people who belong to different cultures." He further argues that multiculturalism is not a new concept; rather, it has been used previously but with different terminology (i.e., plural society, multiethnic society). He adds that the word's continuing popularity is derived from the fact that it has "everything to do with the resonances of the word *culture* and the positive connotations it evokes."[8]

In line with Watson's understanding, Charles Taylor stipulates that to enjoy a good life, a multicultural society, which has more than one community, must have a policy of recognition based on equal dignity.[9] Multiculturalism is often used interchangeably with diversity and pluralism to refer to an environment in which differences among people and groups are recognized, respected, and valued; where differences are seen as positive and desirable, rather than negative or threatening. Multiculturalism also refers to the combination of values that reflects this philosophy.

Therefore, a multicultural society is expected to identify, accept, and accommodate the cultural needs of its diverse citizens, all of whom have various cultural identities. In line with these definitions, I argue that multiculturalism seeks to promote the values of different cultures co-existing peacefully within a single society, where the rights of all citizens are protected and cultural diversity is deliberately fostered. Multiculturalism represents a policy tool for managing significant diversity in order to benefit from its positive influence, as well as to minimize and control any potential tension and conflict.

After reviewing some of the relevant literature on multiculturalism,[10] I identified three common criteria that are fundamental and integral to a multicultural society. I use each criterion to illustrate certain historical incidents

www.icsbook.info

as reflected in `Umar and Salah al-Din's perspectives and practices. These criteria are recognizing others, diversity and pluralism, and tolerance and mutual respect.

Islamicjerusalem under `Umar ibn al-Khattab

Recognizing Others

The first Muslim conquest of Aelia is considered a turning point in the region's history.[11] This event, which took place in 16/637[12] and caused a dramatic change in the structure of the region's population, resulted in the emergence of a multicultural society after centuries of being a closed and an insular region. Consequently, Islamicjerusalem became a part of the Muslim world and its people were considered as *ra`āyā* (subjects) of the empire.

Karen Armstrong argues that `Umar adopted this inclusive vision in Aelia (Islamicjerusalem)[13]:

> When Caliph `Umar conquered Jerusalem from the Byzantines, he was faithful to the Islamic inclusive vision. Unlike Jews and Christians, Muslims did not attempt to exclude others from Jerusalem's holiness. Muslims were being taught to venerate them.[14]

Prior to the first Muslim conquest, Aelia was mainly a Christian region ruled by the Byzantines. Most of its inhabitants had converted to Christianity following the efforts of Emperor Constantine, who had converted in 312, to spread Christianity throughout the empire until it became the official religion in 324.[15] The pre-Christian Romans had forbidden the Jews to live there after 135[16] due to their revolts against the Roman occupation. Nevertheless, during that time they were allowed to stay in Aelia for short periods (i.e., at the time of the Persian occupation [614-28]).[17] The Jews were very keen to return to Aelia, as demonstrated by their eagerness for the Muslims to conquer it and liberate them, according to al-Tabari.[18] Furthermore, Khalil Sarkis (d. 1915) provides examples of the "cruel aggression and oppressions of the Byzantines" to which the Jews had been subjected for a long time. For instance, he states that Constantine oppressed the Jews and forced them to convert. As a result, some of them did so and others only pretended to do so, while those who refused to do so were killed.[19]

Moreover, Aelia's Christian population was divided into sects and groups, as these had different languages and cultures.[20] This resulted in an unstable religious life for the Christians prior to the first Muslim conquest,

www.icsbook.info

for there were serious disagreements from the fifth century on between the Monophysites and the Byzantine emperor about how Christ's divine and human natures coexisted.[21]

In the seventh century, Emperor Heraclius (610-41) attempted to solve the Monophysite-Chalcedonian schism, which had existed since 451, by suggesting a compromise known as Monoenergism. This creed adopted the Chalcedonian belief that Christ had two natures, combined with the Monophysite view that Christ had one "will." The definition of the term *will* was left deliberately vague. Monoenergism was accepted by the patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria, as well as of the Armenians, but not by the Patriarch of Aelia or Pope Honorius I.[22] As a result, Aelia's mainly Monophysite Christians suffered from Emperor Herculius' religious persecution and violence as he tried to force his own beliefs upon them.[23]

Not surprisingly, they welcomed the Muslim conquest, for it promised them religious tolerance. In line with this, Steven Runciman maintains that Aelia's Christians warmly welcomed the Muslim conquerors, for they ended the Byzantine persecution. [24] He quotes the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Michael the Syrian, in the days of the Latin Kingdoms, who, reflecting upon his people's situation at that time, stated: "The God of vengeance, who alone is the Almighty … raised from the south the children of Ishmael [meaning the Muslims] to deliver us from the hands of the Romans."[25] Runciman adds that even the Greek Orthodox, "finding themselves spared the persecution that they have feared and paying taxes that, in spite of the *jizyah*[26] (tax) demanded from the Christians were far lower than in the Byzantine times, showed small inclination to question their destiny."[27]

Leone Caetani discusses the issue from a different angle: The promise of Muslim religious tolerance appeared more attractive than any connection with Byzantium and a Christian government, due to Emperor Herculius' policy of religious compulsion and a strong aversion toward Byzantium. He goes on to say that after the first terrors caused by the invading army's arrival, a profound turnaround in favor of the Muslim conquerors occurred.[28] As a result of the above, Armstrong concludes that it was not surprising for the Nestorian and Monophysite Christians to welcome the Muslims and prefer their rule to that of Byzantium.[29]

Runciman comments on the lack of tolerance among the Byzantine emperors, who wanted to impose their own doctrine on other Christians and use religion as a unifying factor to extend their control.[30] Though some might argue that the different reactions of various Christian groups reflected inter-Christian relationships, this can also be understood in the framework of the

www.icsbook.info

relationship of the empire's religion with the "separatist" groups. However, upon his arrival in Islamicjerusalem, `Umar made the whole area inclusive.

Diversity and Pluralism

From the measures and steps taken by the Muslims immediately after the first Muslim conquest, I argue that the goal was to establish the solid basis needed for a multicultural society, for Jerusalem was a holy place for Islam as well as for Judaism and Christianity. This indicates that Muslims needed to provide an atmosphere in which people belonging to different cultures and religions could live side by side in peace.

The Jews were among those who benefited from this attitude, for they were allowed to return after being excluded for nearly 500 years. In her discussion of the first Muslim conquest, Armstrong points out that `Umar allowed seventy Jewish families from Tiberius to settle to the southwest of the al-Aqsa enclave[31] and let them build a synagogue. In line with this, El-`Awaisi mentions that, according to an eleventh-century Jewish manuscript preserved in Cairo, `Umar acted as an arbitrator or forceful mediator between Christians and Jews to resolve the issue of banning Jews from the city.[32] Runciman discusses how, during `Umar's rule, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Jews became *dhimmīs*.[33] In other words, they were allowed the freedom of religion and worship in return for paying the *jizyah* tax. He adds that each sect was treated as a "semi-autonomous community" under its religious leader, who was responsible for its members' good behavior.[34] Armstrong states further that the Muslims established a system that enabled the Jews, Christians, and Muslims to live together in Islamicerusalem for the first time.[35] She added that this was due to the inclusive vision, developed by the Muslims, who did not deny the presence and devotion of others, but rather respected their rights and celebrated plurality and coexistence.[36]

Tolerance and Mutual Respect

One of Islam's aims is to provide a peaceful life based on mutual respect between Muslims and non-Muslims.[37] `Umar granted the people of Aelia safety for "their persons, their goods and churches." This assurance (this is not, in any case, the "Pact of `Umar"[38]) stands as an important reference text and contains the basic principles for a multicultural society that are applicable at all times and in all places. However, various versions of this document exist.[39] Al-Tabari's version,[40] the longest and the most explicit, is as follows:

www.icsbook.info

> In the name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Compassionate. This is the assurance of safety (*amān*) which the worshipper of Allah (the second caliph) `Umar [ibn al-Khattab], the Commander of the Faithful, has granted to the people of Aelia. He has granted them an assurance of safety for their lives and possessions, their churches and crosses; the sick and the healthy (to everyone without exception); and for the rest of its religious communities. Their churches will not be inhabited (taken over) nor destroyed (by Muslims). Neither they, nor the land on which they stand, nor their cross, nor their possessions will be encroached upon or partly seized. The people will not be compelled (*yukrahūna*) in religion, nor any one of them be maltreated (*yadarrūna*). (No Jews should reside with them in Aelia). The people of Aelia must pay the *jizyah* tax like the Ahl al-Mada'in (the people of the [other] region/cities), they must expel the Byzantines and the robbers. As for those (the first Byzantine group) who will leave (Aelia), their lives and possessions shall be safeguarded until they reach their place of safety, and as for those (the second Byzantine group) who (choose to) remain, they will be safe. They will have to pay tax like the people of Aelia. Those people of Aelia who would like to leave with the Byzantines, take their possessions, and abandon their churches and crosses will be safe until they reach their place of safety.
>
> Whosoever was in Aelia from the people of the land (*ahl al-arḍ*) (e.g., refugees from the villages who sought refuge in Aelia) before the murder of *fulān* (name of a person) may remain in Aelia if they wish, but they must pay tax like the people of Aelia. Those who wish may go with the Byzantines, and those who wish may return to their families. Nothing will be taken from them until their harvest has been reaped.
>
> The contents of this assurance of safety are under the covenant of Allah, are the responsibilities of His Prophet, of the caliphs, and of the faithful if (the people of Aelia) pay the tax according to their obligations. The persons who attest to it are Khalid ibn al-Walid, `Amr ibn al-`As, `Abd al-Rahman ibn `Awf, and Mu`awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan. This assurance of safety was written and prepared in the year 15 (AH).[41]

This assurance reflects the spirit of tolerance toward non-Muslims in general and Christians in particular. It clearly emphasizes that the Christians' lives, properties, and religion will be safe from any kind of interference or molestation; that their churches will not be demolished; no injury will be done to them; and no encroachment will be made on the areas near these churches. Freedom of religion is assured by the stipulation that they will not be compelled to convert. It is obvious that the first paragraph of al-Tabari's

www.icsbook.info

version (excluding the condition relating to the Jews) is similar to and matches the line of treaties that Muslims used to issue to conquered cities. In other words, such guarantees were the normal practice.[42]

The weaknesses in al-Tabari's version start with the statement that the Jews should be banned from living with the Christians in Aelia. Note that this restriction was not supported or even mentioned in any earlier narration. It does not seem to have been implemented, especially as Muslim historical accounts do not mention that `Umar expelled the city's Jews or prevented them from staying there. Al-Quda argues that it is strange to have a condition in the assurance that is not to be implemented. He concludes that it is well-known that Muslims, in general, respect pacts and follow them accordingly.[43]

Al-Duri refutes this stipulation by asserting that the details related to forbidding a certain population to live in conquered cities are unusual and never appear in the texts of similar pacts in al-Sham. The reference to Jews is apparently absent from all Muslim literature. He adds that it is believed that this information first appeared in Michael of Syria's chronicle.[44] Al-Himyari attributes this condition to a specific demand made by Aelia's Christian population.[45] Ibn al-Jawzi does not even mention the Jews in regard to `Umar's assurance in his *Faḍā'il al-Quds*.[46]

El-`Awaisi states that such an exclusion during `Umar's reign has not been proven historically and that this condition would be unacceptable to Muslim law because it contradicts Islam's basic teachings.[47] He supports his argument by citing verses from the Qur'an (e.g., 60:8-9).[48] It was not Muslim policy to prevent non-Muslims from living in Islamicjerusalem, since all people were guaranteed equal rights of residence in the city.

El-`Awaisi also argues that such a condition would be an infringement or interpretation invented by a Muslim jurist, and adds that these were produced to "please the rulers or match the general circumstances and socio-political developments that affected the position of the People of the Book during certain periods of history, especially in the `Abbasid State."[49] In addition to what has been said, I argue that in later periods, when the Christians recognized that Islamicjerusalem was under Muslim rule and that the Jews were no longer prevented from residing there, they felt threatened and added such a condition to the assurance, as shown in al-Tabari's version.

Freedom of religion, as clearly spelled out in `Umar's assurance, is an essential pillar in a multicultural society and should be guaranteed. Goitein points to Aelia's vacant patriarchal seat after Sophronious' (the Patriarch of Jerusalem) death in 638, claiming that the Muslim conquest threw its Christian community into complete disarray and that the Christian commu-

www.icsbook.info

nity remained a flock without a shepherd.[50] He tries to substantiate this by stating that the aged patriarch died shortly after the conquest and that no new patriarch was appointed until 706.[51] In other words, he accuses the Muslims, more or less, of interfering with Christian religious matters. I disagree. The Muslims did not interfere in Christian matters; rather, they were complying with the essential term in the assurance: freedom of religion.

Furthermore, Shafiq Jasir, whose book lists the names and duration of every patriarch in Aelia from 451 to 1106, confirms this almost seventy-year vacancy until John V was enthroned in 706.[52] Why was a new patriarch not appointed for such a long period? Under `Umar's assurance, Muslims were forbidden to interfere in the Christians' religious affairs. The right to appoint patriarchs belonged only to them. Thus, I suggest that this long vacancy could be evidence of the Muslims' non-interference, even though the post was politically important to the Muslim state. It is also certain that any attempt to force the Christians to appoint a new patriarch would have been recorded, and this is not the case.

`Athaminah argues that this long-term vacancy was due to the disagreement between Islamicjerusalem's Monophysite Christians and the Byzantine emperors. The latter tried to impose their beliefs on the Monophysites, who formed the majority of the region's Christians.[53] After the conquest, these native Christians tried to eliminate the Byzantine presence after expelling its representatives from Islamicjerusalem. It seems that each group held to their own opinions. `Athaminah adds that when this problem was solved, a new patriarch was appointed. He concludes that the Muslims played no role in the long delay in filling this post.[54]

Hamilton attributes this long vacancy to the ongoing war between the Muslims and the Byzantine Empire.[55] This statement merely points to the fact that Muslims had no role in this vacancy. Nevertheless, during this time, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was supervised by several priests who had limited authority in their capacity of being representatives of the patriarch and not the patriarch himself.[56]

Contrary to what Goitein claims, I argue that when `Umar conquered Aelia, the Christians' status immediately changed for the better. One result of this event was that the non-Chalcedonian churches were able to establish themselves in Islamicjerusalem on terms of parity with the Orthodox church. The Armenians appointed a bishop there in 650, and the presence of a Jacobite (Syrian Orthodox) bishop has been attested to since 793.[57]

Moroever, Christian pilgrimages to Islamicjerusalem's holy places continued without any interruption. Tibawi argues that the flow of Christian pil-

www.icsbook.info

grims that had been coming since the days of Constantine's mother St. Helena (d. c. 330) was not affected.[58] `Athaminah agrees with him. Nevertheless, the number of pilgrims decreased slightly as a result of hostile relations between the Muslims and the Byzantine Empire.[59] I argue that this drop was normal, since pilgrims would be nervous about traveling during a time of war. Jasir quotes Niqula Ziyadah on this matter: "The liberation of Jerusalem by the Muslims did not stop the Christian pilgrims from visiting the holy places in Jerusalem. They encouraged them to come and visit."[60]

`Athaminah goes even further, claiming that building and renovating the churches and monasteries did not cease; rather, the Christians continued such projects under Muslim rule.[61] Jasir quotes Father Yusuf al-Shammas al-Mukhallisi, a Lebanese Christian monk who wrote on how Muslims treated Christians at that time:

> Except in paying the *jizyah*, the Muslim conquerors have not interfered with anything; they kept everything as it was before. The new situation was that the Muslims gave Christian sects independence with great privileges to their heads and religious leaders. Therefore, it was natural that the Jacobites were closer to the Caliphs than the Malikanis, as the Jacobites were far from any reminder of the Byzantines. This tolerance continued until the end of the seventh century.[62]

This citation is also evidence for the previous argument about welcoming the conquest, which explains the behavior of the different Christian sects. `Umar's multicultural inclusive vision prevented him from forcing the city's Jews and the Christians to convert due to his understanding that Islam mandates freedom of religion, belief, conscience, and worship. Neither the Qur'an nor the Prophet's sayings have ever encouraged forced conversion: "Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from error."[63] I argue that Muslims understand that for a faith to be genuine, it needs to be absolutely free and voluntary.

`Umar's assurance stands as an important reference text and contains basic principles for Muslim–non-Muslim relations that are applicable at all times and in all places. Anything to contrary would be a deviation from these principles. In addition, El-`Awaisi argues that `Umar's conquest was a fundamental landmark that reshaped relations between those people of diverse faiths and cultures who inhibited the region. He went further, stating that:

> `Umar successfully created, developed and managed a new multicultural environment in Islamicjerusalem where differences among its people were not only acknowledged and recognised but accepted, respected, valued, and

www.icsbook.info

> protected. Islamicjerusalem provides and promotes a climate of religious and cultural engagement and dialogue, tolerance and diversity, and social justice. It also encourages, supports, and contributes to fostering a multicultural ethos of mutual culture understanding and respect, and a common understanding between different communities and individuals at all levels.[64]

Islamicjerusalem at the Time of Salah al-Din

Recognizing the "Other"

Similarly, during the Crusades (1099-1187), Muslims, Jews, and native Christians were not allowed to reside in Islamicjerusalem. Moreover, Egyptian Orthodox Copts were banned from visiting the Holy City after the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was established because, according to the Crusaders, they were heretics and atheists.[65] Nevertheless, under the rule Baldwin I (1110-18), the Crusaders allowed many native Christians to return, mainly to populate the city and to ensure that there were enough people to carry out the realm's necessary undertakings. Native Christians had to attend ceremonies in which the language and rituals were alien to them, as Runciman describes. He adds that native Christians (Orthodox), who were the majority, resented being under Crusader (Catholic) domination.[66] Therefore, the Crusaders knew that thousands of Orthodox Christians would actually welcome a Muslim conquest.[67] According to Runciman, Eastern Christians had always looked back with nostalgia to the days under Muslim rulers, when they had had the freedom to worship as they pleased.[68] T. W. Arnold describes the sense of security of religious life under Muslim rule:

> The Native Christian certainly preferred the rule of the Muhammadans [Muslims] to that of the Crusaders, and when Jerusalem fell finally and ever into the hands of the Muslims (A.D. 1244), the Christian population of Palestine seems to have welcomed the new masters and to have submitted quietly and contentedly to their rule.[69]

Unlike the Crusaders, Salah al-Din made Islamicjerusalem an open city for all Christian sects and allowed them full freedom to practice their own particular rituals as they wished.[70] He not only recognized Christians, but also Jews. In fact, he allowed the latter to share the city with others.

Another important example showing Muslim recognition of others is the correspondence between Salah al-Din and King Richard of England in their frequent negotiations during the Third Crusade, for it deals directly with the issues of Islamicjerusalem. King Richard made a proposition and

www.icsbook.info

asked al-`Adil (Salah al-Din's brother) to write it down and send it to Salah al-Din. The letter states:

> ...The Muslims and the Franks are reduced to the last extremity. The land is ruined, ruined utterly at the hands of both sides. Property and lives on both sides are destroyed. The matter has received its due. All we have to talk about is Jerusalem, the Holy Cross and these lands. Now Jerusalem is the centre of our worship, which we shall never renounce, even if there was only one of us left. As for these lands, let there be restored to us what is this side of Jordan River. The Holy Cross is a piece of wood that has no value for you, but it is important for us. Let the Sultan bestow it upon us. Then we can make peace and have rest from this constant hardship.[71]

Salah al-Din's famous reply was as follows:

> Jerusalem is ours as much as it is yours. Indeed, for us it is greater than it is for you, for it is where our Prophet came on his Night Journey and the gathering place of the angels. Let not the king imagine that we shall give it up, for we are unable to breathe a word of that amongst the Muslims. As for the land, it is also ours originally. Your occupation of it was an unexpected accident due to the weakness of the Muslims there at that time.[72]

The above exchange reveals how Jerusalem was important to both sides and how each had their reasons for claiming it. Moreover, both sides would do their best to keep it under their control. The message shows the drop in Richard's demands; he is now asking only about Jerusalem, whereas in previous letters he had asked about the whole region.[73] However, Richard still insists that Jerusalem be first and foremost for the Christians and not shared with the Muslims. Salah al-Din's reply, on the other hand, shows a totally different attitude: He refutes the claim that they are invaders, asserts their rights in Islamicjerusalem, and then acknowledges the Christians' claims to the city. Both of these emphasize his inclusive vision.

Diversity and Pluralism

Salah al-Din's vision for establishing a multicultural society allowed the Jews to return to Islamicjerusalem. He designated two new quarters for the Magharibah (Moroccans) and the Jews within Islamicjerusalem. The number of Jews gradually increased thereafter.[74]

It is important to state that Salah al-Din distinguished between two types of Christians: the invading Crusaders who were behind the horrific mas-

www.icsbook.info

sacres in Islamicjerusalem, and the native Christians. Although he ordered the Crusader (Catholic) Christians to leave Islamicjerusalem, he later permitted them to visit various sites and perform pilgrimage according to the terms of the Ramla peace treaty concluded at the end of the Third Crusade (1189-92).[75] He also granted Bishop of Salisbury Hubert Walter's request to allow two Latin priests and Latin deacons to celebrate divine service at the Holy Sepulcher church. These priests were to have their needs met by the pilgrims' offerings.[76]

According to `Imad al-Din (Salah al-Din's secretary), after the Muslims' recovery of Islamicjerusalem the native Christians requested permission to stay in Islamicjerusalem. Salah al-Din granted this on the following conditions: After paying their ransom, they should pay the *jizyah*, be his subjects, and be treated as *dhimmīs*. However, those members of the poorer classes who did not have money were exempted from paying this tax.[77] The Orthodox Christians and the Jacobites were allowed to live in Islamicjerusalem, to worship as they chose, and to work within his service and be employed in the government. `Imad al-Din mentioned this, but gave no examples. It seems that the Christians were satisfied with how Salah al-Din treated them.[78] Arnold agrees with `Imad al-Din and emphasizes that the Christians were pleased with their Muslim employers.[79]

Salah al-Din's treatment of the native Christians seems to have been the result of the good and warm relations between himself and Emperor Isaac Angelus of Byzantium. Runciman reports that Salah al-Din received a message from the emperor, just after liberating the city, congratulating him and the Muslims on their victory over the Crusaders and requesting him to return the local churches to the Orthodox sects. Moreover, he asked that Christian ceremonies be performed according to the Greek Orthodox Church. His requests were later granted, although the other sects' rights were protected.[80] Salah al-Din allowed the native Christians to pray freely in their churches and handed control of Christian affairs to the Byzantine patriarch. Consequently, the Orthodox Christians and their priests benefited greatly from the Crusaders' departure and had the opportunity to recover their sovereignty over the Christian holy places.[81]

Furthermore, Salah al-Din then returned all of the Coptic churches and monasteries to the Coptic priests. Sawirus reports that Salah al-Din granted the Copts a place in Islamicjerusalem, known as the Dayr al-Sultan (monastery of the Sultan),[82] and exempted them from paying fees to visit the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and other Christian religious places. The main reason for this treatment was that they were his subjects.[83]

www.icsbook.info

Interestingly, Salah al-Din also treated the Abyssinian Christians generously. This was shown especially when he ordered his employees to exempt them from paying fees when visiting the holy places in Islamicjerusalem.[84] Ashur adds that Salah al-Din respected their monasteries in Islamicjerusalem and treated the priest who was taking care of these places with mercy and kindness.[85] From all of this, it becomes clear that Salah al-Din enabled different religions and sects to live side by side in Islamicjerusalem.

Tolerance and Mutual Respect

Islamicjerusalem was to surrender unconditionally, and the Crusaders were to be granted safe conduct out of the region, provided that they paid a fixed ransom.[86] The city surrendered on 27 Rajab 583/2 October 1187 and, according to `Imad al-Din al-Asfahani, it held more than 100,000 people, including Christian men, women and children.[87] Patriarch Heraclius and his priests each paid their ten dinars and left the walled city laden with gold and silver jewellery, relics by the cartload, and other artifacts from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. In addition, the Crusaders stripped the churches of their ornaments, carrying with them gold and silver vases, silk- and gold-embroidered curtains, as well as church treasures.[88]

Salah al-Din's brother al-Malik al-`Adil was so moved by this scene that he asked for 1,000 Crusader captives. Salah al-Din granted his request, and al-`Adil immediately freed them. Salah al-Din, in his turn, freed all of the aged[89] as a goodwill gesture and out of respect for the elderly. Another example of his magnanimity is that he sent his guard to proclaim throughout the city's streets that all old people who could not pay the ransom would be allowed to leave. They came from the Postern of St. Lazar, and their departure lasted from sunrise until sunset.[90]

`Imad al-Din, Ibn al-Athir, and Abu-Shama are among the historians who reported Salah al-Din's good conduct toward the many noble-women of Jerusalem, whom he allowed to leave without paying any ransom. For example, a Byzantine queen who had led a monastic life was not only allowed to leave thus, but was permitted to take all of her belongings and whatever else she wanted to take.[91] Another example was the wife of the captured King Guy, who was allowed to leave the city unhindered with her retinue and associates. Salah al-Din even granted her safe conduct to visit her captive husband in Nablus.[92] Some of his commanders (e.g., the ruler of al-Bira) asked him to free 500 Armenians, as they were from their country. Muzaffar al-Din ibn `Ali Kuchuk requested the release of 1,000 captives,

www.icsbook.info

claiming that they had come from al-Ruha (Edessa). Salah al-Din confirmed and granted his request.[93]

Runciman reports that some of the Crusader noble-women who had ransomed themselves came in tears to ask Salah al-Din what was going to happen to them, as their husbands or fathers had been killed or captured. He promised to free their husbands and gave money and gifts from his own treasury to the widows and orphans, according to their need.[94] Runciman comments that this was in stark contrast to the deeds of the Crusader conquerors of the First Crusade, who indulged themselves in killing, creating refugees, and destroying all in their path.[95]

As the Crusaders were leaving, Salah al-Din assigned to them officers whose job was to ensure their safe arrival in Christian-held territories.[96] Regan quotes one chronicler, without specifying his name, who gave Salah al-Din's officers credit for their humane treatment of the refugees. These officers, "who could not endure the suffering of the refugees, ordered their squires to dismount and set aged Christians upon their steeds. Some of them even carried Christian children in their arms."[97]

`Imad al- Din was amazed at the amount of treasure the departing Latins carried away. He reported to Salah al-Din that these treasures had a possible value of 200,000 dinars and reminded him that he had agreed to the Latins' request for safe conduct for themselves and their own property, but not for that of the churches. Thus, he advised that such treasures not be left in Crusader hands. However, Salah al-Din rejected his proposal:

> If we interpret the treaty [now] against their interest, they will accuse us of treachery. Let us deal with them according to the wording of the treaty so they may not accuse the believers of breaking the covenant. Instead, they will talk of the favors that we have bestowed upon them.[98]

In the words of John Esposito: "The Muslim army was as magnanimous in victory as it had been tenacious in battle. Civilians were spared; churches and shrines were generally left untouched ... Salah al-Din was faithful to his word and compassionate toward non-combatants."[99] Salah al-Din's magnanimity toward both Crusader and native Christians contrasted sharply with the attitude of the victorious Crusaders in 492/1099. The taking of Islamicjerusalem is in itself enough to reveal that Salah al-Din was a chivalric and fair-minded man. His behavior was recognized as such by both the Muslim and Christian worlds as being that of a man possessed of great generosity, remarkable magnanimity, and compassion toward his enemies. The behavior of the Muslims in Islamicjerusalem was impeccable.

www.icsbook.info

Salah al-Din's first action toward the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the holiest place in the Christian world, was to order its closure for three days[100] so that the situation could calm down and life could to return to the region, as suggested by al-`Arif.[101] It also seems that this action was intended to give him and the Muslims enough time to discuss the church's future, especially after a long and tiring war. Some of his advisers called for its destruction in the hope that this would end the Christians' interest in Islamicjerusalem as a site for visits and pilgrimage. `Imad al-Din states that:

> Salah al-Din discussed with his people the issue of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Among them were those who advised that its structures be demolished, its traces blotted out, the way to visiting it blinded, its statues removed, its candelabras extinguished, its gospels destroyed, its seductions removed, and its pronouncements exposed as lies...[102]

However, the majority rejected this, arguing that it was the site and not the building that mattered, and that Christians would still make pilgrimage there due to the site's spirit and sanctity. Moreover, they argued that `Umar had never taken any such action against the holy places, but rather had confirmed the Christians' right to the church.[103] Salah al-Din was persuaded by the majority's opinion. After three days of closure, he reopened the church and granted the Christians the freedom toworship there. However, Crusader pilgrims were only admitted after they paid a fee, as agreed to earlier.[104]

To sum up, when Salah al-Din conquered the city, he did not need to invent and issue a new assurance. To him, `Umar's assurance was the most valid and applicable practice, as emphasized in this section.

Analysis

Recognizing other religions, encouraging diversity and pluralism, and implementing Islamic tolerance and mutual respect will lead to peaceful co-existence, which is greatly needed in a multicultural society. Immediately after liberating Islamicjerusalem both times, Muslims implemented their vision toward its non-Muslims and etablished a multicultural society where, for the first time ever in the city's long and often bloody history, Muslims and non-Muslims lived alongside each other in co-operation and peace.

`Umar's assurance of safety defined the non-Muslim residents' rights and obligations, the most important of which was to pay the *jizyah* to the Muslim government and thereby enter into the *dhimmah* contract. It is, therefore, quite useful to explain what exactly is meant by the *jizyah* tax and

www.icsbook.info

the *dhimmah* contract. The latter was a contract of protection[105] made with Christians, Jews, and all others judged to be among the People of the Book, in addition to any other non-Muslim,[106] after they agreed to be ruled by the Muslims and pay the *jizyah*. Consequently, all of the empire's people were to be treated justly, regardless of their different religions.

As for the *dhimmah* pacts, al-Buti, a leading contemporary Syrian jurist, argues that this contract could be no more than a *bay`ah* (a pledge of allegiance to obey the laws and pursue the public interest) that took place between the ruler and the ruled.[107] No one could be excluded from it, as they were regarded as inhabitants of the empire[108] or, as described by contemporary scholars, holders of Muslim state citizenship (*al-jinsīyah al-islāmīyah*).[109] The only difference was that Muslims had to take this *bay`ah* as a religious duty,[110] whereas for non-Muslims it was a fulfillment of their treaty with Muslims to secure protection.

Al-Buti argues that the non-Muslims' *jizyah* is similar to the Muslims' zakah,[111] the only difference being that Muslims pay zakah to the treasury as part of their religious duty and worship while *dhimmīs* pay *jizyah* to fulfill their pact with the Muslims. The non-Muslims pay lower amounts under the name of *jizyah*, which goes to the Muslim ruler to be spent on protecting the realm.[112] Moreover, if a non-Muslim participated in military service during a particular year, he was exempted from the *jizyah* for that year.[113] The state was also obligated to return the *jizyah* if it could not protect them, as `Umar ibn al-Khattab had to in at least one instance.

It can be argued that exempting non-Muslims from military service made sense, because it was illogical to ask them to fight for the sake of Islam. This would be like making them practice a system of worship without a basic belief. However, non-Muslims could decide to participate in military service for other reasons, such as defending the land in which they were living. The *dhimmah* contract signed with the people of Islamicjerusalem during those two periods was a recognition of the "others," a recognition that Muslims and *dhimmīs* were to live alongside each other in peace. Clearly `Umar and Salah al-Din's treatment of the Jews and Christians reflected the Islamic vision of how to treat non-Muslims: "Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them, for Allah loves those who are just" (Qur'an, 60:8).

The results of the first Muslim conquest contrast significantly with the destruction, killing, and displacement that had characterized the region's history until then.[114] The teachings of Islam, prevented Salah al-Din from com-

www.icsbook.info

mitting barbaric actions similar to those carried out by the Crusaders. Briefly, the concept of "forgiveness with capability" (*al-`afū `ind al-maqdirah*) was in his mind at that time.

In general, the basis for the rules of how to treat non-Muslims under Muslim rule is sought in the Qur'an and in the Prophet's manner of dealing with certain non-Muslim communities, and that of his immediate successors. Guidelines in the Qur'an and the Sunnah speak of strengthening and cementing the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Conclusion

By using `Umar and Salah al-Din's treatment of Christians and Jews in Islamicjerusalem as case studies, I examined how they established a multicultural society. Their understanding of non-Muslims' rights and recognition of the two communities' needs engendered a flourishing multicultural society that provided an atmosphere for peaceful co-existence. Hence, this research supports El-`Awaisi's argument that Islamicjerusalem can be considered a model for a multicultural society. Multiculturalism, a vital and crucial element of a society, can become a convenient and indispensable mechanism for fostering diversity among different cultures and religions. This approach tends to perpetuate, rather than challenge, views about the differences of other religions. The Muslims' inclusive vision for Islamicjerusalem, which involved recognizing others, fostering diversity and pluralism, implementing Islamic tolerance and mutual respect, led to peaceful co-existence.

In light of the above analysis, I suggest that those who study this region should investigate this topic using different case studies in Islamicjerusalem throughout Muslim history. The underlying lesson from this research is that, in terms of multiculturalism, diversity, and cultural sensitivity, Islamicjerusalem gives us a model of a common space in which people from different religions, ethnic groups, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds can live together in peace, tolerance, and harmony. Both `Umar and Salah al-Din encouraged inclusivity and rejected the policies of exclusivity and bigotry that had dominated the region before their conquests.

Endnotes

1. In this research, I use *Islamicjerusalem* as one word. This is not accidental, but rather the result of serious academic debate that sees it as a developing concept that can help us understand the whole dynamics of this region in its historical, sociological, anthropological, theological, and political perspectives. There-

www.icsbook.info

fore, I use this term to emphasize that Islamicjerusalem is a new terminology for a new concept; to distinguish between *Islamicjerusalem* and *Muslim Jerusalem* (the period when Muslims ruled Islamicjerusalem for several centuries should be called *Muslim Jerusalem* instead of *Islamicjerusalem*); and to clarify that Islamicjerusalem refers to a region and not to a city.

2. \`Abd al-Fattah El-\`Awaisi is principal and vice chancellor of Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, Scotland (UK); chair in Islamicjerusalem Studies; and director of the Centre for Islamicjerusalem Studies.
3. \`Abd al-Fattah El-\`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem* (Dundee: Al-Maktoum Institute Academic Press, 2005), 14. As regards Islamicjerusalem being "a unique region," Khalid El-\`Awaisi argues that it includes the walled city of Islamicjerusalem, Ramla, \`Ascalan, Kusayfa, Sougar, Ma'ab, Hebron, Nablus, Jericho and many others towns and cities. See Khalid El-\`Awaisi, "Geographical Boundaries of Islamicjerusalem," *Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies* 6, no. 1 (2005): 175-92.
4. El-\`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, 105.
5. Maher Abu-Munshar, "A Historical Study of Muslim Treatment of Christians in Islamicjerusalem at the Time of \`Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn with Special Reference to the Islamic Value of Justice" (Ph.D. thesis, Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, Univ. of Abertay Dundee, 2003), 268.
6. For example, Caliph al-Hakim al-Fatimi treated the Christians of Islamicjerusalem and elsewhere strictly. For example, he ordered them to wear certain colored clothes to distinguish themselves from Muslims and heavy wooden crosses around their necks, and prohibited them from celebrating some religious ceremonies. He also ordered most of the churches in Islamicjerusalem destroyed, including the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. See Ibn al-Jawzi, *Al-Muntaẓam fi Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-\`Ilmiyyah, 1995), 15:60-61.
7. Shlomo Goitein, "Jerusalem in the Arab Period (638-1099)," in *The Jerusalem Cathedra – Studies in the History, Archaeology, Geography, and Ethnography of the Land of Israel*, ed. Lee I. Levine (Jerusalem: YAD Izhak Ben-Zvi Institute, 1982), 174.
8. W. C. Watson, *Multiculturalism* (Buckingham, UK: Open University Press, 2000), 1-2.
9. Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. A. Gutman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 38.
10. Suzanne Audrey, *Multiculturalism in Practice: Irish, Jews, Italian, and Pakistani Migration to Scotland* (Hants: Ashgate, 2000); Barnor Hesse, *Un/settled Multiculturalisms, Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions* (London: Zed Books, 2000); Gerd Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic, and Religious Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999).
11. El-\`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, 63.

www.icsbook.info

12. Othman Al-Tel, *The First Islamic Conquest of Aelia (Islamicjerusalem): A Critical Analytical Study of the Early Islamic Historical Narratives and Sources* (Dundee, UK: Al-Maktoum Institute Academic Press, 2003), 109-20.
13. The Roman emperor Hadrian changed the city's name to Aelia in 135 after suppressing the Jewish revolt of Bar Cochba. See John Wilkinson, "Jerusalem under Rome and Byzantium: 63 BC-637 AD," in *Jerusalem in History,* ed. K. J. Asali (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1990), 88.
14. Karen Armstrong, "Sacred Space: The Holiness of Islamicjerusalem," *Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies* 1, no. 1 (1997): 14.
15. \`Azmi Muhammad Abu\`lyan, *Al-Quds bayn al-Iḥtilāl wa al-Taḥrīr \`abr al-\`Uṣūr al-Qadīmah wa al-Wusṭā wa al-Ḥadīthah, (3000 B.C.-1967 C.E.)* (Al-Zarqa', Jordan: Mu'asassat Bakir li al-Dirasat al-Thaqafiyyah, 1993), 134.
16. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem under Rome and Byzantium,* 88: \`Arif al-\`Arif, *Al-Mufaṣṣal fī Tārīkh al-Quds* (Jerusalem: Matba\`at al-Ma\`arif, 1986), 68; Abu-\`Iayan, *Al-Quds,* 132-33.
17. Abu-\`Iayan, *Al-Quds,* 136-37.
18. Al-Tabari, *Tārīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk* (Beirut: Manshurat Muhammad \`Ali Baydun, Dar al-Kutub al-\`Ilmiyyah,1997), 2:448.
19. Khalil Sarkis, *Tārīkh al-Quds al-Ma\`rūf bi Tārīkh Urshālīm* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqafah al-Diniyyah, 2001), 101
20. Abu-\`Iayan, *Al-Quds,* 127-33.
21. Bernard Hamilton, *The Christian World of the Middle Ages* (Stroud-Gloucester: Sutton Pub., 2003), 103.
22. Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades: The First Crusade and the Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 1:12-13.
23. Ibid., 1:12.
24. Ibid., 1:20.
25. Ibid., 1:20-21.
26. In his translation of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,* Siddiqi defines *jizyah* as "a tax, a sort of compensation to the Muslim State on the part of the non-Muslims living under the protection of the Muslim State for not participating in military service and enjoying the pact of protection (*Dhimma*)." Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,* tr. A. Siddiqi (Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 1996), 3:163.
27. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades,* 1:20-21.
28. Leone Caetani, *Annali Dell Islam* (Millan: Ulrico Hoeli, 1910), 3:813-14.
29. Karen Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths* (London: Harper Collins, 1996), 232.
30. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades,* 1:6.
31. Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem,* 233.
32. El-\`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem,* 86.
33. *Dhimmah* literally means "pledge and guarantee." Ibn Manzur, *Lisān al \`Arab* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-\`Arabi,1999), 5:59. See also Al-Fayruzabadi, *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-\`Arabi, 1991), 4:162.

www.icsbook.info

34. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 1:21.
35. Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem*, 246.
36. Armstrong, *Sacred Space*, 19.
37. "O humanity. We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (the one who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)" (Qur'an 49:13).
38. `Umar's assurance of safety to the people of Aelia (*al-`Uhdah al-`Umarīyah*) is more commonly translated as "The Pact of `Umar." But in my opinion, this is confusing because of a fabricated document translated with the same name (*al-Shurūṭ al-`Umarīyah*). The so-called Pact of `Umar enumerated humiliating and discriminatory conditions for Christians, conditions that are utterly foreign to `Umar's mentality, thought, and practice. Based on his consultation of Arabic primary sources, T. Arnold showed, in his *The Preaching of Islam* (pp. 56-59), that the pact, as a specific document, is at least a partial fabrication from a later period, since it contradicts what al-Tabari, for example, reports about `Umar's magnanimous treatment of Christians in Islamicjerusalem. For more details about the Pact of 'Umar, see Abu-Munshar, *A Historical Study*, 97-122.
39. After searching the literature, it is obvious that not all historians have reported the text of `Umar's Assurance. Clearly, such early historians as al-Waqidi (d. 207/822), al-Baladhuri (d. 279/892), Ibn al-Athir (d. 630/1233), and Abu al-Fida' (d. 732/1313) were confined to mentioning its significance rather than the actual text itself. Other historians, such as al-Ya`qubi (d. 284/897), Patriarch of Alexandria Eutychius (Ibn al-Batriq) (d. 328/940), al-Tabari (d. 310/922), al-Himyari (d. 900/1494), Mujir al-Din al-Hanbali (d. 928/1521), and Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200) reported its text either in an abridged version or in full.
40. It is important to mention that al-Tabari was born at the end of 224/839. He began writing his history after 290/902 and completed it in 303/915. The version he provided is quoted from Sayf ibn `Umar (d. 170/786).
41. Al-Tabari, *Tārīkh al-Umam*, 2:449. The English translation is quoted from El-`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, 72-74.
42. For example, Khalid ibn al-Walid presented a peace treaty to the people of Damascus in 14 AH. See al-Baladhuri, *Futūḥ al-Buldān* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Ma`arif, 1987), 166. Another example is the peace treaty that `Ayyad Ibn Ghanam presented to the people of al-Jazirah in 17 AH. See al-Qasim Ibn Sallam Abu `Ubayd, *Kitāb al-Amwāl* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1986), 220.
43. Zakariyyah al-Quda, "Mu`āhadat Fatḥ Bayt al-Maqdis: Al-`Uhdah al-`Umarīyah," in *Bilād al-Shām fi Ṣadr al-Islām*, eds. Muhammad al-Bakhit and Ihsan `Abbas (Jordan: University of Jordan and University of Yarmuk, 1987), 276.
44. `Abd al-`Aziz al-Duri, "Jerusalem in the Early Islamic Period: 7th-11th Centuries AD," in *Jerusalem in History*, ed. K. J. `Asali (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1990), 107.

www.icsbook.info

45. Muhammad al-Himyari, *Al-Rawḍ al-Mi`ṭār fi Khayr al-Aqṭār* (Beirut: Maktabat Lubnan, 1984), 69.
46. Ibn al-Jawzi, *Faḍā'il al-Quds* (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah, 1979), 123-24.
47. El-`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, 119.
48. "Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them, for Allah loves those who are just. Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances) that do wrong" (Qur'an, 60:8-9).
49. El-`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, 102.
50. Goitein, "Jerusalem in the Arab Period (638-1099)," 174.
51. Ibid., 174.
52. Shafiq Jasir, *Tārīkh al-Quds wa al-`Alāqah bayn al-Muslimīn wa al-Masīḥīyīn ḥattā al-Ḥurūb al-Ṣalībīyah* (Amman: Matabi` al-Iman, 1989), 59-62.
53. Khalil `Athaminah, *Filasṭīn fi Khamsat Qurūn: Min al-Fatḥ al-Islāmī ḥattā al-Ghazw al-Faranjī (634-1099)* (Palestine in Five Centuries: From the Islamic Conquest to the Frankish Invasion [634-1099]) (Beirut: Mu'asassat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyyah, 2000), 144.
54. Ibid., 144.
55. Hamilton, *The Christian World*, 216.
56. Jasir, *Tārīkh al-Quds*, 61.
57. Hamilton, *The Christian World*, 216.
58. A. L. Tibawi, *Jerusalem: Its Place in Islam and Arab History* (Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969), 11.
59. `Athaminah, *Filasṭīn fi Khamsat Qurūn*, 144.
60. Jasir, *Tārīkh al-Quds*, 184.
61. `Athaminah, *Filasṭīn fi Khamsat Qurūn*, 144-45.
62. Jasir, *Tārīkh al-Quds*, 62-63.
63. See Qur'an, 2:256. This verse was revealed to deal with the case of a Madinan man (from the tribe of Salim Ibn-`Awf) whose two sons had become Christians before Prophet Muhammad began the call to Islam. The father insisted that they convert. They refused and he took the case to the Prophet. Then the revelation "There is to be no compulsion in religion" came.
64. El-`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, 148.
65. Sawirus Ibn al-Muqaffa', *Tārīkh Baṭārikat al-Kanīsah al-Miṣrīyah, al-Ma`rūf bi Siyar al-Bay`ah al-Muqaddasah*, ed. Y. `Abd al-Masih and `A. Suriyal (Cairo: 1959), vol. 2, part. 2, p. 249.
66. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 2:464-65.
67. Sa`id `Abd al-Fattah `Ashur, *Al-Ḥarakah al-Ṣalībīyah: Ṣafḥah Mushārifah fi Tārīkh al-Jihād al-Islāmī fi al-`Uṣūr al-Wusṭā* (Cairo: Maktabt al-Anjlu al-Masriyyah, 1986), 2:645.

www.icsbook.info

68. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 2:464-65.
69. T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith* (London: Constable and Co.,1986), 96.
70. Abu-Munshar, "A Historical Study," 236-39.
71. Baha' al-Din ibn Shaddad, *Al-Nawādir al-Sulṭānīyah wa al-Maḥāsin al-Yūsufīyah* (Cairo: Dar al-Manar, 2000), 151-52. See also D. S. Richards, *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin* (or *Al-Nawādir al-Sulṭānīyah wa al-Maḥāsin al-Yūsufīyah*, tr. Ibn Shaddad, or *Al-Nawādir al-Sulṭānīyah wa al-Maḥāsin al-Yūsufīyah* [Hants: Ashgate, 2001], 185-86); `Abd al-Rahman ibn Isma'il Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn fī Akhbār al-Dawlatayn al-Nūrīyah wal al-Ṣalāḥīyah* (Beirut: Mu'asassat al-Risalah, 1997), 4:285-86.
72. Ibn Shaddad, *Al-Nawādir*, 152. See also Richards, *The Rare and Excellent History*, 186; Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*, vol. 4:286.
73. Abu Munshar, "A Historical Study," 245.
74. Mustafa Hiyari, "Crusader Jerusalem (1099-1187 A.D)," in *Jerusalem in History*, ed. K. J. `Asali (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1990), 170.
75. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh* (Beirut: Manshurat Muhammad `Ali Baydun, Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1998), 10:218; Ibn Shaddad, *Al-Nawādir*, 191.
76. Hasan Habashi, *Al-Ḥarb al-Ṣalībīyah al-Thālithah* (Salah al-Din and Richard), tr. Willaim Stubbs, (Egypt: Al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-`Ammah li al-Kitab, 2000), 1:274-77. (*Itinerarum Peregrinorum et gesta Regis Ricardi.*)
77. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī fī al-Fatḥ al-Qudsī* (Cairo: n.d.), 47-48; Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*, 3:158. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kāmil*, 10:158; Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 2:467.
78. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 48.
79. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, 91.
80. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 2:467-68.
81. Ashur, *Al-Ḥarakah al-Ṣalībīyah*, 2:649.
82. Sawirus ibn al-Muqaffa', *Tārīkh Baṭārikat al-Kanīsah al-Miṣrīyah*, vol. 2, part 2, p. 249.
83. Shuhada Khuri and Niqula Khuri, *Khūlaṣat Tārīkh Kanīsat Urshālīm al-Orthūthiksīyah* (Jerusalem: Matba`at Bayt al-Maqdis, 1925), 78-80.
84. Sa`id `Abd al-Fattah `Ashur, "Ba`ḍ Aḍwā' Jadīdah `alā al-`Alāqāt bayn Miṣr wa al-Ḥabashah fī al-`Uṣūr al-Wuṣtā," *Al-Majallah al-Miṣrīyah al-Tārīkhīyah*, no. 14 (1968): 22.
85. Ibid.
86. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 43; Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kāmil*, 10:156; Ibn Shaddad, *Al-Nawādir*, 53; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1978), 12:323; Isma'il ibn `Ali Abu al-Fida', *Tārīkh Abī al-Fidā' al-Musammā Al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar* (Beirut: Manshurat Muhammad `Ali Baydun, Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1997), 2:157; Grigurius al-Malti ibn al-`Ibri, *Tārīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Dūwal* (Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1992), 221.

www.icsbook.info

87. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 43.
88. Ibid., 47.
89. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 2:466; Stanley Lane-Poole, *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (London, Darf Pubs., 1985), 231-32.
90. Lane-Poole, *Saladin*, 232.
91. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 43, Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*, 3:343, Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kāmil*, 10:157; Mujir al-Din al-Hanbali, *Al-Uns al-Jalīl bi Tārīkh al-Quds wa al-Khalīl* (Hebron: Maktabat Dandis, 1999), 1:474.
92. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 43; Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*, 3:343, Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kāmil*, 10:157; al-Hanbali, *Al-Uns al-Jalīl*, 1:474.
93. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 44. See also M. Lyons and D. Jackson, *Saladin: The Politics of the Holy War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 257.
94. Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 2:466.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibn Shaddad, *Al-Nawādir*, 53. See also Geoffrey Regan, *Saladin and the Fall of Jerusalem* (Kent: Croom Helm, 1987), 153.
97. Regan, *Saladin*, 153.
98. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 47. See also Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kāmil*, 10:157; Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*, 3:401.
99. John. L. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 59.
100. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 35; Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*, 3:402. See also Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 2:468.
101. Al-`Arif, *Al-Mufaṣṣal fi Tārīkh al-Quds*, 176.
102. Al-Asfahani, *Kitāb al-Fatḥ al-Qussī*, 53-54.
103. Ibid.; Abu-Shama, *Kitāb al-Rawḍatayn*, 3:402; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidāyah*, 12:327; al-Hanbali, *Al-Uns al-Jalīl*, 1:485.
104. Al-Maqrizi, *Al-Sulūk li Ma`rifat Diwal al-Mulūk* (Beirut: Manshurat Muhammad Ali Baydun, Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1997), 1:210-11.
105. Al-Baladhuri reported the story where the Muslim armies were unable to provide protect some cities in al-Sham and had to withdraw from them after realizing that the Byzantines were preparing to attack. As a result, the Muslims returned the *jizyah* to the *dhimmis*. See al-Baladhuri, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, 187.
106. Al-Sadiq al-Ghiryani, *Mudāwanāt al-Fiqh al-Mālikī wa Adilatih* (Beirut: Mu'asassat al-Rayan, 2002), 2:454.
107. Muhammad Sa`id Ramadan al-Buti, "Mu`āmalāt al-Dawlah Islāmīyah li Ghayr al-Muslimīn: Al-Quds Namūthajan," *Journal of Islamicjerusalem Studies* 3, no.1, (1999):8.
108. Al-Sarkhasi, *Kitāb al-Mabṣūṭ* (Beirut: Manshurat Muhammad `Ali Baydun, Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 2001), vol. 5, part 10, p. 87; `Ala' al-Din Abi Bakr Ibn Mas`ud al-Kasani, *Badā'i` al-Ṣāni` fi Tartīb al-Sharā'i`* (Beirut: Manshurat Muhammad `Ali Baydun, Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, 1997), 9:427.

www.icsbook.info

109. `Abd al-Qadir `Udah, *Al-Tashrī` al-Jinā'ī al-Islāmī Muqāranan bi al-Qānūn al-Waḍ`ī* (Cairo: Maktabat Dar al-Turath, n.d.), 1:338. See also 'Abd al-Karim Zaydan, *Aḥkām al-Dhimmīyīn wa al-Musta'minīn fī Dār al-Islām* (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Quds, 1982), 63-64.
110. Prophet Muhammad said: "Whoever (referring to Muslims) dies without a pledge (*bay`ah*) dies as one belonging to the days of Jahiliyyah (ignorance)."
111. Al-Buti, *Mu`āmalat al-Dawlah al-Islāmīyah*, 8-9.
112. Ibid.
113. For example, al-Baladhuri says that one of the terms in the treaty between Maslamah ibn `Abd al-Malik (an army chief of al-Walid ibn `Abd al-Malik) and al-Jarajimah (a Christian tribe in al-Sham) was that the latter would be exempt from paying the *jizyah* and would have to participate in the Muslim war. See al-Baladhuri, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, 220. It is worth mentioning that Imam al-Shafi`i permitted non-Muslims to fight on the side of Muslims based on some examples, such as when a number of the Banu Qaynaqa' tribe's Jews joined the Muslims in their war after Badr, and Safwan's (a non-Muslim) joining the Muslim at the battle of Hunayn. However, Abu Hanifah and Malik did not allow this practice. See al-Mawardi, *Al-Ḥāwī al-Kabīr* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1994),18:144-45.
114. El-`Awaisi, *Introducing Islamicjerusalem*, 63.

www.icsbook.info

The Islamic Concept of Education Reconsidered

Khosrow Bagheri and *Zohreh Khosravi*

Abstract

Some authors have analyzed the Islamic concept of education in parallel to the assumed contrast between Islam and the liberal tradition. Hence, given the latter's rationalist tendencies, an almost indoctrinatory essence is assumed for the Islamic concept of education. However, we argue that rationality is involved in all elements of the Islamic concept of education. There might be some differences between the Islamic and liberal conceptions of rationality, but these are not so sharp that the derivative Islamic concept of education can be equated with indoctrination. We suggest an Islamic concept of education that includes three basic elements: knowledge, choice, and action. Then, we show that, according to the Islamic texts, these elements have a background of wisdom.

Introduction

In a recent volume of *Comparative Education*, Halstead introduced "an Islamic concept of education."[1] As he admits, this concept still needs to be analyzed and its components to be shown. In what follows, we critique the above-mentioned analysis and some of the related views on which it relies. After this, we present an alternative view.

In summary, Halstead assumes a contrast between Islam and the liberal tradition and, in parallel, given that tradition's rationalist tendencies, concludes an almost indoctrinatory essence for the Islamic concept of educa-

Khosrow Bagheri Noaparast has a B.A. in psychology, an M.A. in the philosophy of education, and a Ph.D. in the philosophy of education from New South Wales University, Australia (1995). He is a professor in the Faculty of Psychology and Education (Department of Philosophical and Social Foundations) at the University of Tehran, Iran. Zohreh Khosravi has a B.A. and an M.A. in psychology and a Ph.D. in psychology (1996) from New South Wales University, Australia. She is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education and Psychology (Department of Psychology) at the University of al-Zahra, Iran.

www.icsbook.info

tion: "Independence of thought and personal autonomy do not enter into the Muslim thinking about education, which is more concerned with the *progressive initiation of pupils into the received truths of the faith.*"[2]

However, we argue here that rationality is involved in all elements of the Islamic concept of education. There might be some differences between the Islamic view of rationality and that of the liberal tradition; however, one should not conclude, as far as rationality is concerned, that there is a sharp contrast between Islam and the liberal tradition. Before going into the details of the argument, we emphasize here the place of wisdom in Islam.

The Qur'an contains many derivatives and synonyms of *`aql* (wisdom), as in 15:80-82. What is the meaning of *using wisdom* in the Qur'an? When a person is in control of his/her cognitive attempts so that he/she becomes immune to slips of thought, and, as a consequence, reaches the understanding of the thing concerned, it can be said that he/she has used wisdom. Three factors play the main role in avoiding these slips: evaluating the soundness of reasons, having knowledge, and controlling love and hate.

As far as the first factor is concerned, using wisdom occurs when the person evaluates the adequacy and soundness of the reasons held. This element refers to using logic in evaluating the soundness of claims. The Qur'an provides the following example: When addressing the Jews and the Christians who had claimed that Prophet Abraham was the father of their particular religions, God says: "O People of the Book. Why do you dispute about Abraham, when the Torah [The Old Testament] and the Injil [The New Testament] were not revealed until after him? Do you not, then, understand [use wisdom]?" (3:65). In other words, given the historical precedence of Abraham to the Christians and the Jews, it is not reasonable to attribute these religions to him.

In relation to the second factor of having knowledge, whoever has more knowledge is better able to use wisdom at the level of cognition. In other words, having comprehensive knowledge and information enables the person to have access to more material for comparison and combining and, hence, to reach a deeper cognition or a more subtle recognition. With regard to this point, the Qur'an states: "And (as for) these examples, We set them forth for people, and none understand them but the learned" (2:44). The word *understand* (derived from *`aql*) here refers to wisdom, and it is stated that being learned is required for being wise. That is to say, knowledge is a prerequisite for wisdom.

In regard to the third factor, using wisdom requires that the deviating interventions of love and hate be prevented, for just as love might prevent us from recognizing weaknesses, hate might prevent us from seeing strengths.

www.icsbook.info

When the two feet of love and hate are fastened by the band of wisdom, the person can be immune from any deviation in cognition and recognition. Thus, the Qur'an invites people to be aware of emotional deviations in evaluating past traditions: "And when it is said to them, follow what Allah has revealed, they say: 'Nay! We follow what we found our fathers upon.' What! And though their fathers had no sense at all, nor did they follow the right way?" (2:170). In other words, familiarity with particular traditions cannot be a full justification for considering them to be reasonable or right. The force of habit and social dependence should be distinguished from the force of reasonableness and truth. Thus wisdom, with its three elements of logic, knowledge, and emotional control, has an important place in Islam's view.

It is also worth mentioning here that the Islamic word for wisdom (*`aql*) is wider than "reason" and, as Nasr says, refers to *intellectus*.[3] According to him, the perennial philosophy holds that *intellectus* is distinct from *ratio*.[4] While the latter is restricted to pure reasoning, the former refers to a deep insight at a higher level of the whole universe. It might be said that the Islamic concept of wisdom is more extensive than the Latin *ratio* and the Greek *dianoia* and, in fact, refers to the higher perceptive faculty of mind-heart, which is called *intellectus* in Latin and *nous* in Greek, as, for instance, Plato considered *noesis* to be the highest level of intuitive knowledge.[5]

Perhaps the root factor in accounting for the difference between Islamic education and the rationalistic trend in liberal education needs to be sought in the two above-mentioned meanings. In the liberal tradition, *intellectus* is held to be reason, whereas Islam considers it to be wisdom. Having paved the ground for discussion, we now reconsider the Islamic view of education.

Islamic Education: A Critique

In his essay, Halstead seeks to disclose the somewhat unknown dimensions of the Islamic concept of education. As mentioned above, he asserts a contrast between the liberal and Islamic conceptions of education and tries to explain the latter. According to him, this contrast derives from a profound difference between Islam and western culture. Referring to al-Attas' view, he affirms that: "There exist such profound and absolute differences between Islam and western culture that they cannot be reconciled."[6]

According to Halstead, liberalism regards rationality and intellectual freedom as its main pillar. Thus, he believes that the real Islamic view gives no legitimacy to autonomy and freedom of reason and, for that matter, to such rationalistic Muslims as the Mu`tazilites. Criticizing O'Hear's affirmation of the Mu`tazilites, he says:

www.icsbook.info

O'Hear (1982), for example, wrote approvingly of the Mu`tazilite belief that reason should be used "to assess the claims of revelation" and suggested (perhaps somewhat fancifully) that the Mu`tazilites would "presumably not be opposed to the intellectual freedom striven for in a liberal education" (p. 13).[7]

Halstead appeals to the views of such thinkers as al-Ghazali (1058-1111) to show the acceptable relation between religion and reason: "With the advent of al-Ghazali, however, the philosophical and rationalistic schools of thought lost ground. Al-Ghazali reasserted the dominance of religion over reason and gave superior status to revelation as a source of knowledge."[8] Accepting such a relation between religion and reason, Halstead tries to analyze the Islamic view on education that, in the final analysis, leads to a religion-centered education, in contrast to the liberal education that he regards as rationalistic.

Taking such a foundation for his analysis, Halstead then tries to give an account of the Islamic view of education. He appeals to three Arabic words, *tarbiyah* (to cause to grow), *ta'dīb* (to refine, to discipline), and *ta`līm* (to instruct) that, according to him, refer to three basic dimensions of education: individual development, social and moral education, and acquisition of knowledge, respectively. In this analysis, he relies partly on al-Attas' suggestion,[9] particularly in the case of *ta'dīb*.

Let's begin with al-Attas, whose contribution to explaining the Islamic concept of education has been considered important.[10] Al-Attas denies that the Islamic concept of *tarbiyah* and the related word *rubūbīyah* (God's being the Lord) can be considered as candidates for showing the dimensions of the Islamic concept of education.[11] He claims that the root of these words (*rabā*: to grow) indicates physical upbringing without any reference to the basic elements of real education, such as knowledge, intelligence, and virtue. According to him, God's *rubūbīyah* does not include knowledge; rather, it refers to the same meaning of physical upbringing.

However, he could not maintain this awkward result to the end of his book. Hence, he admits that a knowledge-related meaning could penetrate the concept *rabb* (the Lord), but claims that such a meaning would refer merely to the possession of knowledge rather than to the transference of knowledge, which is essential in education. He cites as evidence the word *rabbānī*, which is used in the Qur'an to refer to Jewish scholars. According to him, this word refers to a scholar who possesses knowledge, and he adopts the view that it might be a Hebrew word, rather than an Arabic word derived from *rabb*.

www.icsbook.info

Al-Attas suggests that the Islamic concept of *ta'dīb* could refer to education because, unlike *rubūbīyah*, it refers to knowledge. In addition, the Prophet used it to refer to his being educated by God, as when he says: "My Lord disciplined me and disciplined me well."[12] However, al-Attas' argument is unconvincing for several reasons. First, his insistence on delimiting the meaning of *rabb* to physical upbringing and negating its inclusion of knowledge is untenable and inconsistent with its usage in the Qur'an, where it is used in relation to knowledge. This indicates that knowledge refers to a component of its meaning: "Our Lord. You embrace all things in mercy and knowledge" (40:7).

Al-Attas would respond that in this case, the relation of *rabb* to knowledge merely indicates that God possesses it. However, delimiting the meaning to possession is not convincing, for management, which includes both physical and mental aspects, is also one dimension of this word's meaning. This point is quite clear in the very tradition on which al-Attas has placed his burden of argument. When the Prophet attributes *ta'dīb* to the *rabb*, this clearly indicates that the former is a deed of the latter. If, as al-Attas claims, *ta'dīb* indicates knowledge, then it follows that the meaning of *rabb* includes providing knowledge. This point has been made more than once in the Hadith literature. A further example is the Prophet's request from the *rabb* to increase his knowledge: "O Lord. Increase my knowledge" (20:114). If providing or increasing knowledge has no relevance to the *rabb*, then using the word here would be misplaced. It is clear that, in the Islamic texts, the names of God are used properly in relation to the request concerned. When, for instance, a person requests for God's forgiveness, he or she mentions the relevant name *al-Ghaffār* (The Forgiver).

As for al-Attas' point that *rabbānī* merely refers to the scholar's possession of knowledge, there are textual counter-examples. In the following Qur'anic verse, not only is *rabbānī* used in relation to teaching, rather than the possession of knowledge, but it is also used in relation to *rubūbīyah*: "Be worshippers (*rabbānīs*) of the Lord because of your teaching the Book and your reading (it yourselves)" (3:79). In this verse, it is argued that because the clergy are teaching the holy book and reading it as well, they should have and show a strong relationship to God in their characteristics. This strong relationship to God, rather than the possession of knowledge, is what is meant by calling them *rabbānī*. Therefore, this word relates to *rubūbīyah* (God's being the Lord).

There are also some points in relation to al-Attas' suggestion that *ta'dīb* is an adequate candidate for showing the dimensions of education. First, it is worth mentioning that *ta'dīb* and even the derivatives of its root *aduba* do

www.icsbook.info

not appear in the Qur'an at all. Second, contrary to what al-Attas says, it is not true that *adab* and *ta'dīb* are more comprehensive than *rabb* in referring to both knowledge and action. *Adab* does not necessarily indicate knowledge involvement. That is why it can refer to punishment as well as to animal training and hence, contrary to what al-Attas says, it is not specific to humans. Thus, the Hadith literature mentions that "all debauchery is wrong, except in disciplining horses."[13] Finally, contrary to al-Attas, not only is *ta'dīb* inferior to *rubūbiyah* in showing the dimensions of education; it is, in fact, a subsumption for *rubūbīyah* because *ta'dīb*, at best, refers to ethical and social aspects of education, without including instruction in the sciences and the like. This point will be explained further in the next section.[14]

Now we turn to Halstead's suggestion. First, we need to recognize the methodological aspects of his view. Relying on Islamic religious texts as resources for exploring the basic elements of the Islamic concept of education, Halstead takes an objective standpoint insofar as the methodology of understanding these texts is concerned: "The goals of education are laid down by revealed religion and therefore have an objective quality; they do not vary according to individual opinion or experience."[15]

However, as recent debates in hermeneutics have shown,[16] texts need to be interpreted and penetrating interpretations cause different views to appear. Even if we avoid radical standpoints in hermeneutics that claim, following Friedrich Nietzsche, that "everything is interpretation," this is still a far cry from the objective view of claiming that meaning is over there in the text. In actual fact, the discrepancy among Muslim scholars throughout the history of Islam shows that such an objective quality is not defensible. What Halstead himself refers to in the history of Islam shows this well: While Mu`tazilite (rationalist Muslims) believed that Islamic teachings should be based on reason, orthodox Ash`arite theologians held that whatever is revealed from God is reasonable.

This kind of discrepancy appears in the realm of Islamic education as well. For instance, while Halstead relies on al-Attas' suggestion of *ta'dīb*, unlike him and rightly, I suppose, he delimits this suggestion to one dimension of education, namely, its social and moral aspect. And what is at stake in the present essay is a further sign of the discrepancy in understanding and interpreting Islamic texts.

The second point in Halstead's interpretation of the Islamic concept of education is that he, as a result of his commitment to the priority of revealed knowledge over reason, as advocated by such thinkers as al-Ghazali, equates it with indoctrination or, at least, regards it as including indoctrination. This agrees with what advocates of liberal education claim about religious edu-

www.icsbook.info

cation (including Islamic education) in general. For instance, Hirst claims that not only is the phrase *religious education* meaningless, but also that it indicates indoctrination whenever it refers to the realm of practice.[17]

In trying to show a sharp contrast between the liberal and Islamic conceptions of education, Halstead also claims that the latter, unlike the former, does not embrace a critical view on what is revealed: "Independence of thought and personal autonomy do not enter into the Muslim thinking about education, which is more concerned with the *progressive initiation of pupils into the received truths of the faith.*"[18] This indicates that education is not a rational matter in which pupils are required to think and judge on what is taught; rather, they just need to follow what is revealed from God. In other words, education is the same as indoctrination.

This conception of education is based, in turn, on a view of the nature of religion in general and of Islam in particular. This view, which I call encyclopedic, holds that Islam includes all kinds of true knowledge and information that people need:

> … the divine revelation expressed in the shari'a provides them with the requisite knowledge of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and the task of [the] individual is to come to understand this knowledge and exercise their free will to choose which path to follow.[19]

Both of these points, namely, the entire meaning of Islamic education and its underlying philosophy of religion, could be challenged. Concerning the nature of Islamic education, it is doubtful whether it can really be equated with indoctrination. I have criticized this view elsewhere with reference to Hirst's above-mentioned claim in this regard.[20] In addition, it is worth mentioning here that when the Prophet introduced Islamic teachings, he prevented people from blindly accepting their cultural heritage: "Nay! They say: We found our fathers on a course, and surely we are guided by their footsteps… (The Warner) said: What! Even if I bring to you a better guide than that on which you found your fathers?" (43:22-24).

This is an invitation to think about received beliefs and, as a result, opposes indoctrination. One should not say that indoctrination, in the case of Islam's "correct" beliefs, is defensible, far there is no "good" and "bad" indoctrination. Rather, indoctrination is altogether "bad" unless it is inevitable, like what occurs during early childhood when there is no foundation for rational thinking. In addition, when one talks about Islam's "correct" beliefs, this "correctness" needs to be understood by the person who is addressed. This shows that admitting indoctrination in the case of "correct" beliefs is self-contradictory.

www.icsbook.info

As for Halstead's presumed philosophy of religion, there is not enough space here to deal with it properly. Suffice it to say that there is neither intra-textual nor extra-textual evidence to support the encyclopedic view of Islam. So far as the intra-textual evidence is concerned, the Islamic texts do not claim that they are responsible for giving all of the knowledge and information that human beings need. In fact, religion does not eliminate reason. Neither is there any extra-textual or rational argument to support the encyclopedic view. Actually, there could not be such an argument because according to this view, reason goes on holiday.

Finally, the third point in Halstead's analysis is his triadic structure of *tarbiyah* (to cause to grow), *ta'dīb* (to refine, to discipline), and *ta`līm* (to instruct). According to him, the first word refers to individual development, the second to social and moral education, and the third to acquiring knowledge. There are several challenges to this point. The first one is that the Qur'an uses *tarbiyah* merely to refer to physical upbringing, as al-Attas has also shown,[21] rather than to the extended meaning of individual development. In analyzing this word, Halstead talks about it as an Arabic word. It is worth mentioning that the meaning of words in Arabic is not the determining factor here; rather, what is important is to see how they are used in the Qur'an and other Islamic texts. The usage of *tarbiyah* in the Qur'an shows that it refers to physical upbringing, as is seen in Pharaoh's address to Moses: "Did we not bring you up as a child among us?" (42:18). It is clear that Pharaoh was not concerned about Moses' individual development.

The second challenge is the pupils' supposed passivity in both *ta'dīb* (social and moral education) and *ta`līm* (the acquisition of knowledge). Concerning the former, Halstead's support of indoctrination was criticized previously. As for the latter, he says:

> Certainty may sometimes be achieved through an acceptance of the authority of the teaching of the `ulama' (the learned) about the Qur'an and the Prophet. Islam, therefore, encourages an attitude of respectful humility towards such legitimate authority and trust in the truth of the knowledge that it hands down."[22]

How could this conclusion be acceptable in Islam, given that Qur'an 9:31 criticizes the previous prophets' followers for their unreasonable humility toward their ulama (the learned)? This indicates that the followers should be critical of the learned and always be aware of the correspondence of their views to certain criteria. In other words, authority in and of itself has no legitimacy.

www.icsbook.info

Again, referring to Ibn Khaldun,[23] Halstead says:

> Muslims have long recognized that students' education is as likely to occur 'through imitation of a teacher ... the teacher, as transmitter of (religious) knowledge, is considered an authority figure worthy of respect (and therefore not generally open to challenge by students).[24]

It is clear that there is considerable room for role modeling in Islam. However, what needs to be addressed in this regard is whether or not it can take the shape of blind imitation. It seems defensible to hold that, according to the Qur'an, taking role models should not done blindly; rather, it must be active and in accordance with specific criteria. If Halstead acknowledges that the Qur'an does not support the blind acceptance of tradition,[25] why does he regard the teacher as "an authority figure worthy of respect (and therefore not generally open to challenge by students)"?

Accepting those role models that meet specific criteria characterizes the Islamic view of authority. This can be seen in an order given to the Prophet to follow the previous prophets: "These are they whom Allah guided; therefore, follow their guidance" (6:90). What is required here is not an unqualified following ("follow them"); rather, it is a qualified following limited by guidance ("follow their guidance"). Even though they were prophets, the subsequent prophet should only follow their guidance. In other words, following should be criterion-based and, hence, active and selective.

On the whole, it is not acceptable to make a sharp contrast between Islam and the liberal tradition in terms of rationality. The autonomy that liberal thinking attributes to knowledge is to be understood as indicating that the legitimacy of knowledge claims is due to experience and relevant evidence, rather than to relying on religious beliefs.[26] Challenging this view will paralyze human knowledge, and Islam does not call for replacing reason by religion. Halstead says that "the autonomy of the subject or discipline, at least as understood in liberal thinking, is excluded, for all subjects and all knowledge need the guiding spirit of religion to give them purpose and direction."[27] If by giving purpose and direction he means that different branches of knowledge need to take the legitimacy of their findings from religion, this amounts to paralyzing human knowledge. And if he refers only to the realm of applying knowledge findings, it must be said that the liberal claim of autonomy of knowledge findings is predominantly related to the realm of explanation rather than of application.

As Halstead's proclaimed sharp contrast between Islam and liberal thinking is not defensible, his parallel conclusion as regards education is also problematic. He concludes that Islamic education, in contrast to liberal edu-

www.icsbook.info

cation, is mostly faith-oriented, authoritarian, and inclusive of indoctrination. Given the meaning of *`aql* (wisdom) in the Qur'an, as explained above, Islamic education should embrace logical reasoning, doubt inherited beliefs and even the elements of faith, challenge tradition, and engage in critical thinking. The question as to which concept of education can be attributed to Islam is the subject of the following section.

The Islamic Concept of Education: An Alternative

We suggest that the basic components of the Islamic concept of education be sought in the word *rubūbīyah,* which is used abundantly in the Qur'an and refers to God as the Lord. As explained in the first section, al-Attas was right in saying that *tarbiyah* refers merely to physical upbringing. However, he is wrong in giving the same meaning to *rubūbīyah,* for the latter is not only used frequently in the Qur'an, but also has assumed a central position in the prophets' endeavors to provide knowledge to and develop their people. That is to say, the prophets invited their people to take God as their Lord, a practice that shows the real essence of Islamic education in particular and of religious education in general. We will explain this point below.

First, it should be explained why the invitation to take God as one's Lord is regarded as central. Given that the human beings' main problem lies in choosing among different "lords," it is inevitable that they will eventually choose a lord. They might take their own desires as their Lord, those of other peoples, or both. Whatever is taken as the source of regulation for their deeds is considered their Lord. When something is taken as the Lord, it begins to shape their characteristics according to its own. Thus, there is a clear relationship between choosing a lord and a certain kind of actualization of people's possible states. And this is exactly the point that relates to having a lord to education.

Accordingly, Islamic education could be defined as "to know God as the unique Lord of the human and the world, to select Him as one's own Lord, to undertake His guidance and regulations, and to avoid what is contrary to them." According to this definition, education refers to the process of becoming divine. Three basic elements are involved in this process: knowledge (of God as the Lord), choice (choosing God as one's Lord), and action (undertaking God's Lordship throughout one's life). These three elements involve rationality.

First, knowing God as He has introduced Himself in the Qur'an involves rationality. In other words, in order to know God as, to say the least, the unique Lord of the world or that there will be a day (the Day of Judg-

www.icsbook.info

ment) on which God will be the Lord and will evaluate all human beings' actions throughout their lives, one needs to understand the reasons God has given for each of the cases in the Qur'an and, thereby, to be persuaded internally without external coercion or indoctrination. As mentioned above, the Qur'an states that a rational faith (including faith in God) cannot be based on the blind imitation of outstanding personalities or on the blind acceptance of given traditions. Hence, deriving knowledge about God from the Qur'an naturally involves rationality and requires that one read it and think about what is stated therein in a rational manner.

Given that knowledge is involved as an element in Islamic education, the pupils could – and should – pose doubts about faith claims and examine their reasonableness. Thus, there can be no authoritative faith that needs to be imparted through indoctrination. It is worth mentioning here that the Qur'an itself shows that the basic beliefs can be challenged even before God, and that the answer should be reasonable rather than authoritative:

> And when Abraham asked: "My Lord. Show me how You give life to the dead." He said: "What! Do you not believe?" He said: "Yes, but that my heart may be at ease." He said: "Take four of the birds, cut them into small pieces, place a part of them on every mountain, and then call them. They will come to you flying. Know that Allah is Mighty, Wise." (2:260)

It should be added that even though there should not be authoritative knowledge and that faith should be acquired on the basis of reasonability, rationality is used here in its wide sense. According to this meaning, one cannot only be positively rational about what is within the realm of the reason, but can also be negatively rational and silent about what is outside of reason's explicit boundaries. In other words, accepting these limits is in itself a rational matter.

The second element, namely choosing God as one's Lord, also involves rationality. Given that one has acquired rational knowledge about God to the effect that He is the Lord, it is naturally quite rational to choose Him as one's Lord. David Hume's well-known assertion that there is a logical gap between "is" and "ought" might be recalled here.[28] According to him, one cannot logically deduce an "ought" from premises that contain an "is." It is not necessary to deal with this argument in detail here.[29] Given that this claim is valid, we are concerned here only about what is rational. In other words, there is a recognizable difference between something being logically valid and rationally valid. Again, rationality here is referred to in a wide sense of the word. Every logically valid point is also rationally valid, but not necessarily vice versa. While it might not be logically valid to follow an "ought" in the pres-

www.icsbook.info

ence of an "is," it is usually considered rational or reasonable to do so according to common sense. In their daily lives, people consider it rational to change their "decisions" after becoming aware of some new "facts."

This commonsense affair can also be expressed in a logical manner, namely, according to the practical syllogism as it was formulated by Aristotle.[30] In a practical syllogism, a premise containing an "is" is combined with a premise containing an "ought" followed by a conclusion containing an "ought." The premise containing an "ought" in such a syllogism is usually an inner and personal obligation like "I should experience happiness in my life," and the premise containing an "is" declares a means–end claim that shows the dependence of happiness on some beliefs or actions. Hence, given the inner obligation on the one hand, and the reasoned statement indicating that God is the Lord of the world (and that happiness depends on being in congruence with the Lord) on the other hand, one can rationally – and even logically – conclude that he or she should choose and obey the Lord.

Given that the second element of Islamic education, namely, choosing God as one's Lord, is rational, it follows that faith in God should also be rational. Mere habit, cultural heritage, or indoctrination cannot be the basis for real faith in God. Even though these things are inevitable in childhood, as soon as one is able to think rationally, his or her inherited faith should be shaken by doubts and supported by good reasons; otherwise, it cannot be considered as "faith" proper.

Finally, the third element of Islamic education, namely, undertaking God's sayings and acting according to them, should also be rational. Thus, there should be reasons for doing the acts. That is why, in almost all cases of demanding action, the Qur'an states some reasons. For instance, in the case of fasting we read: "O you who believe. Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard (against evil)" (2:183). In giving this prescription, God does not take an authoritative position; rather, the reason is mentioned immediately after giving the prescription: managing one's inner inclinations so that one may guard against evil.

According to this third element, rational action is a component of education. The two parts of "rational action" need to be taken into consideration. As for being "rational," the actions required of a pupil should be shown to be reasonable. That is to say, blind actions have no educative value. Concerning the second part, namely, "action," it should be emphasized that education involves action. In other words, education is not merely a cognitive or emotive matter; rather, the person should perform some deeds in order to develop his or her capabilities. Referring to the important place of action in Islam, Rom Harré says:

www.icsbook.info

> Muslim moral psychology is the only traditional morality I know of with a well-articulated psychological theory of moral development. It is a conative, not a cognitive, theory ... Hence, all the will-strengthening techniques like the Ramadan fasts and the various other forms of self-denial. They are not to mortify the flesh, a kind of moral sadomasochism; they are to strengthen the will because that is the path of moral development.[31]

Harré is quite right in claiming a special place for action in Islamic morality. However, as explained above, one should not conclude, as Harré's statement might indicate, that this morality is not cognitive at all. "Rational action," being emphasized in Islam, indicates that there should be a cognitive aspect for action. To follow the well-known Kantian phrase, we could say that Islam holds the following ideas to be true: "Action without reason is blind, and reason without action is empty."

Given that Islamic education holds that action should be reasonable, it follows that the relationship between pupils and teachers should not be based on the mere imitation of a teacher's deeds. Without any doubt, following an exemplar is a necessary part of education. But what is at issue here is that this following should be accompanied by insight. Teachers should explain why their actions should be followed. In this way, their authority is not due to their being teachers *per se*; rather, it is for the reasons and criteria that accompany their deeds.

So far, we have explained on conceptual and theoretical grounds that, according to Islam's basic concepts, education should follow a rational track. However, one might object that so far as the practical realm of Islamic countries is concerned, education takes the form of indoctrination. Then, the question will be: What can really be said about Islamic education in terms of rationality or indoctrination? It is undeniable that the educational centers in the Muslim world are largely indoctrinating their students. However, this by no means negates the necessity of reviving Islam's ideal concepts in the area education; rather, it shows the double necessity for such a revival. In fact, this kind of conceptual clarification is itself part of a critical endeavor with the existing situation and thus a necessary step toward long-term development.

It is interesting to note that this kind of irony is also more or less the case in western education today. In theory, the liberal tradition tries to distinguish between education and indoctrination and to avoid the latter in the educational centers. However, what is actually going in the West's educational centers is akin to indoctrination. It must be noted that it is not too difficult to create a "doctrine" from science and then indoctrinate the people with it.

www.icsbook.info

Referring to this point, the eminent historian and philosopher of science Paul Feyerabend states that the science of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe was indeed a tool for liberty and enlightenment; however, it cannot be deduced that science will always remain such a tool. He holds that neither in science nor in any other ideology can a natural element that would make it inherently liberating be found. Ideologies can be obliterated and turned into religions. He maintains that his critique of modern science is that it prohibits freedom of thought.[32] Not only can science be transformed into a doctrine, but religion can agitate the process of scientific indoctrination. Taking this aspect into consideration, Feyerabend admires Californian Christian fundamentalists who have been able to eliminate the rigid formulation of Darwin's theory of evolution from school books and replace it with the Bible's account found in the Book of Genesis.[33]

On the whole, contrary to what is actually going on in the educational centers of both Islamic as well as western countries, it is necessary to revive and clarify basic concepts of education in order to pave the ground for bringing rationality into the educational centers. In this way, the Islamic views explained above are not restricted to the Muslim world; rather, since education needs to become more rational in general, we call upon all educationists and thinkers in the realm of education to adopt a rational approach to educational matters.

Conclusion

Even though there are important differences between the Islamic and the liberal traditions of thought, it is not acceptable to conclude that if rationality is the basic element of education in the liberal tradition, then the real essence of the Islamic concept of education should be sought in indoctrination instead of rationality. Nevertheless, the question as to rationality's essence and boundaries can be considered an open matter for discussion. As far as the Islamic view is concerned, human reason is not considered an omniscient entity (as some of the advocates of liberalism might claim) and, consequently, acknowledging the limits of human reason is itself regarded as a rational matter. Despite this, however, as this essay has shown, the basic elements of the Islamic concept of education have a background of rationality. By appealing to the Islamic concept of *rubūbīyah*, an Islamic concept of education can be suggested that includes the three basic elements of knowledge, choice, and action. According to the Islamic texts, each of these three elements of education have a background of rationality or wisdom.

www.icsbook.info

Endnotes

1. J. M. Halstead, "An Islamic Concept of Education," *Comparative Education* 40, no. 4 (2004): 517-29.
2. Ibid., 519. Emphasis added.
3. S. H. Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (New York: 1989).
4. F. Schuon, *Stations of Wisdom*, tr. G.E.H. Palmer (London: 1978).
5. We owe this notification about the difference between reason and intellect to the editorial comments.
6. Halstead, *Islamic Concept of Education*, 526.
7. Ibid., 518.
8. Ibid.
9. S. M. N. al-Attas, "Preliminary Thoughts on the Nature of Knowledge and the Definition and Aims of Education, in *Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education*, ed. S. M. N. al-Attas (London, Hodder & Stoughton: 1979), 19-47.
10. Ibid., 521.
11. S. M. N. al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam: A Framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education* (Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia, 1980).
12. Ibid.
13. M. B. Majlessi, *Biḥār al-Anwār* (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-Arabi, 1983), 64: 216. Anywhere *ta'dīb* and *ta`līm* are used as synonyms, the usual meaning for the latter is the instruction of morality, rather than instruction in general. For instance, Imam Ali says that whoever takes himself as a leader for people should start with instructing (*ta`līm*) himself before going to instruct others. In this saying, *ta'dīb* and *ta`līm* are used as synonyms, and it is clear that instruction refers to moral instruction. See his "Kalām,"in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, 70.
14. The root *ra-ba-ba* is more essential than *ra-ba-wa*. The latter, as well as *ra-ba-a* and *ra-a-ba*, are derived from *ra-ba-ba*. It is possible that because of overlaps among these words, the meaning of growth is mistakenly considered for *ra-ba-ba*. See H. Mostafavi, "*Ra-ba-ba*," in *Al-Tahqiq fi Kalemate al-Quran al-Karim* (Tehran: Bungahe Tarjemeh va Nashre Ketabunder, 1359).
15. Halstead, "Islamic Concept of Education," 519.
16. R. E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleirmacher, Dilthey, Heidegger and Gadamer* (Evanston. IL: Northwestern University Press: 1969).
17. P. H. Hirst, *Moral Education in a Secular Society* (University of London Press: 1974).
18. Halstead, "Islamic Concept of Education," 519. Emphasis added.
19. Ibid., 524.
20. N. K. Bagheri, *Islamic Education* (Tehran: Alhoda Publishers, 2001).
21. Al-Attas, *Concept of Education in Islam*.

www.icsbook.info

22. Halstead, "Islamic Concept of Education," 525. Of course, people should respect the ulama, but, as argued here, the legitimacy of their authority is criterion-based and, therefore, trust in them could not and – should not – be blind.
23. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah,* vol. 3. tr. F. Rosenthal (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967). Original work published 1381 AH.
24. Halstead, "Islamic Concept of Education," 525.
25. Ibid., 250. As for the relation between a *mujtahid* (a legist who formulates independent decisions in legal or theological matters) and a *muqallid* (one who blindly follows a *mujtahid*), it is like the relation between a novice and a specialist. A novice, undoubtedly, should follow a specialist, given that the specialist is capable with regard to the criteria concerned. Acknowledging the necessity of criteria opens the door for an insightful following and, therefore, the possibility of challenging in principle. Qur'an 9:31 criticizes the followers of previous religions for taking their ulama as *rabb.* This does not indicate, of course, that they had taken them as God, but that they followed their ulama's *bid`ah* (unjustifiable innovation) blindly. So, the followers should be allowed to ask the ulama for the criteria of their fatwas, and the ulama should not be regarded as being beyond question and challenge.
26. See, for example, Hirst, *Moral Education.*
27. Halstead, "Islamic Concept of Education," 525.
28. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* (Oxford: 1951).
29. The distinction between *fact* and *value* was revived by Moor in the twentieth century. See G. E. Moor, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903 [1956]). He claimed that value cannot be considered as an objective reality and referred to it as a "naturalistic fallacy." In his later works, Moor gave a more considerable role to facts in values, but viewed it as a non-natural characteristic that supervenes on facts. See G. E. Moor, *Philosophical Studies* (New York: Humanities Press, 1922 [1951]). In other words, value is regarded as an epiphenomenon. See Nicholas Capaldi, *The Enlightment Project in the Analytic Conversation* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1998), 320.
30. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* tr. T. Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1985) 3:1144, b, 14-22.
31. R. Harré, *Personal Being* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 244.
32. P. Feyerabend, (1981). "How To Defend Society against Science," in *Scientific Revolutions*, ed. I. Hacking (Oxford University Press: 1981), 119-21.
33. Ibid., 129.

www.icsbook.info

Review Essay

Contours of an Islamo-Christian Civilization

Books Reviewed: Jack Goody, *Islam in Europe.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004; Richard W. Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2004; James A. Bill and John Alden Williams, *Roman Catholics and Shi'i Muslims: Prayer, Passion, and Politics.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

There can be no doubt that the twenty-first century has begun – and continues – under the ominous cloud of enmity between Muslim groups or nations and western ones, from the attacks on American soil on 11 September 2001 to those in Madrid and London, to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and now in the growing tension with Iran. Unsurprisingly, this has spurred a mushrooming of publications on the troubled relations between "Islam and the West," with almost every book pointing out the bold Christian rhetoric emanating from a militarily aggressive White House.

Kenneth Cragg, the veteran Christian expositor of the Qur'an, more prolific than ever in his nineties (seven titles since 2002), astutely named one of his latest books *The Qur'an and the West* (Georgetown University Press: 2006). Not only is "Islam" misleading in terms of the wide diversity of cultures, sects, and spiritualities inspired by the Qur'an and the Hadith literature, but for Cragg, Muslims in today's globalized world, whether living as "exiles" in the West or within Muslim-majority states, will have to choose between the vulnerable faith proclaimed in the early years in Makkah and the religion *cum* political rule exemplified by the Prophet in Madinah. As usual, Cragg also challenges the Christian side, which, in its American incarnation, largely rationalizes the use of power to extend its hegemony from Israel-Palestine to Central Asia in the name of democracy.

Though all three books under review here share Cragg's motivation to reduce tension and foster greater understanding between Muslims and Christians, only the third (on Shi`ites and Catholics) represents the kind of theological dialogue that Cragg and others have nourished over the years.

www.icsbook.info

The thread running through this review is that the urgent task of breaking down stereotypes and building peace between Muslims and Christians needs the contribution of people on both sides, a contribution graced with a breadth of scholarly expertise and solid commitment.

Jack Goody is a Cambridge emeritus professor of social anthropology with a string of publications to his name, mostly related to West Africa but also touching on general themes of modernity, culture, and economics. Richard Bulliet is another veteran scholar, a Middle East historian at Columbia University. The authors of *Roman Catholics and Shi`i Muslims* are not theologians: James Bill teaches political science and international studies at the College of William and Mary, while John Williams (at the same college) is professor emeritus of the Humanities in Religion and an Islamicist. Each one brings an array of analytical tools to the task of "de-othering" Muslims for Christians and vice versa. Together, they mount a solid case for the internal and external congruence of a Muslim-Christian alliance for human betterment in an irreversibly interconnected world.

Islam in Europe is a deliberate rebuttal of the current western reflex to see in Islam the faith of backward and violent people. Of his four chapters, the first one, "Past Encounters," is by far the longest (100 pages). In it, he provides a great deal of historical information to support his thesis that from the eighth century onward, Muslims have always been present in Europe, contributing handsomely to European civilization in the fields of science, literature, philosophy, medicine, and the arts. Secular scholars too often either ignore or dismiss outright the religious dimension (p. 10). Goody writes that it is difficult for people with no personal faith to understand the power of religious ideas in shaping one's worldview and prioritizing action in society, whether individually or collectively. Naturally, faith convictions coalesce with other factors determined by time, location, and culture; they are crucial nonetheless. Witness the staying power of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union or the impact of Islam on the resistance fighters in Afghanistan in the 1980s or today in Chechnya.

Goody sees the "long and massive" Islamic penetration of Europe along three historical fronts: 1) the Arab/Berber invasions of Europe, "the southern thrust," mostly completed in the first Islamic century; 2) the Ottoman Turks ("the middle way"), who began their westward conquest of Europe after the fall of Constantinople (1453); and 3) "the northern entry" by the Mongol Tartars into the Ukraine (1240) on the heels of "a millennia-old stream of Ural-Altaic and Turkic-speaking peoples coming into Europe from the steppes of Central Asia" (p. 49). In light of this pervasive influence, the (rather late) concept of a "Christian Europe" should be reexamined, con-

www.icsbook.info

structed as it was, at least in part, by opposition to the Muslim "other," easily its equal militarily and much more formidable culturally during the medieval period. Europe, after all, is part of the Eurasian landmass, open to a multitude of influences, and foremost to those of the three Near Eastern religions: first Judaism, then Christianity, and finally Islam. All three have "equal entitlements to be present" (p. 14).

That first chapter offers the reader a plethora of details on these main Islamic thrusts into Europe, while Goody the anthropologist consults a wide range of historical sources. It reads well generally, but the author is at his best when recounting the literary and cultural impact from the southern front, for example, the translation into European languages of Arabic *adab* (etiquette) and wisdom literature and the central role played by animal fables (probably originating in India) in monastic literature and eventually in Chaucer's works. The *Chanson de Roland*, corresponding to the first Crusade and revolving around the legend of Charlemagne and his battles with the Muslims, is but one sample of medieval *chansons de geste* literature, which, together with the influence of the *Arabian Nights*, gave rise to an abundant European romance literature.

Contrary to popular wisdom, love poetry was not the invention of twelfth-century European troubadours. Ibn Hazm (beyond his other literary contributions) and other Muslim poets had been composing chivalric verse long before this. Poets crossed over from Spain to Provence and beyond, and so did singing girls "sent as gifts by Muslim rulers to their Christian counterparts" (p. 72). Courts both Muslim and Christian looked strangely alike by the fourteenth century. Add to this the vigorous commercial trading between both sides as well as an almost continuous exchange of ambassadors and you have an entirely different picture of "Islam in Europe" from the conventional one.

Goody's last three chapters also merit close attention. The first, "Bitter Icons and Ethnic Cleansing," seeks to deconstruct the notion of *ethnic cleansing*, which has more to do with religion than *ethnicity*, and the *cleansing* part, which has, sadly, been an integral part of human history from time immemorial. Next he examines the issue of Islamic terrorism (chapter 3). *Terrorism*, a term first applied to the Jacobins during the French Revolution and defined as the tactic of those who resist the monopoly of force in the modern state, has been practiced by many groups, including Jews in 1930s Palestine: "The terrorists then became the legitimate government" (p. 134). But if terrorism is defined chiefly as the killing of non-combatants, then how can pre-emptive military strikes (i.e., Iraq in 2003) not be labeled as "terrorist"?

www.icsbook.info

Finally, the last chapter returns to the theme of icons, those representations of religious exemplars and concepts in language and art, as well as a long-standing interest of Goody's. Although his point that all major religions (including Buddhism and the Brahman class in Hinduism) started off with serious doubts about the use of representation in whatever medium is certainly valid, it may not be the most germane to his overall argument. The Taliban's destruction of the Buddhist statues in Bamyan or their banning of cinemas (as was done to the theater in Puritan England) may be manifestations of an anti-iconic fundamentalist religion; however, this issue hardly represents the major barrier between Muslims and Christians today.

On another note, some Muslim names are wrongly transliterated – thus *Naṣrallāh* instead of the *Naṣārā*, "Nazarenes" as used in the Qur'an (p. 148); Ibn Taymuyah instead of Ibn Taymiyya (p. 150). Also the Shi`ite passion play (developed quite late) was about Husayn's killing, not his father Ali's (p. 155).

Richard Bulliet offers an excellent historico-cultural apologetic for Muslim-Christian understanding – another scholarly work made accessible to a wide audience. For him, the dramatic flare-up of hostilities between Muslim and Christian counterparts since 2001 makes the task of arguing that "the case for Islamo-Christian civilization" is just as plausible as the recent slogan of "Judeo-Christian civilization" (1950s) – and all the more urgent. It is high time to "retire from public discourse" the "clash of civilizations" thesis, with all of its Islamophobic undertones (p. 9): "Civilizations that are destined to clash cannot seek together a common future" (p. 5).

Bulliet also seeks to undercut the condescending western attitude of demanding that Muslims pass various litmus tests before they can be admitted into civilizational membership – "civilization" defined, of course, by western values with secularism at the top of the list. What is needed is a retelling of history, a "master narrative" that sidelines the current one, which sees only fourteen centuries of fearful conflict and harbors the notion that "there is something 'wrong' with Islam" (p. 13). By contrast, his own historical narrative reveals Latin Christians and Middle Eastern Muslims as partakers of a "common socioreligious system" embarked for eight centuries on a comparable trajectory of development that, at certain points, virtually overlapped (p. 15). These "sibling societies" faced similar challenges in the thirteenth century, yet responded differently and acted "like fraternal twins that are almost indistinguishable in childhood but have distinctive ... personalities as adults" (p. 16).

Among the highlights of Muslim-Christian expansion, both scriptural traditions (Latin Christians and Muslims from North Africa to Central Asia)

www.icsbook.info

begin to enlarge their regional grip by converting alien populations. While Muslims found this task considerably lightened by the majority presence of monotheistic peoples (Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians) who also had in common a Hellenistic culture with many key texts already translated into a Semitic language (Syriac), the Latins faced formidable obstacles in communicating the gospel to polytheists who had no sacred scriptures, whether from Scandinavia, the British Isles, Germany, Poland, or France. Additionally, starting in the ninth century, both communities "mirrored one another in the rapid growth of bodies of religious specialists" (p. 24): the rise of monasticism with the founding of the Benedictine Order and, on the Muslim side, the increased role played by the ulama (experts in religious knowledge).

With his other three chapters, Bulliet deals less with history and more with its interpretation. In his second chapter, "What Went Wrong?," he challenges the assumptions made famous by Bernard Lewis in his book by that title. Such a question implies a comparative perspective, he notes, and, importantly, an objective standard by which to judge the "failure" of Muslim countries to live up to the West's economic, political, and social vitality. The fact is that neither side followed a blueprint to get to where they are now. Europe stumbled on its present course through political and industrial revolutions. Muslims had leaders, such as Muhammad Ali (d. 1849) in Egypt and Kemal Atatürk (d. 1938) in Turkey, who believed that closing the power gap between them and Europe or the United States mandated the implementation of western-style secular policies. Yet Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966) was not unique in concluding that the West was decadent and that only the Qur'an and the Sunnah held the secret to the Muslim ummah's ultimate prosperity.

Through a wealth of examples, Bulliet argues that precisely those Muslims who most wanted to copy the West were also the most "consumed with dreams of unlimited personal power" (p. 60). From the Ottoman sultan Abdülhamit II (d. 1918), Syria's Hafez al-Asad (d. 2000), and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak to the monarchs of Jordan, Morocco, and the Persian Gulf, all sought greater independence from western control while tightening their grip on power and exploiting western know-how and finance as best they could. In that sense, the question might be: "What went right?"

Yet here again, a better understanding might come from an Islamo-Christian civilizational perspective. In both societies, monarchs have always struggled to "expand their personal jurisdiction and limit religious jurisdiction" (p. 66). Latin Christendom experienced repeated conflicts between crown and church until the worst of the Protestant-Catholic wars were settled in 1648, with religion being subjected to rulers within their national boundaries. The Muslim world's ulama, though weaker than their Christian

www.icsbook.info

counterparts, succeeded over the centuries in keeping their rulers in check by a combination of popular appeal and religious posturing. The Shari`ah, after all, laid out specific checks and balances on political power.

Thus, whereas in recent history the West sharply divided church and state, Muslim lands continue to demonstrate a "religious resurgence" that often threatens their autocratic rulers. Having just emphasized this deeply ingrained reflex of Muslim populations to turn to religious leaders in times of crisis, Bulliet, paradoxically, argues that secular turning points profoundly dilute people's religious fervor. He rests his case by monitoring the frequency of religious names in specific periods of time (see his appendix on "Quantitative Onomastics"), because these illustrate parents' common attitudes about future trends.

According to him, the American revolution, the state-sponsored reforms in Turkey (*tanẓīmāt*), and the reign of Reza Shah in Iran "triggered long-term declines in religious naming" (p. 78). If anything, the Iranian revolution accelerated this declining trend. Bulliet, it seems to me, is less than clear in explaining the paradox between an observable resurgence of religion and the phenomenon of parents betting on a secular future, especially in view of his conclusion: the challenge is for Muslims to transform the "Islam against tyranny" reflex into a constructive dialogue with contemporary democratic and economic models.

This interest in the emerging trends of Islamic sociopolitical thought is carried out in the last chapter "The Edge of the Future," in which he argues that considering the vast diversity of movements in Islam's past and the tendency for change to come from "the edge" (away from the centers of power and orthodoxy), we should expect that new Islamic movements that have not yet appeared are likely to provide profound and creative solutions to the present turmoil caused by jihadists and hard-line religious autocrats. Bulliet's historical acumen deserves close reading here, even when he ventures into the future. It must also be read with the preceding chapter in mind and the revelation of his own intellectual journey as a scholar of Middle East studies (and past executive secretary of the Middle East Studies Association [MESA]). He states that western scholars should attempt to break the destructive habit of intellectuals and politicians, both of whom seek to find "people they can love" in this region (because they believe and act as they do). In view of this Islamo-Christian civilization that has nurtured us over the centuries, urges Bulliet, we should let our Muslim side work out its own solutions to the church-state puzzle in peace.

The third book under review brings us full circle. Bill and Williams bring together the largest Christian denomination (Catholicism) and a ven-

www.icsbook.info

erable Islamic tradition (Shi`ism, and specifically, the Twelvers), that is particularly in the limelight today because of Iran and Iraq. This is a Cragg-like project, at least in the sense that theological issues take priority. The goal is straightforward: to contribute to a "community of civilizations" (p. 3) by highlighting the common ground between the two traditions. The book's cover displays a dramatic moment in Shi`ite-Catholic rapprochement: President Khatami's meeting with Pope John Paul II during the former's visit to Rome. Whether it was Khatami's words about commonality and reconciliation or the Pope's blessing of the Muslim delegation, the encounter was indeed a harbinger of more dialogue to come.

Broadly stated, the book is organized around five common foci: saints and intercessors (chapter 3); redemptive suffering and martyrdom (chapter 4); the common threads among Catholic mysticism and Sufism (chapter 5); shared and contrasting attitudes toward law and the state (chapter 6); and, finally, the same applied to issues of social justice, religious authority, and modern polity (chapter 7).

At the same time, this an ideal textbook for the religion classroom: a seamless and readable text (with minimal notes) by two seasoned scholars in their field; an introductory chapter covering both faiths; a detailed presentation of Shi`ite history, including notes on all twelve imams; a useful three-page glossary of Shi`ite terms; and, as in both previous books, a selected bibliography and index. More than that, they present us with an excellent case study of comparative religion – all the more dramatic because, likely due to our media biases, it is unexpected. In fact, the common ground between these two traditions is spectacular. For example, Jesus (in both faiths) and Imam Husayn (in Shi`ite Islam) are considered sinless: "They both led simple lives and suffered poverty and hardship" (p. 48). Even their passion and the voluntary sacrifice of their lives achieved cosmic significance for their followers. Although Husayn was not known as a warrior, more than anything else he exemplified the quality of one who is *maẓlūm* (wronged), who refuses to fight back not out of cowardice, but "because of generosity and forbearance" (p. 49). Both deaths are considered "redemptive," in that their suffering achieved a "great spiritual victory" and "helped cleanse the world of injustice, tyranny, and corruption and set a great example for their followers" (p. 50). Certainly in comparison to Sunni Islam, the parallel is striking.

Yet stopping at that point may prove misleading, for "redemptive" in the Christian sense goes much further than that. As John the Baptist puts it, Jesus is "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Shi`ites, although more attuned to redemptive suffering than their Sunni counterparts, recoil from the doctrine of Christ's atonement for human sin.

www.icsbook.info

As a theologian, Cragg would have unpacked the issue further. Just the same, the commonalities are remarkable.

Consider the parallel between Mary and Sayyida Fatima (the Prophet's daughter, Ali's wife, and the mother of Hasan and Husayn): both are considered sinless, acting as models of devotion and spirituality; both lived lives of suffering, especially through their sons' martyrdom; and both, through their intercessory powers, represent "critical links in the divine chain that connects the human and the divine" (p. 55). Other important linkages between Catholicism and Shi`ism include the Imams' intercessory role and the spiritual power that emanates from the many *imāmzādas* (tombs of lesser saints); a strong mystical current; a relatively strong emphasis on reason in the tension between faith and reason – both value philosophy; "the normative nature of politics, politics based on systems of law from divine precepts" (p. 135); and an overriding concern for the downtrodden and the necessity of social justice and equality.

Above all, it is the shared theme of redemptive suffering that acts as a fulcrum for the human dilemma in the religious sphere: the inner element (*bāṭin* [esoteric] as opposed to *ẓāhir* [exoteric]) is "the power of love, sacrifice, and redemption" (p. 144). Yet in the world of politics, where no magic wand can wave away corruption, greed, and injustice, religious leaders seek to establish structures that will minimize the impact of human wrongdoing and seek the good – above all for the poor and the oppressed – as in Latin America's liberation theology and the Middle East's populist Shi`ism.

The authors' last sentence could serve as an apt summary of the books reviewed here: "At this time in history, it is important that the widely diverse world communities and cultures strive to communicate with, tolerate and, most important, understand one another" (p. 146). In useful and complementary ways, all three of these works break down the dangerous prejudices of our day and bring Muslims and Christians several steps closer to investing together their religious faith for the betterment of humanity.

David Johnston
Visiting Scholar, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

www.icsbook.info

Formations of the Secular

Talal Asad
Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003. 269 pages.

This most interesting and ground-breaking study presents a Foucauldian and Nietzschean genealogical tracing of the concept of the *secular*, working back from the present to the contingencies that have coalesced to produce current certainties. It asks what an "anthropology of secularism" might look like and examines the connection between the "secular" as an epistemic category and "secularism" as a political doctrine. Asad attempts to avoid the trap of making pronouncements about secularism's virtues and vices, irrespective of its origin, and to proffer instead an anthropological formulation of its doctrine and practice.

According to the author, secularism is more than a mere separation of religious from secular institutions of government, for it presupposes new concepts of religion, ethics, and politics; as well as the new imperatives associated with them, and is closely linked to the emergence of the modern nation-state (pp. 1-2). In contrast to pre-modern mediations of non-transcended local identities, secularism is a redefining, transcending, and differentiating political medium (representation of citizenship) of the self, articulated through class, gender, and religion (p. 5).

Concomitantly, he questions the *secular's* self-evident character even when admitting the reality of its "presence" (p. 16). His main premise is that "the secular" is conceptually prior to the political doctrine of secularism, the secular being that formation caused by a variety of concepts, practices, and sensibilities that have come together over time (p. 16). He concludes that the "secular" cannot be viewed as the "rational" successor to "religion," but rather as a multilayered historical category related to the major premises of modernity, democracy, and human rights.

Within the above introductory framework, the book's seven chapters are divided into three parts. The first part, comprising three chapters, explores the epistemic category of the *secular*. The following three chapters of part 2

www.icsbook.info

examine the doctrinal aspects of *secularism*. Finally, chapter 7 investigates the legal and ethical *secularization* process during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Egypt. Chapter 1, which attempts to clarify what is involved in the anthropology of secularism, explores the secular's epistemological assumptions, focusing on the notion of a Christian and liberal "redemptive" myth that is so central to the modern idea of enchantment (pp. 16 and 25). His purpose here is to counter the impression that secular political practices simulate religious ones by arguing that the sacred and the secular depend upon each other, rather than one coming after the other (p. 26).

Chapters 2 and 3 discuss agency, pain, and cruelty in relation to embodiment, thereby addressing such questions as how attitudes to the human body, which incorporate dimensions of pain and enjoyment as well as structures of human senses, differ in various forms of life. Agency is designated as relevant because a better understanding may be offered as to how "the religious" and "the secular" are continuously formed and re-formed by knowing how, by whom, and in what context it is defined and used (p. 99). Pain, connected to agency and the sense of passion, is associated with religious subjectivity (often regarded as adverse to reason) and with suffering, a condition that secular agency purports to eliminate universally (p. 67).

The agent, in the secular viewpoint, represents and asserts himself. He is empowered. Failing so, he becomes the victim of chance and cruelty – of pain (p. 79). This argument is extended into chapter 3, which reflects on premodern and modern understandings and conceptions of cruelty and torture, thus suggesting that the idea of cruelty in modern discourse has distinctive characteristics that can be described as aspects of the secular (p. 100). In fact the secular, despite its own distinct forms of cruelty, claims that both cruelty and torture are manifestations of inhumane and uncivilized behavior. This is why both tend to frequently take secretive deniable forms as opposed to premodern public spectacles of power projection.

This "secular," as the second part seeks to argue, claims to redeem the autonomous human subject through the legal and ethical structure of human rights. In this respect, the latter constitutes an aspect of secularism as a political doctrine. Yet there remain inherent contradictions in this secular doctrine based on the assumption of the "human," on which human rights stand: "Nothing essential to a person's human essence is violated if he or she suffers as a consequence of military action or of market manipulation from beyond his own state when that is permitted by international law." In other words, human suffering as a state's citizen is distinguished from the suffering he or she experiences as a human being (p. 129).

www.icsbook.info

This is further reflected in chapter 5, which discusses the case of Muslim religious minorities in Europe. Asad argues that Muslims tend to fail to integrate into European societies not necessarily due to reasons intrinsic to their faith, as many do argue, but due to Europe's very self-conception. European notions of "culture," "civilization," and "the secular state," as well as "majority" and "minority," make it extremely difficult for Muslims to be represented satisfactorily (p. 159). This is particularly so when the modern nation-state, a European historical construction subsequently universalized, has come to make an enforced claim to the constitution of legitimate social identities and arenas (p. 200). From this, chapter 7 finally traces how the European secular experience came to be universalized as a process, through transformations undertaken in the arenas of state law and morality, the case of Egypt being a conspicuous example.

Asad's work, however, despite its profound depth, seems to fall a step short of sufficiently addressing the relationship between the religious and the secular. The continuous and fluid redefinitions of both over time tend to mystify concepts and categories away from the existence of essences. This is why he could state that the sharp separation between both categories goes hand-in-hand with the paradoxical claim that the secular continuously produces the religious (p. 193). Asad seems to ignore or reject outright any possibility of a universal definition or *essence* that could still underscore the relationship between both, for it cannot always simply be a matter of each category being made and re-made. There must be some essence that defines some unchanging relationship between the religious and the secular. Perhaps this *essence* is what is missing in Asad's work. Having said so, Asad's brilliant study remains a defining piece of intellectual and scholarly contribution for all of those interested in exploring the religious and the secular in the modern era.

Amr G. E. Sabet
Department of Public Management
Vaasa University, Vaasa, Finland

Stolen Youth: The Politics of Israel's Detention of Palestinian Children

Catherine Cook, Adam Hanieh, and Adah Kay
London and Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, in association with Defence for Children International: Palestine Section, 2004. 197 pages.

The subject of child detention is fraught with complexities of both a legal and an emotional nature, particularly when placed in the context of conflict.

www.icsbook.info

Founded on the Defence for Children International: Palestine Section's (DCI/PS) work conducted between 1999 and 2003, the contributors developed a level of expertise in the realm of youth detention in Israeli prisons through research, advocacy work, and the experiences of their colleagues, many of whom were former child detainees. The result is a compelling and often disquieting read, replete with testimonies by the children, their families, and lawyers which relates the unforgiving conditions and obstacles that clutter the legal process and place the child at a disadvantage.

Edifying and cogent, the authors maintain an objective narrative throughout, thereby enabling the reader to absorb the circumstances and legal framework prior to constructing an independent conclusion. In addition, the tables, graphs, and figures corroborate and clarify such subjects as Israeli position abuse (*shabeh*), the characteristics of prisons, and key terms related to human rights and humanitarian law, as well as a glossary that provides background information concerning the noted organizations, statutes, and terminologies.

Composed of three sections, each of which addresses a distinct stage of the detention process, the book's lucid flow introduces the political environment and military court system through part 1, "Framework and Context," along with the legal instruments and definitions of torture according to Article 1 of the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Article 7.2e of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Part 2, "Arrest through Incarceration," explores the methods employed during the arrest of children and their access to legal assistance. It also assesses the levels of abuse in comparison to those of the first Intifada and the Oslo years. Part 3, "Analysis and Conclusions," ends the book by analyzing of the relationship between international law and the Israeli legal system, insofar as institutionalized discrimination exists untouched by international intervention, and an overview of Israel's human rights record.

For many children, the nightmare begins before they even enter the courtroom. In chapter 5, "Arrest and Transfer," the arrest – whether at home or at the scene of the alleged offense – is portrayed vividly through the children's accounts. Murad Abu Judeh, a seventeen-year-old male resident of al-Arroub refugee camp in Hebron district, relates:

> We heard a very loud knock on the door ... fifteen soldiers entered the house, three of them were masked and wearing civilian clothes. One of the masked soldiers asked me my name and for my ID card. I went to my room in order to bring the ID and one of the soldiers followed me. When I bent over to get the key for my drawer he kicked me on my back six times, pushing me to the ground. He searched my drawer, then grabbed

www.icsbook.info

> me by my neck and took me back to the main room where I found the soldiers had upturned our furniture. The masked soldier whispered in my ear, "We'll rape you one by one." (p. 53 [DCI/PS case file, 17A/2001])

On 20 February 2003, fifteen-year-old Riham Musa was shot several times by Israeli soldiers after being accused of an attempted stabbing:

> They opened fire on me and I was hit in the stomach, although I didn't fall to the ground. I kept standing in the same spot, not moving, so that they would stop shooting. However, another soldier shot me in the leg and then I fell to the ground. (p. 56)

Riham was subsequently taken to the hospital for surgery and shackled to her hospital bed for twenty days, a measure that drew extensive criticism from physicians and human rights movements.

Chapter 6, "Interrogation and Detention," and chapter 8, "State Violence and Discrimination," portray the reality that confronts children following their arrest. Often duped into signing false confessions (the legal documents are presented in Hebrew), children discover that instead of signing a release form, they have, as in the case of one child, signed a confession form to nine charges and are subsequently sentenced to three months imprisonment, along with an additional nine-months suspended sentence for three years and a 2,000 NIS/US$ 425 fine.

Once detained, the child is powerless to the point that even his/her bodily functions are controlled by the Israeli police or military, since "detainees are not allowed to use the toilet and are forced to relieve themselves while fully clothed in the presence of others" (p. 81). According to the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT): "The aim of torture is not to kill the victim, but to break down the victim's personality" (p. 9 [Facts About Torture, www.icrt.org]). From *shabeh* to the control of bodily functions, the contributors repeatedly exhibit the array of means in which a child character's can be diminished.

The definition of "child" is greatly disputed in the context of the Israeli military court system. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is any individual under the age of eighteen years; yet for the Israeli military court system, this is negotiable. Birgitta Elfstrom, from the Swedish Section of the International Commission of Jurists, notes: "The [Israeli military] court's definition of a child is a person who hasn't yet reached the age of 14. A child between 14 and 16 'is a big child' and if more than 16, an adult" (p. 27).

www.icsbook.info

This interpretation is further obscured by regulations that permit only family members of sixteen years and over in possession of an ID card to attend court hearings. Thus, a child of fourteen is of an age

> ... where he may be arrested by heavily armed Israeli soldiers in the middle of the night, face torture, be brought before a military court, and sentenced to many months in prison for the alleged offence of throwing stones, yet his 15-year-old brother isn't considered mature enough to attend his trial. (p. 28)

The authors' endeavour to provide an analysis of the manner in which the human rights discourse can be woven into a larger discussion of the political motivations behind rights abuses is neatly met. In addition, the numerous elucidating case studies enable *Stolen Youth* to be not only a contribution toward studies of the region's legal infrastructure in relation to international law, but also a commendable effort to encourage a wider comprehension of Israel's detention system and its implications for the Palestinian population.

K. Luisa Gandolfo
Ph.D. Candidate, Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies
University of Exeter, United Kingdom

Islam, Memory, and Morality in Yemen: Ruling Families in Transition

Gabriele vom Bruck
New York: Palgrave, 2005. 348 pages.

The anthropological literature on Yemen has had little to say about the class of *sādah* (plural of *sayyid*) who dominated the Zaydi imamate in North Yemen from the tenth century until 1962. Gabriele vom Bruck's account of the *sādah*, based on interviews and an extended stay in Yemen starting in 1983, includes a wide range of information on perceptions of this class, especially after the 1962 revolution, with an emphasis on how personal identity is established and attitudes about marriage with non-*sādah*. There is an extensive bibliography of western sources, but little indication of the wide range of relevant Arabic sources available. It should be noted that vom Bruck almost totally ignores the *sādah* of southern Yemen as well as of the Tihama, although her text sometimes reads as if it were describing a generic class of *sādah* for Yemen as a whole.

www.icsbook.info

The author's stated goal is "to examine the relationship of experience, social practice, and moral reasoning among the hereditary elite in the context of revolutionary change" (p. 5). Her theoretical focus is on the social process of remembrance as the *sādah* were forced into new roles after the imamate's demise. Vom Bruck argues that we should avoid "a monolithic understanding of sayyid as a 'vessel of charisma' and 'paragon of piety'" (p. 250) and suggests that the "descent metaphor" (p. 6) was the "principle self-defining criterion" of the *sādah* as well as the "core of the Imamate's political culture" (p. 6). However, the idiom of descent has also been the defining feature of Yemen's tribes, so the role of descent *per se* is less relevant as a distinguishing marker than how the *sādah* relate to other social categories.

Although the relationship with tribesmen is mentioned at several points, it is not analyzed in depth apart from anecdotal evidence. For example, it is highly problematic to label musicians *al-akhdām* (p. 44), who were actually quite rare in Zaydi towns and villages, a nuanced pariah category. There is little sense of how the *sādah* fit into actual communities, and no effective integration of the available literature previously published on Yemeni social categories (including Tomas Gerholm's *Market, Mosque, and Mafraj* [Stockholm University Press: 1977] and Eduard Glaser's important late-nineteenth century articles).

The first chapter, "The House of the Prophet," is a rambling account of the Zaydi school's origins with a focus on Sanaa. The author, an ethnographer by training, relies on derivative sources for her understanding of Zaydi Islam, most notably the work of Wilfred Madelung, rather than probing the many available Arabic texts. For example, a paragraph (p. 37) on the first Yemeni Zaydi imam, Yahya ibn al-Husayn, cites four English references and ignores a valuable printed Arabic biography (`Ali ibn Muhammad ibn `Abid al-`Abbasi al-`Alawi, *Sīrat al-Hādī ilā al-Ḥaqq Yahyā ibn al-Ḥusayn* [Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1972]). Her decision (p. 275, note 9) not to examine the extensive literature of published memoirs and officially sponsored publications on the 1962 revolution makes it very difficult for the reader to make any kind of informed judgment on the informants' comments. Moreover, her book, with multiple references by informants to the perceived history of the *sādah* in Yemen, would benefit from a systematic comparison with the historical tradition.

A major problem is that the information provided is mostly anecdotal and is not placed within the social context. The Yemeni informants' recollections are fascinating, but the result is more a journalistic account than a substantive ethnographic analysis. This is the case in chapter 4, which is an interesting story about three individuals but contains no analysis. Another example is

www.icsbook.info

mujtahid Sayyid `Abd al-Qadir's lengthy autobiographical note (pp. 114-19), which mentions his textbooks and teachers, his focus in training, relations with the imam's family, and judiciary appointments. Unfortunately, this information is barely analyzed. The thriving Yemeni biographical genre, which should have been of great value, is virtually ignored, even though this genre, in large part, validates the virtues of past notables in elite families.

One of the main methodological failures is the lack of detail on how the material was collected. There are many examples of extensive quotes from interviews (e.g., Sayyid al-Mansur on pp. 36-37) but the Arabic is not provided and there is no indication of how these were translated or by whom. Were recordings made? Were the interviews written down by hand, as indicated for some examples? Were the translations done in the field with help from Yemeni informants? At times, the quote has a vague attribution such as "a governor's daughter" (p. 59), "a friend" (p. 109), "a diplomat" (p. 181), "a university lecturer" (p. 191), and "a businessman" (p. 213). The author does not explain why so many informants are not named, while intimate details are given of some of the major families. Indeed, the author provides a list (pp. 256-68) of professional histories for two major families, but does not analyze them in the narrative.

It is also sometimes unclear where or when the information was gathered. Although at one point the author says she lived in a village given the fictitious name of Falih (p. xiii), there is no indication of a village context (apart from mentioning that she stayed with a family) or the actual length of her stay there, and it barely figures in the narrative. What does it mean to be "working in Falih" (p. 160), when we have no data on the community's size or social make-up? Where were most of the many interviews carried out, especially given the focus on male respondents? The issue of how she functioned as a single female researcher among males from the elite is not discussed, apart from an acknowledgment that men "figure more prominently" (p. 24) in her study than women. The lack of attention to the methods used compromises the material's usefulness for comparative purposes.

While the book contains a lot of valuable information, I cannot recommend it for use in a classroom. As an ethnographic account, it has serious methodological flaws, for it largely relies on anecdotal evidence and thus lacks the reflexivity and analysis needed to contextualize the stories. Students would find it tedious to sift through the many stories and be disappointed at the brief conclusion. There is little theoretical innovation, despite quotes from a myriad of critical scholars.

Given the importance of history in the *sādah* identity, the author could have consulted the wide range of relevant Arabic sources, especially the

www.icsbook.info

biographical genre and memoirs on the 1962 revolution. The reader interested in the Zaydi school will find little of their doctrines and legal thinking. Those who know something about Yemen can use the book with caution, but other readers should perhaps look elsewhere.

Daniel Martin Varisco
Chair, Department of Anthropology
Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York

The Kemalists: Islamic Revival and the Fate of Secular Turkey

Muammer Kaylan
Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2005. 482 pages.

The range of titles in Prometheus Books' "Islamic Studies" section is quite intriguing. According to its webpage, this "leading publisher in philosophy, popular science, and critical thinking" appears to be dedicated to covering Islamic-related topics of interest in a comprehensive manner for a post-9/11 western audience. Recnet publications include*The Legacy of Jihad: Islamic Holy War and the Fate of Non-Muslims* (the author is a professor of medicine), *The Myth of Islamic Tolerance* (authored by the "director of Jihad Watch"), and *Leaving Islam: Apostates Speak Out* and *Why I Am not a Muslim* (both by the notorious Ibn Warraq).

The book under review fits into this series due to its apologetic character and narrow perspective on Islam – a perspective that sees political enunciations motivated by Islam as threatening and in direct contradiction to the (presumably universal) modern. The front book flap sets the tone and caters to a broad readership: "A clash of civilizations – between the secular traditions of the West and the fundamentalist Islamic revival in the East – has plunged the world into serious crisis."

First of all, it has to be stated that*The Kemalists* is neither an academic book nor an "Islamic Studies" book. It is filled with methodological problems and utterly incorrect statements about Islam. One particularly blatant example should suffice to make this point: On page 198, Kaylan lumps together as brotherhoods the "reactionary" Muslim Brotherhood, the "Shafis" (sic), the "Maliki Brotherhood," and the "liberal ... Melami and Bektashi brotherhoods" – apparently not understanding the differences between a modern Islamist movement, schools of law, and Sufi orders. To be fair, the author does not claim to be an Islamicist; however, it is disturbing to see how politically motivated treatises such as his gain publicity under an "Islamic Studies" label.

www.icsbook.info

Kaylan was a leading Turkish journalist from the early 1950s until 1970, when he abruptly left the country after receiving death threats following a strongly worded front-page editorial against then-president Süleiman Demirel (pp. 32-35, 265f.). He moved to the United States, where he has since worked as a freelance journalist for the daily newspapers *Aksam* and *Sabah*, as well as for Reuters News Agency. In the 1960s, the heyday of his journalistic career, Kaylan was editor-in-chief of the daily *Hürriyet*.

What Kaylan offers is a mixture between an autobiography and a political narrative of modern Turkey designed for a broad, predominantly non-Turkish, audience (although the book came out in Turkish in 2006). The title is misleading, insofar as "the Kemalists" are not treated in any systematic way. "The Islamists" would have been a more appropriate title. The first part, in which the author draws mostly on his memoirs, is the most compelling. It provides an inside perspective on the workings of Turkish journalism during politically strongly contested times. He offers an interesting look into the technicalities of Turkish news production. For example, he describes how, in the early 1950s, some older journalists still wrote in the Arabic script (which had been replaced by the Latin script in 1928) and how their texts had to be transliterated before they went into print (p. 100). Such accounts make Kaylan's memoirs a pleasurable read.

At the center of his narrative, however, is Turkish politics. Raised in a Kemalist and economically privileged family, Kaylan claims that his mother was Turkey's first female dentist (p. 46). Kaylan began his journalistic career in 1950, when the first democratic elections initiated a new political era: the religiously more conservative Democratic party was voted in, thereby ending twenty-seven years of one-party rule by the Republican People's party, which had been founded by Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk). In Kaylan's account, this event initiated a story of decline that reached its apex in November 2002, with the electoral victory of the Justice and Development party.

Kaylan is obsessed with the theme of decline. In his excursions into history, narrating the Turkish conquest of Anatolia as well as selected parts of Ottoman history, he follows the paradigm of Ottoman decline according to which, after the "enlightened sultan" Süleyman the Magnificent in the mid-sixteenth century, "Islamic fanatics ... [were] introducing a dark era of coarse fundamentalism" (p. 352). In Kaylan's view, this was temporarily halted by Atatürk, whose radical secularization and modernization politics following the Turkish War of Independence (1919-22) represent the apex of Turkish modernity. While he acknowledges that Atatürk, president of the new Turkish Republic from its inception in 1923 until his death in 1938,

www.icsbook.info

was a "ruthless but enlightened dictator" (p. 64), he supports Atatürk's vision of modern Turkey as a secular (in the Turkish context understood as "control of" rather than "freedom for" religion) and western country. In addition, he shares Atatürk's suspicion of Muslim networks, especially Sufi brotherhoods and other "sects," such as the diverse groups following the teachings of Said Nursi (1877-1960), whom he lumps together as the "Nur sect."

For Kaylan, modern Turkish history unfolds in an almost Manichean struggle between secularist Kemalists and "[t]he fundamentalist Islamic extremists bent on establishing orthodox Muslim regimes [that] daily menace the world with terrorism in their efforts to rid the world of secular traditions" (back flap cover). He shares Kemalism's anti-Islamic bias and operates with an essentialist notion of Islam: "Islam, influenced throughout the centuries by deviationist Arab and Iranian fundamentalists, is an unbendingly hard religion that rejects change. This is one of the reasons why I think it is difficult to modernize it or to turn it into an institution based on the rules of democracy" (p. 429).

Kaylan views the supporters of a stronger role for Islam in Turkish society, whom he labels without differentiation as "extremists," "radicals," "fundamentalists," or "reactionaries" (i.e., the anti-Kemalists), ad the enemy. In this worldview, modernity and Islam are incompatible. Accordingly, the Justice and Development government is employing *takiyye*, defined as "to give a wrong impression in order to mislead one's opponent, even to lie about one's real objectives and to behave hypocritically" (p. 421). Kaylan is further obsessed with the veil, which, for him, represents the "enslavement of the Muslim woman" (p. 323). The fact that a majority of the wives of the ruling party's parliamentarians wear the hijab appears to prove, at least to him, the party's anti-secular character (p. 420).

Unfortunately, the author makes no attempt to engage seriously with the concrete political program of any of the Islamically motivated groups he targets, nor does he show any interest in the motivation of those who constitute its base and who vote for its candidates. For him, political Islam's success is grounded in the secularist parties' corruption, and its success is reduced to a matter of deluding the people through false promises and systematic concealment of its leaders' real goal: establishing a non-democratic Shari`ah state.

Kaylan's perspective is thoroughly state-centered. Although he criticizes corruption and the lack of political freedom, he ultimately backs the state's authoritarian structure, embodied in the military's strong position, as a necessity in the face of the Islamic and Kurdish threats that it continues to face.

www.icsbook.info

This perspective reduces the Kurdish question to a matter of security/terrorism and simply ignores the contested issue of the Young Turks' massacres of Armenians, arguably the first genocide of the twentieth century.

Despite its apparent biases, I recommend this book to readers with a strong interest in Turkish politics during the 1950s and the 1960s. As a political journalist in close personal contact with the leading figures of Turkish politics and the media world, Kaylan is able to provide interesting background information about some of that time's political intrigues. I further recommend the book to everybody who would like to get an inside view of the Kemalist mindset, of which Kaylan's historical memoirs represent a classical example.

Markus Dressler
Religious Studies Department
Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York

Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History

David Arnold and *Stuart Blackburn, eds.*
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004. 323 pages.

Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History is edited by David Arnold (professor of South Asian history) and Stuart Blackburn (research associate), both of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London. The intellectual contributions of the editors and nine other distinguished scholars, all of whom belong to a range of academic disciplines, make this collection of eleven essays a remarkable and highly readable work on life histories – biographies, autobiographies, and oral accounts – from India. This volume grew out of the "Life Histories" project established at SOAS and out of various workshops held between 1998 and 2000 at SOAS, the London School of Economics, Oxford University, Cambridge University, and the British Library.

In their well-thought-out and written "Introduction," the editors explain why this volume was published. According to them, for a very long time the life history approach has been gaining wide acceptance among scholars belonging to various disciplines, such as women's studies and black studies, due to a "growing distrust of 'meta-narratives'" and a firm desire to "move towards a more nuanced, multi-stranded understanding of society and a greater recognition of the heterogeneity of human lives and lived experi-

www.icsbook.info

ence" (p. 5). Life histories provide an alternative, individualized, and culture-specific version of "truth" that can problematize and counter any of the naïve truth claims of meta-narratives.

However, until recently, scholars of India have been comparatively "neglectful" (p. 1) of life histories, although they are central to Indian religious texts, literature, and history. In general, South Asian scholars seldom employ the life history form as "genres worthy of systematic analysis" (pp. 3-4). According to Arnold and Blackburn, this general reluctance can be attributed to the paradigm of "collectivity," which was largely shaped by the nineteenth-century Orientalist approach and colonial ethnography that dominated South Asian scholarship for several decades.

From this perspective, India was always imagined as a society deeply conditioned by ties of caste, kinship, and religion, one in which notions of self and individual agency, as well as their literary expressions, were "subsumed within larger social and cultural domains" (p. 5). These essays explore a wide range of biographies, autobiographies, diaries, and oral stories in an attempt to counter this imagination and to analyze the interaction and negotiation there between collectivity and individuality. Life histories are valuable social documents for understanding notions of self, individual practices and intentions, and the importance of collectivities in South Asia.

The essays are organized into three parts based on their form and intent. The first part, "Confronting Modernity," contains three essays on the written life histories of "modern" individuals who were actively engaged with colonial modernity. Arnold's essay examines prison narratives, especially those written by Gandhi, Nehru, M. N. Roy, Jogesh Chandra Chatterji, V. D. Savarkar, and C. R. Rajagopalachari. According to him, the prison experience gave middle-class men and women who had been jailed by the British a unique opportunity for individualistic self expression.

In another essay, Francesca Orsini focuses on the writings of Mahadevi Varma (1907-87), a modern Indian woman who was eager to conceal her personal identity and reluctant to write about herself. Through her stories of other people's lives, however, we obtain a fragmented account of her own life history. Sudipta Kaviraj's essay explores the autobiography (*atmacarit*) of Sibnath Sastri, a nineteenth-century Bengali writer and religious reformer. Sastri's autobiography is a literary expression of a "modern" individual's invention of a private life.

The book's second part, "Translating Tradition," includes four brilliant essays on more traditional life history genres that do not conform to a conventional western pattern of autobiography. Metcalf analyzes Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya's *Aap Biitii*, a twentieth-century Muslim intellectual's

www.icsbook.info

memoirs, written in a "distinctive Indo-Persian cultural and literary tradition" (p. 11). Sylvia Vatuk, in another interesting essay, offers a gendered reading of the autobiography of Zakira Ghouse, a Hyderabadi Indian Muslim woman, which is "full of elliptical references to events that might have caused considerable offence if more fully explicated" (p. 16). David Shulman's essay is based on the Sanskrit biography of Ananda Ranga Pillai, an eighteenth-century Tamil politician, and identifies both the pre-modern and modern elements of this life history. Blackburn's essay throws fresh light on the collective telling of life history by analyzing two different genres of this practice in Tamil: historical ballads (*carita*) and folktales (*katha*).

The last part of the book, "Spoken Lives," features three essays on the oral life histories of socially marginalized and silenced peoples (e.g., women and Dalits) gathered through interviews, conversations, and listening in on other people's lives. These essays attempt to uncover lives and recover voices that otherwise might have eluded the attention of academic disciplines. Kirin Narayan's essay presents the life stories of middle-class, middle-aged women from Kangra and explains the "silences" attending women's life stories in India. Josiane Racine and Jean-Luc Racine elicit the life history of Viramma, an illiterate Tamil Dalit woman who died in 2002, to show how Dalits are silenced and how they can "speak." In the final essay, Jonathan Parry constructs the life story of Somavaru, a Bihari Satnami, who is reluctant to speak openly about emotions and feelings.

The book is a useful resource for all those involved in cultural and religious studies and those interested in such dominant themes of South Asian studies as gender, modernity, colonialism, nationalism, caste, kinship, folklore, and interaction between individual and community. It challenges the prevailing perception that Indian society is dominated by collectivities and that notions of self and individual agency are marginal to South Asian thinking and behavior. Instead, it argues that there has always been a constant interaction and negotiation between notions of self and community in India. The essays on Indian life stories in this volume, moreover, do not reveal a pattern of isolated, autonomous, individual selves, but rather a self within a network of family, kin, caste, religion, and gender. As life histories offer unique insights into the wider society of which an individual is a part, the book also argues that they are important resources for social science research in general and for South Asian society in particular.

Jose Abraham
Ph.D. Candidate, Institute of Islamic Studies
McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada

www.icsbook.info

Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel, and the Ottoman Harem

Reina Lewis
New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004. 297 pages.

In her book, Reina Lewis discusses how to acquire an accurate understanding of the various strands of neo-Orientalism that perpetuate long-lasting and contemporary stereotypes of Muslim women from traditional Islamic societies. Within the context of the current global and geopolitical landscape as well as the alleged American war on terror, the competing western imperialist and orientalist images, along with negative stereotypes, that characterize Muslim women are rhetorical. According to Lewis, all of these elements are at the center of knowledge that is produced and reproduced. This book focuses on Ottoman women's writing from the beginning of the twentieth century and traces their "travel accounts, memories, and fractions that reveal a gendered counter-discourse that challenges Occidental stereotypes" (p. 1). The author's main theme is how these writings not only challenged western Orientalist discourses, but also intervened in the Ottoman debate about women and national emancipation. The book, which follows an interdisciplinary approach, is divided into six chapters.

In her introduction, Lewis argues that postcolonial studies have been too paradigmatic and narrow to include Middle Eastern and particularly Turkish experiences, since most postcolonial theories focus on the South Asian experience. Her novel endeavor helps bridge this void in postcolonial studies. Also, she introduces "to postcolonial studies the specificities of the late Ottoman situation and bringing to the reading of Ottoman sources the critical perspectives of postcolonial and gender theory" (p. 5). Moreover, she brings to light some western women's writings, such as those of Grace Ellison and Lady Mary Wortley, who traveled to the East exploring the status of Middle Eastern women and, through their writings, tried to "challenge Western misapprehensions" of their status (p. 45).

In chapter 1, Lewis articulates the harem as a field of study and pays particular attention to the context in which its literature emerged. Lewis traces the history of the economic and cultural conditions that supported the emergence of this literature. Such understandings counter the misconceptions that persist in western academic discourses that silenced the Ottoman harem and disregarded its members' literary contributions. Intriguingly, this chapter highlights the role of the Anglo-American publishing industry in

www.icsbook.info

creating and circulating western and Middle Eastern women's harem narratives, which mostly perpetuate the stereotypes.

Lewis brings to light the Ottoman women's writing in which they addressed various topics, such as seclusion, the veil, and polygamy. By providing these women's bibliographical stitches, Lewis brilliantly illustrates their resistance to what they experienced and how they continued to work from within. However, I was hoping that later on in the book the author would expand on the limitations that Muslim feminists and women writers have dealt with since the turn of the twenty-first century.

In the third chapter, "Harem: Limits of Emancipation," Lewis highlights the harem's significant contribution to the Ottoman Empire's modernization and emancipation. She discusses how Ottoman women "conceptualised a specifically Eastern vision of emancipation and engaged in a clear-sighted evaluation of the relative merits of occidental liberation" (p. 97). While so much of what has been written casts the Ottoman harem, as well as its counterparts in Arab Muslim societies, in a negative light, Lewis challenges western understandings and provides poems and artifacts of the harem's contribution to emancipation. In this chapter, she captures how Ottoman women writers challenged or accommodated the stereotypical images held by outsiders and the restrictions within their home culture.

Throughout the fourth chapter, the author discusses how western women travellers to the Orient represented and eroticized the bodies of Ottoman women. Chapter 5 provides a sound account of the literal meaning of harem, which seems to be explained only rarely in the literature. In this chapter, Lewis provides not only a detailed explanation of the word but also its implications to western Orientalist scholarship. In the following chapter, she encompasses the Ottoman harem's historical artifacts, considers photographs to help understand issues of its inhabitants' dress and identity, and affirms that the veil controversy is not only confined to the West but is international. For this reason, she argues that "the analysis of the history of segregated life remains contentious both as part of postcolonial revisions of the past and in relation to reprises of the veil" (p. 268).

The book's uniqueness stems from its thematic emphasis on the diversity of Ottoman women. For instance, the study includes Ottoman women authors from different classes and ethnic positions. By emphasizing such factors, Lewis seeks to interrupt "some of the orthodoxies that have emerged in contemporary feminist post-colonial theory" (p. 4). Another aspect of the book's uniqueness is that it traces the East-West dialogue around Oriental women. This is an innovative perspective, because most of the scholarly

www.icsbook.info

work emphasizes the tension between East and West, especially in issues related to women's status.

Although Lewis is well aware that the Ottoman Empire represented the Islamic world at that time, she makes no serious attempt to explain how Islam, as the empire's dominant faith, affected the harem's writings and experiences. Despite this omission, I argue that Lewis successfully examines what is considered to be the limitation of Edward Said's seminal work on Orientalism. Feminist scholars have criticized Said for the gender-blindness of *Orientalism*. This gender-blindness refers, to a certain extent, to how Said's work ignores the centrality of sexuality and gender in Orientalist discourse. In his *Orientalism*, Said asserts that Orientalism is "an exclusively male province" (p. 207). In contrast, Lewis successfully explores its gendered aspect by providing an interesting critical analysis of women's autobiographies, writings, and interactions with their western counterparts.

Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel, and the Ottoman Harem is timely and a *sine qua non* for appreciating the complexity of feminism in Middle Eastern societies, which is overlooked in most of the available literature. The book is organized, detailed, provocative, and provides a critical and historical pioneering perspective into the harem literature within the context of western feminism and its relationships to the publishing industry. Therefore, it is most useful for feminist scholars and readers interested in feminism and feminist studies in Middle Eastern societies. This book is a major contribution to the field of Orientalism and postcolonial studies.

Amani Hamdan
Ph.D., Education Studies, Curriculum Studies and Pedagogy
University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario Canada

Burned Alive: A Victim of the Laws of Men

Souad (Judith S. Armbruster, tr.)
Great Britain: Bantam Press, 2004. 333 pages.

Burned Alive is the true story of Souad, a young Palestinian woman who survived an attempted honor killing carried out by her brother-in-law. This autobiography, documented by Marie-Thérèse Cuny and translated from the French by Judith S. Armbruster, is narrated in such a way that the readers can develop a familiarity with the complicated dimension of gender roles, the prevalence of asymmetrical standards of male and female moral-

www.icsbook.info

ity in misogynistic societies, and their impact on women. The plot develops in a way designed to inform the reader that honor killing, although outwardly practiced as a customary punishment for an illicit sexual relationship, is, in reality, a brutal form of female suppression.

The book, divided into five parts, covers two different stages of Souad's life. Now forty-five, the first phase of her life took place in a small West Bank village where, at the age of eighteen, she experienced the atrocity of an attempted honor killing because she had had premarital sexual relationships with a man. Through an aid worker named Jacqueline, Souad miraculously survived and was moved to Europe, where she began the second phase of her life. She now lives with a loving husband and three children, following her tryst with death, twenty-four operations, and innumerable excruciatingly painful recovery procedures.

Despite the book's melancholic quality, Souad's narration is about regaining life through courage, belief, and "self-acceptance" after facing rejection (p. 329). Sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and humanitarian workers can find it very informative. While her narration is more personal, Jacqueline (Souad's rescuer and biographer) reflects on the issue holistically and identifies other countries, among them Jordon, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, India, Pakistan, and even Israel and Europe, where men condone similar honor crimes (p. 221).

Burned Alive argues that culture, education, and knowledge act like a mirror through which an individual develops an understanding of "self." Souad was kept illiterate and her cultural image generated a personal sense of worthlessness, self-incrimination, timidity, impurity, shame, guilt, and potential evilness. She shares the insight that in her society, "a man who takes away a girl's virginity is not guilty … in fact a man who has self-respect doesn't marry the girl he has de-flowered" (p. 150). In patriarchal cultures, women are programmed to obey and submit to men. This autobiography implicitly presents Souad's intimate encounters not as her own moral failure, but as a by-product of her perceptions of "woman" as a servant and "man" as a master who can ensure her freedom. Her surrendering to the allocated gender roles makes her easily exploitable and vulnerable to the man who casually deflowers her and then leaves her in the hands of death.

This book also portrays women as patriarchal. Souad acknowledges that although men are the "symbols of enslavement" (p. 56), they themselves are also "consenting slaves" (p. 79) and indulge in slandering one another. Rebellion and eccentricity in a woman leads to a stigmatization that sometimes ends in homicide. This is disturbingly captured through the character

www.icsbook.info

of Souad's mother – herself a battered wife leading a life of self-denial (p. 36) – who suspected Souad's pregnancy and disclosed it to her father so that she could be punished (p. 142).

The book's strength lies in its simultaneous particularistic and generic approach. Souad takes herself as a case in point, but within a certain local context, and Jacqueline reflects on the issue in a broader context. The material is organized in a manner that captures Souad's life as a journey from nothingness to something to everything. During this process, the sentiments of shame and inferiority for conceiving and giving birth to her son Marouan diminish as she finally accepts him wholeheartedly. Her eventual feeling of connectedness and comfort with her womanhood is a very moving experience for the reader.

However, *Burned Alive* contains certain limitations that must be mentioned. First, due to her atypical and exceptionally cruel household, Souad's experiences and level of susceptibility cannot be generalized. Second, *Burned Alive* can be used by those engaged in anti-Islamic discourse to denigrate Islam, and particularly the Palestinians, as a result of which it can be unduly rebuffed by apologists in the Muslim world. Souad's Muslim identity, however, does raise some issues for Islamic thought as she becomes an embodiment of the plight of Muslim women in patriarchal Muslim societies.

While reading the book, one realizes that an illicit sexual relationship is not presented as a theological issue, but as a sociological and psychological one. This raises some issues for Islamic thought, such as viewing sexuality as a taboo subject and dismissing sex education. Both of these need rethinking. In real life, the conventional approach of cloistering women does not preclude chance cross-gender encounters, as was the case with Souad.

Paradoxically, although Souad was not sent to school and received no Qur'anic education, she was still expected to be moral – a contradiction in itself. It is significant to realize that her Muslim household indoctrinated her with a fear of village norms but did nothing to help her internalize Islamic norms. Therefore, for her any illicit sexual relationship remained culturally incorrect but not an explicit matter of religious concern.

The reader finds Souad following an integrationist approach in her new society and Europeanizing herself by keeping only a few relics from her native culture. During her time in Europe, she is presented as a woman who rationalizes most of her decisions in an attempt to survive. A case in point is her prolonged cohabitation with her boyfriend Antonio before they get married, even though her own priority of getting married is elaborated throughout the book's first part. She was culturally programmed for marriage and

www.icsbook.info

had fantasized about it as a key to her freedom and to attaining an elevated social status. However, she met Antonio when she needed to feel secure and protected, and therefore chose cohabitation.

After surviving her own culture's misogynistic and chauvinistic attitudes, it is understandable that, in all probability, she could not have idealized her own norms. This reflects upon Souad's tragic disillusionment with her own culture and, inevitably, with her own religion, thus bringing forth gender violence as a major cause of her detachment from Islamic social norms.

Maleeha Aslam
Doctoral Researcher, Department of Land Economy
Member, Wolfson College, Cambridge University, United Kingdom

A History of Islamic Philosophy, 3d ed.

Majid Fakhry
New York: Columbia University Press, 2004. 430 pages.

That Majid Fakhry's *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, first published in 1970, has been brought out in a third revised edition can be of no surprise to the many admirers of this most robust of scholars. Fakhry's scholarship is meticulous, and his style, even when handling the most complex ideas, remains simple and straightforward.

As many of the theological questions raised by Islam's key philosophers, particularly those pertaining to free will, justice, rights, and responsibilities, had political implications, each chapter in this book begins with a historical context. However, Fakhry only allows this context to play a subsidiary role, as a backdrop to the main narrative: the history of ideas. This approach lends itself very well to an examination of the ideas held by both individual philosophers and schools of philosophy. Importantly, Fakhry demonstrates how, during several key Islamic epochs, there was no one dominant system of thought, but rather, contending systems of thought. He takes us through these debates step by step, as in, for example, the first theological controversy on free will and predestination (*qadar*). It is in the presentation of these debates, more than anywhere else, that we see that while *A History of Islamic Philosophy* is distinguished from the work of many other grand narrative histories by not being marred by a partisan viewpoint, Fakhry's is by no means a clinically scientific approach.

This book comprises thirteen chapters. It begins with "The Legacy of Greece, Alexandria, and the Orient," covers the watershed periods in the

www.icsbook.info

growth of Islamic philosophy, and includes a chapter on "The Interaction of Philosophy and Dogma" as well as one on "The Rise and Development of Islamic Mysticism." It concludes with an analysis of modernist and contemporary trends.

Fakhry opens with an account of the last years of the Arab conquest of the Near East and the ensuing problems of administering an empire. He begins his story of Islamic philosophy by describing how, by the end of the seventh century, Arabic came to replace Persian and Greek as the state prescribed language. This is a significant shift, for with a change of language comes a change of sensibility. His handling of the Greek material is admirable, particularly as he analyzes the different strands of Platonism and Aristotleanism that began to penetrate Islamic thinking. He is less interested in how this occurred – assuming, no doubt, that this process is familiar to most audiences – than in focusing on the ideas themselves and the intersection between these ideas and the Islamic ideas of that period.

In the second chapter, "Early Political and Religious Tensions," the contest for the caliphate is presented less as a political battle for individual power than a contest between two opposing ideas of power. As this chapter moves on to examine the rise of *kalām* (theology), Fakhry presents a cogent summary of the Mụtazilite creed. He then analyzes the position taken by the Mụtazilah and other rationalizing groups and traditional thinkers on key theological issues regarding God's nature, human beings' nature, and the act of creation. He notes that the "two attributes over which the fiercest controversy raged in theological and philosophical circles were [free] will and speech" (p. 62). These questions would remain important for the following generation of thinkers, as Fakhry shows in the next chapter, which deals with the works of al-Kindi, Ibn al-Rawandi, and al-Razi.

As a "champion of the introduction of Greek and Indian writings into the Muslim world" (p. 67) and a greatly innovative thinker himself, al-Kindi was, as Fakhry demonstrates, Islam's first systematic philosophical writer. Fakhry's reading of al-Kindi (close to thirty pages) is thorough and covers such subjects as al-Kindi's argument of why God is not a bearer of accidents and why the quest for truth can never be reckoned as blasphemous. Fakhry also outlines al-Kindi's development of Aristotle's principles of motion. This chapter and the next, which examines the work of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, are among the book's strongest.

If there is one chapter in which Fakhry foregoes his objectivity, it is chapter 8: "The Rise and Development of Islamic Mysticism (Sufism)." Perhaps this is why it is the book's weakest chapter. Mysticism, he argues,

www.icsbook.info

runs counter to many Islamic teachings, for "The Muslim believer [here counterpoised to the mystic] is called upon to accept this world of transient existence (*dār al-fanā'*)" (p. 241). To provide a broad overview of the development of Sufism proves difficult on the following two counts: unlike some of the other movements discussed in earlier chapters of this book, Sufism has had a very long existence (and although the form of transmitting its *kalām* and the long line of creativity associated with its name have changed, it continues to be practiced) and has developed distinctly in different parts of the Muslim world.

The concluding chapters on modernist and contemporary trends bring us up to the present. In the modern period, the source of Islamic inquiry was the same as it was in earlier periods: the Qu'ran. Additionally, the essential questions regarding necessity, free will, and destiny continued unchanged. The framework upon which these questions were hung, however, was markedly different. In this we see, perhaps, the influence of both the Muslim world's contact with the post-Enlightenment West as well as the changing nature of the body politic in Muslim countries. Of the Afghani modernist thinker, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Fakhry says: "He reduces religion to a rationalist system of beliefs, shorn of any supernatural content" (p. 349). This is a position to which the Indian (and later, Pakistani) philosopher Muhammed Iqbal did not accede, for: "Iqbal's concept of religion is that of a complex, partly rational, partly ethical, and partly spiritual experience" (p. 364).

In his concluding chapter, Fakhry analyzes the thought of, among others, the Egyptian scholar Sayyid Qutb, for whom the "roots of the decline of Western civilization are not material or economic but rather spiritual or moral; the West has lost the 'stock of values' that enabled it in the past to be the leader of mankind" (p. 381). Islamist groups have invested great importance in the ideas of such thinkers; this analysis is, therefore, a welcome addition to the text.

In Fakhry's hands, the complex ideas of the major Islamic philosophers and schools are made accessible to a wide audience without being unnecessarily simplified. His publishers should be assured that there will be a fourth, and no doubt, a fifth edition of *A History of Islamic Philosophy* produced in the future.

Anita Mir
Writer/Researcher
London, United Kingdom

www.icsbook.info

Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy, and Mysticism in Muslim Thought. Essays in Honour of Hermann Landolt

Todd Lawson, ed.
London and New York: I.B. Taurus Publishers, in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2005. 558 pages.

Thirty-eight essays are brought together in this volume to honor Hermann Landolt of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University, Canada. A broad range of participants, including former students and colleagues both close and distant, have contributed essays, most of which deal with aspects of Ismaili, Ithna-ashari, or Sufi thought. Almost all of the essays are in English; four are in French, however. The range of topics is catholic, to say the least, and the rough chronological ordering of the essays can hardly contain them.

The "classical" section features such figures as al-Junayd, al-Farabi, Ibn Tufayl, al-Qadi al-Numan, al-Kirmani, Abu Hatim al-Razi, and al-Waqidi; the "medieval" takes in al-Ghazzali, al-Suhrawardi, al-Qushayri, al-Shahrastani, Afdal al-Din Kashani, Jami', Najm al-Din Kubra, Ibn Sina, and al-Sharani; the "pre-modern" includes Shah Tahir, Ahmad Sirhindi, Molla Sadra, and Fayd al-Kashani; and the "modern" section features not so much people as themes, such as dervish orders, Ginans, ulama, tradition, and modernization. It is worth noting that several articles in the last section focus their attention on medieval as much as modern aspects (if not more so, as in the case of Eric Ormsby's interesting essay "The Faith of Pharaoh: A Disputed Question in Islamic Theology"). Their classification seems to be more out of consideration for achieving balance in the book's form than in accurately reflecting the contents. Be that as it may, such a cornucopia (as the editor describes it) cannot help but provide something of relevance to almost everyone interested in Islamic thought.

Two essays particularly drew my attention; they also left me wishing that the two authors had had an opportunity to consider the conjunction between their papers before they were published (but the absence of such is, of course, in the nature of most such collections). L. Clarke's excellent paper on "The Rise and Decline of *Taqiyya* in Twelver Shiism" will reward every reader. Clarke shows how two meanings of *taqiyya* – "precautionary dissimulation of belief" and "esoteric silence," what she calls legal and esoteric *taqiyya*, respectively – became blended through the ages. Esoteric *taqiyya* was "a necessary and integral part" of Twelver Shiism in early times, for the

www.icsbook.info

community's very existence and status depended upon notions of privileged knowledge belonging to the Imams, which is shared secretly with the community. This is the basis of the concept of *taqiyya.*

However, as Clarke outlines, such secret knowledge is more a matter of form than content. It is a "discursive strategy" designed to convey a privilege of membership and identity, within which, perhaps ironically, the primary prohibition on disclosure is focused on members within (as opposed to outside) the community. The Imams *must* have knowledge that is unknown to their followers for their status to be preserved. This serves to remind those inside that there is always more knowledge to be had. Such knowledge sustains the believer's "wonder and devotion." Such *taqiyya* also supports quietism, for knowledge cannot be revealed until the time is right (in the messianic age).

What we see in later centuries, however, is a focus on legal *taqiyya*, a tendency that Clarke traces in origin to Shaykh al-Mufid (d. 413/1022), who emphasized it as a duty only in circumstances of dire necessity. Sunni-Shi`i polemics are said to be the main cause of this shift. This was because the potential of hidden knowledge, with its inherent attitude of quietism, left the community in a tenuous situation – one that had, by modern times, proven to be totally incompatible with the community's aspirations. Within this new understanding, the Imams' status became protected by the doctrine of infallibility (*`iṣmah*) rather than esoteric knowledge, and quietism was no longer considered a suspect attitude.

It would have been fascinating indeed if this article could have been brought into conjunction with the topic of Bulbul Shah's essay: "Al-Qadi Nu`man and the Concept of *Bāṭin*." Here, the Fatimid Ismailis' esoteric aspect is discussed in terms of the contrast between *ẓāhir* (exoteric) and *bāṭin* (esoteric). The Imams become the repository of the Qur'an's esoteric knowledge, which was passed on from one Imam to the next. After reading this, I was left wondering about the role of the *ẓāhir/bāṭin* dichotomy in early Ithna-ashari thought and how that might tie into the notion of the esoteric *taqiyya* explored so lucidly by Clarke.

Any good collection of essays, even if on disparate topics, will provide readers with food for thought on topics that capture their imagination. This one certainly did so for me. The editor is to be congratulated for bringing together such a fine tribute to Hermann Landolt.

Andrew Rippin
Dean, Faculty of Humanities
University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

www.icsbook.info

Forum

Reflections from the Social Sciences on the Possible Causes of Abusing Muslim Prisoners of War

Walter R. Schumm

Abstract

The entire civilized world has been shocked by the many abuses perpetrated against Muslim prisoners of war by members of the Allied Forces, chiefly the United Kingdom and the United States. Here, the author, a former commander of Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) units in the U.S. Army Reserve and author of several military articles on the importance of treating prisoners properly, reflects upon the sociological and psychological causes of such unjust, unlawful, and tragic abuse. One possible cause is the adoption of a pragmatic social exchange theory approach, rather than a moral approach, to the humane treatment of enemy prisoners: If the enemy does not hold many prisoners, there is less reason, under a pragmatic approach, to reject abuse ("They cannot get back at us by abusing our people they have captured because they have almost none.").

Walter R. Schumm is a professor of family studies, School of Family Studies and Human Services, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS, and a retired colonel, Military Police Corps, U.S. Army Reserve. From 1991-94, as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, he commanded two Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) units, the 439th Military Police Detachment and the 530th Military Police Battalion, in Omaha, NB. From 1999 until his retirement in July 2002, he commanded the 6th Professional Development Brigade, headquartered in Topeka, KS, of the 95th Division (Institutional Training), U.S. Army Reserve. From 2000-01, Colonel Schumm's command, including his subordinate units, was awarded 50 percent (3 of the 6 possible) "Best Army Reserve Units" in the world awards by the Reserve Officers Association and the U.S. Army Reserve Command, as well as numerous other awards from the 95th Division in "best brigade" categories. He is the son of Rear Admiral Brooke Schumm and the brother of Colonel (U.S. Army, Retired) Brooke Schumm, Jr.

www.icsbook.info

> A second risk factor is the perception that senior leaders have either authorized or at least will overlook abusive treatment. Milgram's psychological experiments showed long ago that ordinary people will do terribly hurtful things to others if they feel that authority figures have approved of the harm in the name of science or some other ideology. A third issue is simply the deficient leadership within the Allied armed forces. A final issue is the ignorance of many in the West of the beliefs and practices of Islam that, since its origins, has disapproved of prisoner abuse.

The recent series of abuses against Muslim prisoners at various locations around the world have shocked the entire world. Those abuses have been described separately in a number of detailed accounts.[1] Although nothing one author can do can compensate for such atrocities, perhaps considering the social science factors underlying such abuse can help us reduce the chances of its reoccurrence in the future.

Prisoner abuse has occurred in most, if not all, previous military conflicts, including World War II,[2] Korea,[3] Vietnam,[4] and the first Persian Gulf war.[5] That fact demands a serious effort to avoid prisoner abuse in present and future conflicts. Frankly, I assumed that prisoner abuse was not only illegal but that it was morally wrong, a perspective abetted by my own personal ethic. However, long before the development of the Geneva Conventions, the Qur'an had deemed prisoner abuse to be wrong (4:90, 6:108, 9:6, 33:26, 47:4, 49:9, and 60:7-8). Furthermore, Muslims believe that although God put kindness and mercy in the hearts of Christians (57: 27), some were false while others were upright (3:113-15, 5:82). Therefore, there is a grave danger that those who abuse Muslims prisoners will be counted not among the upright, but rather among the unjust, those who violate God's specific words. Since the Qur'an[6] *commands* Muslims to fight the unjust (e.g., 22:45), being identified as "among the unjust" involves great personal and organizational risk. In addition, the law of retaliation could be invoked to justify attacks against those who have hurt Muslims unjustly (e.g., 2:178, 194).

While some may attribute the prisoner abuse situation entirely to the Bush administration's policies, my experience suggests roots in sociology and psychology as well. Those roots led to a warning years before even 9/11: "It only takes one improperly trained or motivated soldier among a thousand to commit an offense against the Geneva Conventions that would cause our nation considerable embarrassment" and: "The honor and reputation of the US Army depend on firm and humane EPW treatment. We must not fail in this duty."[7]

www.icsbook.info

After 9/11, I began to undertake a serious study of Islam and sought to understand that great religion from several perspectives.[8] I was impressed that the Qur'an specifically prohibits particular forms of prisoner abuse. Therefore, I was especially distressed when I read about the abuses at Abu Ghraib.[9] However, I was eager to ascertain the causes of such abuse.

The U.S. Army has produced an interesting book: *The Road to Abu Ghraib.*[10] However, sadly, it does not deal with the actual abuses but only with the history of EPW operations up to and immediately prior to the war in Iraq. A number of reports have considered what went wrong at Abu Ghraib,[11] including a recent book by the prison's former commander.[12] It appears that *Field Manual 34-52* (1992) allowed the interrogation, but not the physical abuse, of EPWs. Starting in December 2002, it seems that certain techniques were allowed, including yelling, stress positions, isolation for up to thirty days, deprivation of light/auditory stimuli, removal of all comfort items (including religious items), removal of clothing, exploiting individual phobias (e.g., dogs and such non-injurious physical contact as grabbing, poking, and light pushing), and sleep adjustment, according to a Naval IG Investigation (Appendix E). I will now discuss my perspective on the causes of the abuse.

Adopting a Pragmatic Rather Than a Moral Perspective

In a coauthored paper, I conceded the following:

> Those who treat their prisoners well usually find that the enemy treats their own captured personnel relatively well. While our treatment of German POWs was condemned as "too soft" during World War II, it influenced the Germans to treat our prisoners better than those of other Allied nations. The early release of the few US service personnel captured during the Persian Gulf War was tied to our humane treatment of his captured personnel.

However, I also provided nine other reasons for the humane treatment of EPWs, including a moral rationale:

> For over 220 years, our nation's founding principles have highlighted the value of human life and are the basis for humane treatment of EPWs. When we live up to our own constitutional principles, we retain the 'moral high ground…'"[13]

www.icsbook.info

Colonel Matthews noted, in the same issue of *Military Review,* that George Washington observed that military officers should be "men of character ... activated by principles of honour."[14] Other authors also recognized the importance of the "moral element" as a component of war.[15] Unfortunately, the editor, brave as he was to defy the Pentagon and publish the paper despite their objections, chose to focus on the pragmatic perspective:

> Elsewhere in this issue, Colonel Walter Schumm et al. argue that we must uphold the highest standards of enemy prisoner of war treatment not only because our national ideals demand it, but also because international law requires it and, more important, fair treatment of prisoners tends to be reciprocated by most enemies.[16]

Most recently, Major General Scott C. Black, judge advocate general of the U.S. Army, was quoted as saying to Senator Russell Feingold at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing:

> Reciprocity is something that weighs heavily in all of the discussions that we are undertaking as we develop the process and rules for the commissions, and that's the exact reason, sir. The treatment of soldiers who will be captured on future battlefields is of paramount concern.[17]

Again, the idea is that even if the enemy does not hold any prisoners today, an enemy will surely hold some in the future; therefore, we should treat enemy prisoners well today for the sake of our own prisoners tomorrow.

More recently, DiMarco argued:

> History offers no modern examples of the strategic effectiveness of harsh interrogation techniques, but it is replete with examples of the negative strategic effects such techniques have on the counterinsurgency force.[18]

The dangers of such pragmatic perspectives are twofold. First, if the enemy fails to treat allied prisoners well, that may serve as a justification – although wrong – for retaliation against EPWs; the beheading of two captured American soldiers in June 2006 may reflect that sort of thing. Second, if the enemy fails to capture a significant number of prisoners, the lack of our own personnel in enemy custody may lead some to believe that there is no pragmatic reason to treat their EPWs humanely (Since they do not have any prisoners against whom to retaliate, we are getting a "free pass" to mistreat their prisoners.). Some may even ignore the risks to American soldiers who might become prisoners in the future. Therefore, I argue that the pragmatic perspective is a weaker argument for guaranteeing proper EPW treatment.

www.icsbook.info

Sadly, I have heard comments from a few former veterans that since al-Qaeda has mistreated some allied prisoners, we no longer have any real obligation to treat their prisoners well – and even that their prisoners deserve to be mistreated. The pragmatic approach is simply insufficient, in my opinion. Why is it so hard to just acknowledge that mistreating prisoners is morally wrong, period? Colonel Goldman may have been right when he stated:

> An interminable parade of appalling misbehavior by men and women in uniform has riveted public attention on traditional military values such as duty, honor and integrity. The media zealously speculates whether the U.S. military is in an irreparable ethics crisis. They ask, and we privately wonder, "Has the U.S. military lost its moral compass in this relativistic society?[19]

At the end of his article, Colonel Goldman noted: "We must begin now and aim for results 10 years from now." Perhaps if we had begun in 1998, we might not have risked losing the peace over the prisoner abuse scandals of 2003 and 2004. Indeed, Fareed Zakaria argued: "Ask any soldier in Iraq when the general population really turned against the United States and he will say, 'Abu Ghraib.'"[19] Zakaria supported his arguments by noting that Iraqi support for the occupation fell from 63 percent before Abu Ghraib to 9 percent one month after Abu Ghraib. History may prove that the Allied occupation lost its moral authority over prisoner abuse, just as, speaking of the French army, DiMarco noted: "Torture deprived the army of its moral authority."[21]

Misunderstanding Human Nature under Authority

A second cause, I believe, is a failure to understand the human tendency to abuse others when permitted, even remotely, by authority. The Milgram experiments showed us that even good people can be steered in the direction of abusing human rights when ordered to do so by a seemingly competent authority.[22] In those experiments, subjects were told to expose apparent experimental subjects to higher and higher doses of electric shock, until they were nearly dying from the "treatment." Few objected, since they believed that the white-coated personnel had the proper authority to demand compliance and would assume responsibility for the harm done.

In military history, a classic blunder was General Robert E. Lee's giving "vague" orders to General J. E. B. Stuart, who conducted a cavalry raid to the north and east of Lee's army as it marched into Maryland and Pennsyl-

www.icsbook.info

vania during the summer of 1863. Instead of serving as Lee's eyes and keeping track of the Union army's movement, Stuart raided Yankee homes and towns, thereby making himself a pest and increasing the Union's animosity toward the South and the Confederates. Lee made major mistakes because, at critical times, he had little idea of the Union army's location, strength, or direction of movement due to the overly vague instructions to his cavalry commander. Those mistakes have served as a warning to all military leaders since that time to remember that ambiguous instructions can lead to calamity, even to losing wars.

Moreover, far more serious than Stuart's meanderings is what can happen when subordinates perceive that their superiors condone lawlessness. As DiMarco has observed, "once violence is permitted to be exercised beyond the standards of legitimately recognized moral and legal bounds, it becomes exponentially more difficult to control."[23] Almost certainly, some of the abuses reported in Iraq have occurred because of such psychological truths. In the case of EPW operations, comments that the Geneva Conventions are "quaint" or "outdated" can send signals to key leaders and soldiers of all ranks that no one is really serious about complying with the conventions or our national moral principles. This potentially opens the floodgates for EPW abuse at a variety of locations and times.

The clearest example of this was represented by a memorandum from General Sanchez, in which he authorized several methods of prisoner interrogation that he admitted, in his own memorandum, could be seen by others as violations of the Geneva Conventions:

> Incentive/Removal of Incentive: Providing a reward or removing a privilege, above and beyond those that are required by the Geneva Convention, from detainees. [Caution: Other nations that believe Detainees are entitled to EPW protections may consider that provision and retention of religious items (e.g., the Koran) are protected under international law (see, Geneva III, Article 34).] (Paragraph B, under Enclosure 1, "Interrogation Techniques.")

> Attacking or insulting the ego of a detainee, not beyond the limits that would apply to an EPW. [Caution: Article 17 of Geneva III provides: "Prisoners of war who refuse to answer may not be threatened, insulted, or exposed to any unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind." Other nations that believe detainees are entitled to EPW protections may consider this technique inconsistent with the provisions of Geneva.] (Paragraph I, under Enclosure 1, "Interrogation Techniques.")

www.icsbook.info

> Presence of Military Working Dogs: Exploits Arab fear of dogs while maintaining security during interrogations. Dogs will be muzzled and under control of MWD handler at all times to prevent contact with detainee. (Paragraph Y, under Enclosure 1, "Interrogation Techniques.")[24]

Other paragraphs permitted the use of "Mutt and Jeff," which some nations admit to be a violation of Article 13 of Geneva III: dietary and environmental manipulation, also considered by some nations to be possibly inhumane; sleep adjustment and isolation for *more than thirty days*, if properly briefed by the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade Commander prior to implementation; and stress positions.

Did Sanchez invent these ideas? I doubt it. As recently as June 2006, Clifford D. May, seeming to speak for the Bush administration, admitted that the position of the International Committee of the Red Cross was that all captives must be granted the privileges of prisoners of war, whereas: "The administration's view is that those who slit the throats of aid workers and dispatch suicide bombers to slaughter women and children have no claim to such privileges."[24] Even so, I doubt that most of the Guantanamo prisoners are guilty of such crimes; if they were, they should have been tried years ago and sentenced in accordance with international law. May goes on to ask: "Do militants who are both uncooperative and unrepentant deserve Club Med?"[26] May apparently fails to realize that similar questions were asked about our humane treatment of Germans and Japanese, even Nazis, during World War II – yet at that time, the political leadership of the United States gave a radically different answer!

When a major commander, a three-star flag officer apparently under the direction of his superiors, is willing to cut corners on compliance with the Geneva Conventions, perhaps seeing just how close one can come to not quite violating them, one might as well expect that lower ranking subordinates will, like J. E. B. Stuart, take advantage and use the situation as an excuse to exercise their worse selves and mistreat enemy prisoners. Rather, generals Sanchez and Karpinski should have rejected any such ideas and insisted on the strictest compliance with the Geneva Conventions and Army Regulations, ensuring that all subordinates, including the commander of the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade, would fear the gravest consequences should they either violate the rules in any manner whatsoever or fail to report any such violations through the chain of command. Soldiers should have been briefed that promotions and awards would be in order for those who accurately reported any mistreatment of prisoners, regardless of the circumstances. Illegal orders have been given before to military subordinates; how-

www.icsbook.info

ever, as Colonel Matthews pointed out, "the legality of orders as a condition for compliance has become an essential factor in the officer's professional deliberations."[27]

As convenient as it might be for some to rewrite the Geneva Conventions and develop special categories of EPW who do not deserve humane treatment,[28] the conventions clearly specify that all captives must be treated humanely. If a captive is convicted of a capital crime, the penalty may be execution. However, as long as the captive is alive, he or she has a right to fair and humane treatment, even after being convicted by a due legal process.

The other side of this coin is that those who abuse prisoners should face due process for their crimes rather than being protected, as it appears United States attorney general Alberto Gonzalez is attempting to do by getting an exemption for American personnel who may have abused prisoners in their custody.[29] Unfortunately, even if superiors ordered violations of international law, subordinates have, in the past, been held accountable for disobeying illegal orders. Of course those who issue such orders deserve prosecution, even if they themselves did not actually ever so much as see a single prisoner of war. One has to wonder if Gonzalez, who may have said that the Geneva Conventions were "quaint," is not trying to protect himself from future prosecution as much as trying to protect any American service personnel from future prosecution.

Deficient Leadership

Third, I think that the intermediate leaders failed. When asked by a reporter for the *St. Petersburg Times* in December 2003 what she did as commander of the 800th Military Police Brigade (EPW), General Janice Karpinski replied: "Everyone assigned here carries on the tradition of fishing"[30] in one of Saddam's old lakes. When asked how often she visited each of her EPW sites, she said that she tried to visit each one "at least once every three months."[31] Since she had fifteen sites, one may deduce that she visited about one site a week. Such an inspection schedule is simply inadequate for the supervision of almost any type of civilian or military operation. The expression "When the cat's away, the mice will play" is still true. Soldiers do what the commander checks. If the commander does not check, the soldiers may end up doing outrageous things. A good commander does not depend solely on the subordinate commanders' good will for reporting problems on their watch. (There will always be a tendency to put the best face on any "issues.")

www.icsbook.info

Nowhere is this more true than with respect to EPW abuse. As a senior commander, one cannot accept the excuse that some soldiers are exempt from inspection because they are in a "secure area." Secure documents can be covered to allow the senior commander to inspect. There should be no area in which prisoners can be abused at will, regardless of whether the CIA, civilians, or military personnel are running the operation. A recent article in *Esquire* magazine suggests that even after Abu Ghraib had been revealed, the United States was running abusive EPW interrogation sites at other locations in Iraq, if not elsewhere.[32]

If the higher powers do not like a Military Police commander demanding to inspect areas to ensure that prisoners are being treated humanely at all times and in all places, then the commander can allow himself or herself to be relieved of command for that very reason. Commanders should take the line that "You can't come in here, sir" as a definitive clue that they need to go in there and find out what is really going on. Commanders must arrange for inspections of EPW areas at inconvenient times and places to be sure that prisoner abuse is not occurring when no one expects the commander to appear. If a commander is forcibly prevented from inspecting areas for some reason, he or she had better start producing memorandums for the record with all of the details and actively seek other venues for checking on abuse (e.g., asking prisoners themselves about possible abuse).

Failure to Understand Islamic Culture

Lastly, I believe that American soldiers and leaders probably failed to understand Islamic culture. Muslims are correctly opposed to murder, even of Jews or Christians, because of the Islamic teaching that all life is sacred.[33] As noted earlier, Islam condemns any abuse of prisoners. The Allied forces' abuse of prisoners can have no other effect than to remind Muslims of injustice and the evils of violating God's commands, as found in the Qur'an. One can hardly think of a better motivator for insurgents to justify their perception of Allied forces as unjust occupiers instead of respectful guests in Iraq. As mentioned above, God enjoins Muslims to fight injustice. Furthermore, some EPWs have died or have been killed while under the protection of Allied forces. Since murder is a sin that God may not forgive, it may be virtually impossible for Muslims to forgive Allied forces who appear to be responsible for killing a defenseless Muslim under their control.[34] Setting up such difficult conditions is not the way to try to help rebuild a fledgling democracy in a culture that has enough of its own challenges already.

www.icsbook.info

Conclusion

In the end, it will not be the "six [enlisted] morons who lost the war," but the leadership of the nation and the army whose faulty ethics and ignorance of the importance of EPW operations, not to mention of Islamic culture, allowed definitions of POW/EPW status to be rewritten[35] and, therefore, abuses to occur – abuses that inspired the insurgents to fight with even more determination to rid their sacred Islamic lands of an occupying force of a different religion.[36] Regardless of the United States' national security interests, EPW abuse is simply wrong from almost any moral perspective, even if some so-called Christian organizations are reluctant to condemn EPW abuse, as noted recently by Randall Balmer.[37] If it were possible for me to apologize to the entire Islamic world for our errors and pray for their forgiveness, I surely would, though it would not be deserved and perhaps not likely to be granted. I can certainly say that abuse of EPWs is not consistent with the American military and moral principles that I was taught to respect and obey.

While some may accuse some Americans of post-Abu Ghraib repentance, American military writings, including this author's, well before 9/11 were consistent in their support of the Geneva Conventions and humane EPW treatment. If anything, recent events have reaffirmed the strategic importance often attained by prisoner of war operations, as noted in previous commentary,[38] and more recently by Zakaria.[39] In my view, the ultimate security of any nation depends on its moral values just as much or even more than whatever technological superiority it might possess from an economic or military perspective.

I hope that, as Americans, we never forget this and that we honor our traditional moral principles accordingly, even if they appear to be ignored or trivialized among some political elites.[40] Applying such noble principles must be extended to all areas, not the least of which includes the proper treatment of prisoners of war.[41] If the situation in Iraq deteriorates into chaos, history will surely identify one of the principal causes as the moral failures of the Allied coalition's improper treatment of Muslim prisoners of war as well as other detainees.

Endnotes

1. Mark Danner, *Torture and Truth: America, Abu Ghraib, and the War on Terror* (New York: New York Review Books, 2004), Karen J. Greenberg and Joshua L. Dratel, eds., *The Torture Papers: The Road to Abu Ghraib* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), Seymour M. Hersh, *Chain of Command:*

www.icsbook.info

The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2005: Events of 2004* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2005), International Committee of the Red Cross, *Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the Treatment by the Coalition Forces of Prisoners of War and Other Protected Persons by the Geneva Conventions in Iraq during Arrest, Internment, and Interrogation* (New York: International Committee of the Red Cross, February 2004), Joseph R. Schlesinger, *Report of the Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations* (Arlington, VA: Independent Panel to Review DoD Detention Operations, 24 August 2004).

2. Walter R. Schumm, Bobby B. Polk, John Bryan, Frank Fornataro, and Jennifer Curry, "Treat Prisoners Humanely," *Military Review* 78, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 83-93.
3. Walter R. Schumm, K. M. Kildare, Fred J. Wiebelhaus, and Joseph O. Kjosa, "Lessons from History: The EPW Situation in the Korean War," *Military Police* 2, (winter 1995): 48-51.
4. Richard Hammer, *One Morning in the War: The Tragedy at Son My* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1970).
5. Schumm et al., "Treat Prisoners Humanely."
6. M. H. Shakir, *Holy Qur'an* (Elmhurst, NY: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., 1985).
7. Schumm et al., "Treat Prisoners Humanely," 92.
8. Walter R. Schumm, A. D. Ferguson, Malika S. Hashmat, and Telisa L. New, "Differences in Paradox between Islam and Christianity: A Statistical Comparison," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 16, no. 2 (April 2005): 167-85; Walter R. Schumm, "Variations in Themes of Asceticism, Humility, and Love among Muslim Sayings Attributed to Jesus," *Islamic Studies* 44, no. 1 (spring 2005): 113-23; Walter R. Schumm and Alison L. Kohler, "Social Cohesion and the Five Pillars of Islam: A Comparative Perspective," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 23, no. 2 (spring 2006): 126-36; Walter R. Schumm, Charles V. Anderson, Angelia S. Brinneman, Pakhalchuk A. Magsanoc-Deoki, and Rachel A. Ulrick, "Reanalysis of Sageman's (2004) and Pape's (2005) Data Predicting Al-Qaeda Membership and Suicide Terrorism," *Psychological Reports* 98, no. 3 (June 2006): 915-17; Walter R. Schumm, "Treating prisoners of war humanely," British Medical Journal (elec.), http://bmj.bmjjournals.com/cgi/eletters/330/7490/543[21#99693] (9 March 2005).
9. The only consolation I felt was finding out that my old unit, the 530th Military Police Battalion (EPW), was the only unit cited as both knowing and performing their jobs in accordance with the appropriate standards, according to the Taguba Report.
10. John F. Gebhardt, *The Road to Abu Ghraib: U.S. Army Detainee Doctrine and Experience* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004).
11. George P. Fogarty, "Is Guantanamo Bay Undermining the Global War on Terror," *Parameters* 35, no. 3 (autumn 2005): 54-71.

www.icsbook.info

12. Janis L. Karpinski, *One Woman's Army: The Commanding General of Abu Ghraib Tells Her Story* (New York: Miramax, 2005). In her book, now Colonel Karpinski notes that she was promoted to lieutenant colonel about 1998, to colonel in 2001, and to brigadier general in February 2003, relatively brief periods that may not have allowed her the normal amount of time to mature in a variety of assignments while in each rank. She held at least five, possibly six, positions between the time she assumed battalion command in 1997 or later and when she took command of the 800th MP Brigade (pp. 139-45), positions that might normally be three to four year tours each. The goal of serving in a senior position should be to prepare for future mobilization, rather than merely getting a six-to-twelve month Officer Efficiency Report, briefly "punching a ticket" to impress other officers or promotion boards. She took command of the 800th Military Police Brigade in late July 2003 and did not hear of the prisoner abuse until 13 January 2004. I consider it revealing that she credits General Sanchez (p. 20), General Taguba (p. 226), and herself (p. 226) with being worried about what the scandal would do to the reputation of the United States Army. Far more important, in my view, was the issue of what the scandal would do to the honor of the United States of America and, by extension, to its reputed ideals of freedom and democracy, and to the credibility of those ideals internationally.
13. Schumm et al., "Treat Prisoners Humanely," 83.
14. Lloyd J. Matthews, "The Evolution of American Military Ideals," *Military Review* 78, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 52.
15. Brian R. Reinwald, "Retaining the Moral Element of War," *Military Review* 78, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 70.
16. Lee J. Hockman, "From the Editor," *Military Review* 78, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 2.
17. R. Jeffrey Smith, "Top Military Lawyers Oppose Plan for Special Courts," *The Washington Post*, 3 August 2006. Online at www.truthout.org/docs_2006/080306A.shtml, p. 2. Downloaded 4 August 2006].
18. Lou DiMarco, "Losing the Moral Compass: Torture and Guerre Revolutionaire in the Algerian War," *Parameters* 36, no. 2 (summer 2006): 63-76, at p. 64.
19. W. Darryl Goldman, "The Wrong Road to Character Development," *Military Review* 78, no. 1 (January/February 1998): 62.
20. Fareed Zakaria, "Pssst.... Nobody Loves a Torturer," *Newsweek* 146, no. 20, 14 November 2005, 36.
21. DiMarco, "Losing the Moral Compass," 73.
22. Stanley Milgram, *Obediance to Authority: An Experimental View* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).
23. DiMarco, "Losing the Moral Compass," 72.
24. Ricardo S. Sanchez, "Memorandum: Subject: CJTF-7 Interrogation and Counter-Resistance Policy" (Camp Victory, Baghdad: Headquarters, Combined Joint Task Force Seven, 14 September 2003).

www.icsbook.info

25. Clifford D. May, "Guantanamo Treatment Not Inhumane,"*The Manhattan Mercury* (Manhattan, KS, 18 June 2006), C-9.
26. Ibid.
27. Matthews, "The Evolution of American Military Ideals," 55.
28. Thomas E. Ayres, "Six Floors of Detainee Operations in the Post-9/11 World," *Parameters* 35, no. 3 (autumn 1998): 33-53.
29. Smith, "Top Military Lawyers Oppose Plan for Special Courts," 3.
30. Susan T. Martin, "Her Job: Lock up Iraq's Bad Guys," *St. Petersburg Times* Online, 14 December 2003, 3. www.sptimes.com/2003/12/14/Worldandnation/Her_job_Lock_up_Iraq.shtml.
31. Ibid., 4.
32. John H. Richardson, "Acts of Conscience," *Esquire* 146, no. 2 (August 2006), 102-09, 150-54.
33. Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam* (Plainfield, IN: American Trust Publications, 1999), 323-26.
34. Ibid., 323.
35. Ayres, "Six Floors of Detainee Operations in the Post-9/11 World."
36. Schumm et al., "Reanalysis of Sageman's (2004) and Pape's (2005) Data."
37. Randall Balmer, "Evangelicalism Betrayed," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 52, no. 42 (23 June 2006): B-6-B-9; Randall Balmer, *How the Religious Right Distorts the Faith and Threatens America: An Evangelical's Lament* (New York: Perseus Books, 2006).
38. Schumm et al., "Treat Prisoners Humanely."
39. Zakaria, "Pssst.... Nobody Loves a Torturer."
40. Senator John McCain, Senator Lindsey O. Graham (who is also a reserve Air Force appellate judge), retired General Colin Powell, and other political and military leaders in the United States are to be commended for taking clear stands against the abuse of prisoners of war. I have received reports from veterans of the Iraq war that, in some cases, insurgent activity increased against those Allied forces that were perceived as having treated the local citizenry, prisoners, and others unjustly.
41. Mark Hosenball and Michael Isikoff, "Out from the Shadows," *Newsweek* 148, no. 12 (18 September 2006): 32-33. Just in case the reader still believes that torture "works," the authors noted that some of the false information about weapons of mass destruction that helped"justify" the UnitedStates'invasion of Iraq was acquired by torturing a prisoner of the Egyptian government who admitted that he had "made it all up so his Egyptian interrogators would stop beating him" (p. 33). Similarly, Ron Suskind, in "The Unofficial Story of the al-Qaeda 14," *Time* 168, no. 12 (18 September 2006): 34-35, reported that the brutal interrogation of Abu Zubaydah "yielded little from threats and torture. He named countless targets inside the U.S. to stop the pain, all of them immaterial."

www.icsbook.info

The First Annual Muslim Peacebuilding, Justice, and Interfaith Dialogue

The First Annual Muslim Peacebuilding, Justice, and Interfaith Dialogue was held on 28-30 April 2006. Sponsored by the Salam Institute for Peace and Justice (SIPJ) and the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), it was made possible through a Conflict Transformation Grant, in part with the Fuller Theological Seminary, and the generous support provided by the Mohammed Said Farsi Chair of Islamic Peace at American University.

The conference was opened by Mohammed Abu-Nimer (SIPJ) and Louay Safi (ISNA). Abu-Nimer explained that this event was being held to "systematically think about the Islamic perspectives of peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and interfaith dialogue, and to attempt to bring it into the American public context." Safi mentioned that "it is crucial that we learn how to prevent and resolve these inevitable conflicts." After these opening remarks, the panel sessions began.

Panel 1, "Peace through Development: Experiences from Muslim Communities and the Muslim World," discussed the effect of development practices in Muslim communities on the peace and sustainability of both these communities themselves and their outside interactions. Kathleen Meilahn spoke about the United States' inability to create a sustainable peace in Iraq due to its lack of cultural and religious understanding. She was followed by Ayse Kadayifici-Orellana, who presented the SIPJ's study on Muslim Peacebuilders in Africa and the Balkans. Her major findings included the use of and the need to expand the concept of *tawḥīd* (that all of creation emanates from God) and therefore must understand unity through plurality. Putut Widjanarko's presentation focused on the Muslim community's contribution to reducing ethnic differences within Islam.

Panel 2, "Intra-Muslim Dialogue," focused on the need for intra-faith dialogue among Muslims. The presenters pinpointed the Sunni-Shi`ah spilt, differences between converted Muslims and born Muslims, and ideological

www.icsbook.info

differences within the American Muslim community. Panel 3, "Islamic Approaches to Mediation and Conflict Resolution," opened with Imam Muhammad Shafiq's survey of the state of conflict resolution and dialogue in the Muslim world. He expanded on the point that Muslim communities are more willing to participate in interfaith dialogue then intra-faith dialogue. Abd al-Hayy Weinman and Mohamed H. Mukhtar then expanded on the Islamic principals that can achieve mediation and conflict resolution. One of these is *jamā`ah*, an African Muslim practice of creating a neutral buffer zone in the middle of a conflict zone to serve as a new community for victims.

Panel 4, "Peacebuilding, Democracy, and Human Rights in the Islamic Context," clarified the place of these three themes in Islam by discussing their historical and current applications. The case studies included both the historical and current place of Muslim women in peacebuilding, historical examples of the civil and pacifist strategies used during the Makkan period, and the 2006 Palestinian elections. Panel 5, "Islamic Approaches for Interfaith Dialogue," provided several examples of interfaith dialogue by Muslims, including the creation of a game designed to encourage this activity. Imam Kazerooni spoke on the role of civil society in interfaith dialogue, and Junaid Ahmed dwelt on the need to move beyond just dialogue to interfaith solidarity and justice campaigns

Panel 6, "Successes, Lessons Learned, and Challenges Facing Muslims and Muslim Organization Working for Peace and Justice," reviewed the importance of Muslim organizations working for peace as well as their challenges. The Interfaith Youth Core (IYC), based out of Chicago, and the American Muslim Voice (AMV) were highlighted. The IYC focuses not just on dialogue, but also on coordinated action (e.g., community service) to create true understanding. AMV representatives discussed their strategies for dealing with insufficient funds and communication with other organizations.

The Special Session, "The Network of Muslim Peacebuilding and Interfaith Dialogue," included representatives of the founding organizations of the Network for Muslim Peacebuilding and Interfaith Dialogue, among them Kadayifici-Orellana, Safi, Imam Mohammed Shafiq (Center for Interfaith Studies and Dialogue, Nazareth College), Rabia Harris (Muslim Peace Fellowship), Rashied Omar (Kroc Institute, University of Notre Dame), and Imam Taqi-Baker (Free Muslim Association). This discussion included making the network accessible to other practitioners, including young people. There were also warnings about succumbing to a nationalist overtone and a need to reach out to different ethnic groups.

Several themes emerged in the course of this event, among them the following: the relationship between Islam and culture, the need for intra-faith

www.icsbook.info

dialogue between Sunnis and Shi`ahs, the need to understand Islam's internal diversity, recovering Islamic nonviolence from the early tradition, moving toward the *shūrā* (consultation) model of community, bringing women's voices into intra-faith dialogue, identifying the main Sunni and Shi`ah leaders for training and dissemination, learning how to "tolerate the intolerant," and the need for the American Muslim community to engage in dialogue with the larger American society.

This event closed with a call to integrate Shi`ahs into American Muslim community organizations and spotlighted the need to establish a dialogue between both groups. It was pointed out that ISNA's first two presidents were Shi`ah. In addition, it was suggested that programs should be designed to initiate this rapprochement and that they could even be used as an outreach mechanism to the entire community. It was also suggested that anthropologists and sociologists continue to be employed to evaluate the movement, as this will help both practitioners and academics remain critical and reflective, both academically and spiritually, while pursuing their work.

Ashleigh Zimmerman
Annual Conference Manager, Salam Institute for Peace and Justice
Washington, DC

Globalization and Trans-nationalism

On 10 August 2006, the National Advisory Council for South Asian Affairs (NACSAA) met at the Cosmos Club in Washington, DC, to answer several questions: Do markets know best? Does the market really know? Are the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer? Does globalization mean Westernization and/or Americanization? Are traditional societies being dissipated? As there were many speakers, I will present only brief summaries.

Shabir Ahmed stated that the West uses its foreign aid to get countries to follow its own standards and perspectives, while many members of the elites have abandoned the traditional lifestyle. On the positive side, globalization solves poverty through the market. Syed Akhtar asked whether globalization was the same as McDonaldization or Nikeification, or just about cultural domination and sweatshops. He sees globalization as a win-win situation, provided that a nation has the necessary "enabling conditions": a highly educated workforce, the rule of law, and democratic institutions.

V. Balachandran reminded the audience that globalization also causes problems. In India, this takes the form of increasing farmer suicides, shanty towns, a lack of investment in the agricultural sector, a decrease in the qual-

www.icsbook.info

ity of life, and questions of who owns the country's natural resources. James Clad defined globalization in negative terms: It is not necessarily an across-the-board integration of economies, a generator of an immediately improved security environment, a trend of deepening skill sets and the development of an industrial and an R&D culture, something new (it is a recurrent phenomenon enabled by technological advancement), or westernization, for all cultures borrow what is useful to them.

Abdul Mommen claimed that the South Asian diaspora can help root out terrorism. Currently, South Asia is facing higher levels of terrorism; in America and western Europe, these levels are actually declining or increasing only marginally. Bangladesh, despite being a liberal Muslim state, is seeing its level of terrorism, as well as the number of fatalities, grow even faster than has been the case in the Middle East since 9/11. Vijay Sazawal spoke on self-governance and trans-nationalism in Kashmir. He pointed out that while Pakistan calls for more self-rule in Indian Kashmir, it provides almost none to its own Kashmiri citizens. He concluded that "the line of control (LOC) is more or less a pretty clean division between various ethnic entities that make up the old princely state and that the current boundary can sustain regional stability even when its political future is questioned."

Ashraf Haidari, representing the ambassador of Afghanistan, spoke of how globalization transformed Afghanistan into the site of a proxy war (twice) and its abandonment to the drug lords, warlords, and al-Qaeda. On the bright side, the country is making some progress in economic, political, and legal reforms; is open for regional and international business and investment; and has joined SAARC and SAFTA. Shamser Mobin Choudhury, the ambassador of Bangladesh, said that trans-nationalism has led to decolonization and the universalization of human rights; the globalization of capitalism with its destabilizing effects on less developed countries; a technological revolution in transportation and communication; and the expansion of social networks that facilitate the reproduction of trans-national migration, economic organization, and politics.

Maryam Qudrat, an Afghani-American, analyzed how the Taliban crushed independent thought by using memorization to defeat the people's analytical ability, how they twisted education and private judgment to serve their own interests, used the five daily prayers to indoctrinate the people, cited Ibn Taymiyyah to justify their attacks on other Muslims, and punished people in public to "teach." Jacob English said that Afghan nationalism is in a development phase. Although Karzai is encouraging the refugees to return, there is no stable infrastructure and a 30-55 percent unemployment rate. These and other negative factors explain, in part, the Taliban's resurgence.

www.icsbook.info

Many people do not care who wins as long as the fighting stops. Government support of the drug lords and warlords might lower the people's respect for the government, but who else is there, he asked? The international community's priorities should be paying teachers, police, and members of civil society in a consistent manner; build and staff infrastructure and schools, protect human rights, and provide security in the south.

Steve Cohen, the father of South Asian studies in America and now at Brookings, maintained that the "border" for the clash of civilizations runs within Pakistan, that Washington's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are going "very badly," and that Afghanistan is "teetering on the edge of catastrophe." He expects radical Islam to follow the path of communism: a movement that wanted to build a just world but quickly lost its unity and ultimately collapsed due to its own internal inconsistencies. In closing, he said that America is giving Pakistan a free ride because of the war on terror and that the Bush administration clearly has no long-term vision.

Faizan Haq, general secretary of the Pakistan-American Conference, claimed that the media is promoting ultra-nationalism, a policy that engenders the victimhood that enflames tension. Unfortunately, the "war on terror" is an open-ended war to which the other side has not responded. Therefore, no alternatives are provided and everyone is using the same words. Yusuf Salahuddin said that Huntington's claim that future wars will be over religion, not economic or politics, has been partially correct: Bangladesh faces rising Islamic militancy; Afghanistan and Pakistan face ethnic and religious fragmentation; and India faces poverty, friction between traditional and modern values, and the rise of Hindu "fanaticism." Since Hinduism has failed to "reform" the caste system and stop high caste persecution of low castes, the disenfranchised lower castes are listening to different ideas.

The two lively and informative question and answer sessions dealt with many of the same issues, as well as how they were affecting Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the smaller South Asian countries.

Jay Willoughby
AJISS Managing Editor
Herndon, Virginia

Should the U.S. Shut Down Gitmo?

This panel discussion, held on 27 June 2006 and sponsored by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), featured James Yee, a 1990 West Point graduate and Muslim chaplain assigned to Camp Delta (Guantanamo

www.icsbook.info

Bay) and attorney Gene Fidell of Feldesman, Tucker, Leifer, and Fidell, who has worked on cases involving Guantanamo Bay inmates. The discussion took place at the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, DC.

After making opening remarks on illegal immigrants and terrorism, Mohammad Nimer (research director, CAIR) introduced Chaplain Yee, who had served at Camp Delta from November 2002 to September 2003. While there, he experienced the detention center's living conditions and received awards and recognition for his service. On 10 September 2003, however, he was arrested and accused of espionage, aiding the enemy, mutiny, and sedition. Eventually, he was locked up alongside enemy combatants Yasser Hamdy and Jose Padilla in a naval brig in South Carolina. Later, all charges were dropped, including unrelated charges regarding national security.

Yee explained his role as advocating for the free exercise of worship. He advised the camp commander on religious aspects of prison operations and listened to prisoners' complaints and concerns, including authorized and unescorted access to the cells. In addition, he observed detainee treatment and made recommendations. He described two operations: detention operations run by military police or guards (e.g., providing them with clothes) and intelligence gathering, which included extracting information. Yee was assigned to the former group, as the commanding general at the time, Major General Geoffrey Miller, considered it unethical for the chaplain to be present during intelligence gathering operations.

Yee mentioned the suicides of 10 June 2006, which sparked the debate of whether the United States can still be considered the world leader in human rights. Talking about prisoner abuse, he presented "Gitmo's secret weapon": the use of religion against the detainees. For example, prisoners told him that they were forced to sit on a satanic circle (painted on the floor) while shackled at the wrists, ankles, and waist (the military's "three-piece suit"). Forced into the prayer position, the guards would then declare Satan, to be their God. Female interrogators would touch male prisoners inappropriately (e.g., their genitals) and force the prisoners to touch them. Also, the Qur'an was ripped, thrown, kicked, and stepped on, which ignited prisoner protests. All of this abuse led to mass suicide attempts. In January 2003, a Saudi prisoner who attempted suicide slipped into a coma for months and later recovered with brain damage before he was returned home.

When asked how to help prevent prisoner deaths, Yee recommended a policy of handling the Qur'an with respect. Culture was also abused, as prisoners sometimes were forced to wear the Israeli flag. But Islam was the cornerstone of abuse used to destroy the detainees psychologically. Today, the hunger strikes, protests, and suicide attempts revolve around their indefinite

www.icsbook.info

detention, uncertainty, and lack of due process. The military's view of suicides as an "act of asymmetrical warfare," as well as a State Department official's statement that they were a "good public relations move designed to attract attention," are, according to Yee, offensive and unproductive.

Attorney Eugene Fidell, who handled Chaplain Yee's case, discussed the detainees' "combatant status," which makes it hard for them to defend themselves. He added that their status as "intelligence sources" is slim to none, as only a few have been charged. Fidell explained that a military commission can be held anywhere, as Guantanamo is inconvenient, and that the key reason for confining them at Guantanamo was to put them beyond the federal courts' reach. The Supreme Court rejected this argument in 2004.

During the question and answer period, Yee stated that religious and sexual humiliation was a deliberate and systematic policy, for he felt that there was strong anti-Muslim sentiment toward prisoners and observant American Muslim personnel. Asked about the Geneva Conventions and the issue of cruel and inhumane treatment, Fidell agreed that such treatment violates the convention. Yee added that using religion against the detainees is against this country's character and the freedom of religion. He felt that such actions allows terrorists and those who harbor anti-American sentiments to point out that the "war on terror" is a "war against Islam" and that this hinders intelligence gathering.

When asked if any of the intelligence gathered at Guantanamo had prevented future terrorist attacks, Yee replied that such information was deemed "classified." In response to another question, he replied that a United States Southern Command website mentions the abuse of the Qur'an under media releases, along with Lieutenant General Schmidt, who authored the Schmidt report. According to Yee, no senior leadership has been held accountable for any of the abuses at Guantanamo Bay, although Geoffrey Miller, a four-star general, was reprimanded.

Surprisingly, this camp continues to exist despite two Supreme Court rulings (2004 and 2006) that its inmates are entitled to the prisoner of war protections under the Geneva Conventions and that it is subject to American law. To date, no prisoners have had a hearing. Holding prisoners without due process, and then abusing and humiliating them, is unjust and unethical and violates their basic human rights. This is even truer when, according to the Bush administration's own admission, these detainees seem to have had nothing to do with terrorism.

Soha Srour
AJISS Assistant Editor
Herndon, Virginia

www.icsbook.info

Abstracts

The dissertation titles and abstracts contained here are published with the permission of ProQuest Information and Learning, publishers of Dissertation Abstracts International, and may not be reproduced without its prior permission. Copies of the dissertations may be obtained by addressing your request to: ProQuest Information and Learning, 300 N. Zeeb Road, P.O. Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346. Tel: 1-800-521-3042; Website: http://wwwlib.umi.com/dissertations.

Wrecking Balls, Recognition, Reform: The Ambivalent Experience of Law, Justice, and Place in Urban Malaysia. Baxstrom, Richard, Ph.D. *The Johns Hopkins University, 2006.* 323 pages. Adviser: Das, Veena. Publication Number: AAT 3197110.

This dissertation is an ethnographic study of the Malaysian state's attempt to transform the physical space and demographic character of a predominantly Malaysian Tamil neighborhood and the effects of large-scale development projects on local communities in urban Kuala Lumpur. Focusing on Brickfields, one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city, I examine the discourses and practices associated with these development projects that reveal complex attempts on the part of the state and the community to reconcile techno-rational conceptions of law, development, and city planning with local understandings of justice and relatedness.

Specifically, this project explores the workings of the law in the context of urban development projects and the gap between formal legality and local notions of justice and relatedness. By establishing the multiple ways in which law and justice circulate in Brickfields, the project then considers how area residents seek to form a sense of personhood in the context of an ambiguous legal subjectivity and a rapidly changing urban environment. Finally, the project considers alternative avenues of engagement with the state, particularly religion, available in an setting where urban subjects find themselves formally excluded from the processes of law and the formation of what are believed to be ideal, ordered urban spaces.

These issues are addressed by this dissertation by asking how the *right* to the city and community is imagined and articulated in Malaysia. Through an analysis of ethnographic data obtained during fourteen months of fieldwork between 2000 and 2002, this dissertation demonstrates how variously situated Malaysians (city planners, property developers, temple priests, Brickfields residents) worked to make urban modernization consistent with Malaysian cultural and religious practices at the local level and meaningful in terms of Malaysian public life.

www.icsbook.info

The Viability of Sanctions as Effective Foreign Policy Tools: The Case of Iran and Syria. Poblete, Yleem D. S., Ph.D. ***The Catholic University of America, 2006.*** **329 pages. Adviser: O Leary, James. Publication Number: AAT 3198190.**
One of the most enduring questions policymakers grapple with is: what approach will best achieve the desired objectives? In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, sanctions offer an effective and punitive, but non-military strategy to address terrorism and proliferation threats. A preponderance of scholarly work view sanctions as failures, without taking into account whether these have been applied as required. In some studies, the goals are not prioritized or, at times, are defined incorrectly.

The dissertation seeks to address these deficiencies and alter the frame of reference of the current debate, viewing economic sanctions as part of a continuum of U.S. foreign policy initiatives. Goals are divided into three tiers. The first category includes, in descending order of value: (a) compellence/change in unacceptable behavior, (b) containment, and (c) deterrence (relating to other countries). The second tier includes: (a) punishing/isolating, (b) leveraging for cooperation, and (c) forcing the target to negotiation. The third tier focuses on symbolic goals.

The research shows that sanctions on Iran and Syria are effective foreign policy tools that have achieved a range of desired objectives relating to terrorism and proliferation. They are proportional to the threats posed by the target countries and are viable as pre-emptive strategy. The study also addresses the consequences of inaction or lack of enforcement and its impact on the target's pursuit of behavior deemed unacceptable by the sanctioner – the United States. The study further illustrates how sanctions not only demonstrate U.S. resolve but can also achieve international cooperation to address the target's problematic policies. The Iran and Syria cases confirm that incremental application is counterproductive, as it enables the target to undertake efforts, including alignment with other rogue states, to offset the impact of the sanctions.

The research illustrates the inter-dependence between tiers of goals and how the U.S. approach toward one target can affect the impact of sanctions on another. Based on the research, the study provides recommendations on how to increase the effectiveness of sanctions.

Global Means, Local Ends? A Case Study of Transnational Human Rights Networks in Jordan. Lieberman, Jessica Dumes, Ph.D. ***The George Washington University, 2006.*** **278 pages. Adviser: Brown, Nathan J. Publication Number: AAT 3199922.**
In the past few decades, small but critical groups of individuals and organizations around the world have joined with people beyond their national borders to promote political change. This dissertation examines the impact of such transnational networks in semi-authoritarian regimes through a study of changes in human rights policies in Jordan. Based on an analysis of two transnational human rights campaigns in Jordan, this dissertation argues that the networks' impact on human rights

www.icsbook.info

policies will be determined by three factors (1) the regimes' practices, (2) the nature of the issue undertaken, and (3) the organizational structure of the network.

The campaigns highlighted include a transnational struggle to address repressive press laws (1993-2004) and a campaign to protect women from gender-based violence (1993-2004). The press campaign constitutes a partnership between local activists and NGOs and external (or international) NGOs. The linkages between these non-state actors constitute a transnational network which strives to develop as a counterweight to the state. In contrast, the second campaign is an example of a transnational social movement around women's rights that has worked with the Jordanian state to implement new policies.

The present research project on human rights networks illuminates gaps in both the Middle East studies literature and in the scholarship on transnational politics by demonstrating that transnational political advocacy has not only arrived but has made an impact on human rights policies in the Middle East. In addition, the project adds to our knowledge of the way transnational networks navigate in regimes that are neither fully authoritarian nor democratic. The Jordanian regime accepts democracy rhetorically but in fact restricts many of the freedoms usually enjoyed in such a system. Hence, the country is open enough for transnational networks to flourish. Yet human rights pressures in Jordan have led to mixed results.

The research shows that semi-authoritarian regimes have a distinct impact on the work of transnational advocacy networks, as the state alters laws and institutions according to its own interests. Thus, transnational networks have a greater impact on promoting change with respect to issues that empower the state, even ones that appear at first to have little grounding in local norms. Because the ruling regime is not interested in moving from one governing system to another, networks that challenge the state's autonomy will have less power in achieving their goals of creating institutions that limit the state.

In addition, research from the Jordanian cases demonstrates that the relationship between constituent actors within transnational networks is more important than previously thought. This study pays close attention to the effects of those relationships on human rights outcomes, specifically the establishment and maintenance of network linkages. By focusing on different types of networks, this dissertation shows that while transnational initiatives can be helpful, they are also potentially counterproductive.

Much of the prior work on transnational activism argued that a state's incremental concessions in the face of human rights pressures eventually led to changes in human rights practices. In contrast, this dissertation argues that hybrid regimes are adept at balancing such pressures in order to retain their control. In addition to the importance the study places on analyzing the issue-area and organizational structure of the network, this project contributes a new variable, that of transnational networks, to the emerging research agenda on the persistence of nondemocratic regimes since the third wave of democratization in the 1990s.

www.icsbook.info

We Have No Friends But the Mountains: Transmitting Kurdish Indigenous Knowledge, Culture, and Identity in Changing Contexts (Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria). Brenneman, Robert Lee, Ph.D. *University of Minnesota, 2006.* Adviser: Plihal, Jane. Publication Number: AAT 3200577.

The Kurdish people are divided among four hostile Middle Eastern nation states – Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Syria – in which they have experienced many forms of oppression, including forced assimilation, ethnic cleansing, and even genocide. Despite this oppression, the Kurds have been able to maintain a distinct cultural identity which separates them from their Turkish, Arab, and Persian neighbors.

This research is an ethnographic study which focuses on how Kurdish ethnic identity, indigenous knowledge, and shared culture were transmitted in the traditional mountain villages. Like many other ethnic groups, however, Kurds are migrating to urban contexts in massive numbers. Therefore, I also examine how the three dimensions of ethnic identity, indigenous knowledge, and shared culture (which I have used the Kurdish word Kurdayati to encapsulate) are being transmitted in urban contexts, often far removed from their former homelands. The research is based on fieldwork conducted in Turkey and Northern Iraq over many years, but particularly during the recent period between May and September of 2005.

Because it is impossible to grasp the Kurdish dilemma without understanding the historical and political context, I have briefly examined Kurdish history with a focus on issues of Kurdish identity, from antiquity until very recent events, including the war in Iraq. The most important aspect of this research are the discussions with scores of Kurds of all walks of life who have shared their experiences with me and have allowed me to enter into their life-world. The integration of literary sources and my own fieldwork should provide insight for a better understanding of a vitally important people who have been underrepresented in ethnographic studies.

The Politics of Belief: Women's Islamic Activism in Bangladesh. Huq, Maimuna, Ph.D. *Columbia University, 2006.* 416 pages. Adviser: Combs-Schilling, M. Elaine. Publication Number: AAT 3199557.

I argue that investigation of Islamic movements in South Asia and elsewhere should be informed by anthropological concerns with subject-formation within historically specific cultural regimes. This entails a widening of the conventional emphasis on the public-formal aspects of Islamist discourses and the socioeconomic structures within which these discourses operate to include those micro-level processes whereby the selves of Islamic activists are formed.

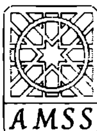
I closely examine the successful Bangladeshi women's Islamist student group 'Bangladesh Islam Chatri Sangstha' (BICSA) on these terms. I find that its success depends on its ability to produce a specific moral-practical subjecthood through disciplinary technologies grounded in revivalist-orthodox Islam and Western-style pedagogy. The latter is made accessible to BICSA by mass higher education and a mass print culture, both relatively recent developments in Bangladesh. I examine Islamist

www.icsbook.info

women's *opposition* to hegemonic Bangladeshi cultural mores through painstaking *submission* to religious prescriptions, and trace how forms of agency mobilized by BICSA's top-down process of shaping 'pristine' Muslim women return to haunt that process in the form of contestations ranging from explicit protest to ambiguous resistance.

To discern the everyday micro-level processes that guide subject formation among BICSA women, I conducted field research in urban Bangladesh (primarily Dhaka) between September 1998 and May 2003. This enables me to explore how Islamic activist women both embrace and subvert Islamic teachings imparted by the BICSA leadership with the intention of producing subjects totally committed to the Islamization of self, society, and state. I posit that in seeking to adapt Qur'anic prescriptions and the *jihad*-centered ideology of South Asian Islamist Sayyed Abul Ala Mawdudi (1903-79) to present-day realities, BICSA inevitably produces ambivalent subjectivities in the interstices of conflicting and overlapping power structures. I trace some ramifications of these conflicted subjectivities in the quotidian lives of BICSA activist women, highlighting domains of expansiveness as well as constraint. Because their subjectivity arises amid contradictory, intersecting social domains, BICSA activists attain a more complex and textured agency than perfect commitment to any one ideology, whether conformist or oppositional, would allow.

www.icsbook.info



The 35th Annual Conference of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS)

"Muslim Identities: Shifting Boundaries and Dialogues"

Cosponsored by Hartford Seminary, CT
77 Sherman Street, Hartford, CT 06105
October 27 – 29, 2006

Annual Banquet: Saturday, October 28th

Crowne Plaza Hartford Downtown – 50 Morgan Street, Hartford, CT

Tickets $35.00
(Students $15.00)

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Ibrahim Abu Rabi

Co-director, Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, Hartford Seminary

"The Shaping of Muslim Identities after
9/11 in the Context of Globalization and Justice"

Dr. Abu Rabi will examine the impact of 9/11 on shaping contemporary Muslim identities, the expansion of globalization and its impact on socioeconomic issues, as well as American Muslim social scientists' response to these changes.

Conference Chair: Dr. Jane I. Smith, Hartford Seminary, CT

Fill out Registration Form and mail to AMSS Conference Coordinator, 500 Grove Street, 2nd Floor, Herndon, VA 20170. For registration form, please visit www.amss.net or contact Layla Sein, Conference Coordinator, at conferences@amss.net

www.icsbook.info

CALL FOR PAPERS

Islam: Tradition and Modernity

The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS)-Canada &
The Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Toronto, Canada (cosponsor)

Date: November 4th, 2006
Place: St. George Campus, 89 Chestnut St., Toronto

This conference will explore the place, practice, and intersections of traditional and modern Islam. We encourage papers that reflect on the legacy and continuities within the vast Islamic intellectual and spiritual heritage, as well as on the impact of modernity and the broader social, spiritual, historical, and political contexts that inform modern readings of traditional Islam. We welcome a broad range of scholarly papers from across the social sciences and humanities. Submissions should relate (but are not limited) to the following themes:

- What are tradition and modernity?
- Traditional Islam's place and practice in the modern world: textual, ritual, devotional
- Change and continuities within traditional Islam and within the vast Islamic intellectual and spiritual heritage (theology, philosophy, art, mysticism)
- Connections and disconnects with culture and politics
- The place of Islamic epistemologies and identities
- Social movements and the struggle for social justice, human rights and women's rights
- Critiques and dialectics of tradition and modernity
- Traditionalism vs fundamentalism
- Traditional and modern hermeneutics
- Claims to authority and authenticity
- Tensions between the sacred and the secular
- Relationship between tradition and the mystical
- Adaptations of tradition in the encounter with modernity
- Revival/Renewal of tradition (emergence of counter/pseudo-traditional perspectives, neo-traditionalist movements)

This is the second Canadian conference of AMSS-Canada. Since 1972, AMSS has provided a forum for the continuity of the Islamic intellectual heritage and its broad scholarly traditions to become a critical voice in the global, transnational forum. AMSS is an interdisciplinary gathering dedicated to philosophical/theoretical issues, ethnographic and historical accounts, sociopolitical analyses, and exegetical, jurisprudential, and literary analyses from a wide spectrum of disciplines and perspectives in the social sciences and humanities. This conference fills an important niche in Canadian research by bringing together Muslim and non-Muslim scholars in a supportive, scholarly, and professional environment.

Abstracts: Submit a 250-word abstract and brief bio (Word or RTF file) by 15 August 2006 to amsscanada@yahoo.ca. Notification of acceptance will be sent by 30 August 2006.

Conference Chair:
Dr. Todd Lawson, Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations
University of Toronto

Conference Coorganizers:
Dr. Jasmin Zine, Wilfrid Laurier University, (AMSS Executive Board member)
Maliha Chishti, OISE/University of Toronto, (AMSS Executive Board member)

www.icsbook.info

CALL FOR PAPERS

Center for the Study of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies

National Conference
February 15-17, 2007
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Abstracts, not to exceed two (2) pages, should be submitted that relate to any aspect of the Islamic and Middle Eastern experience. Subjects may include, but are not limited to: literature, demographics, history, politics, economics, education, health care, fine arts, religion, social sciences, business and many other subjects. Please indicate the time required for presentation of your paper (25 minutes **OR** 45 minutes).

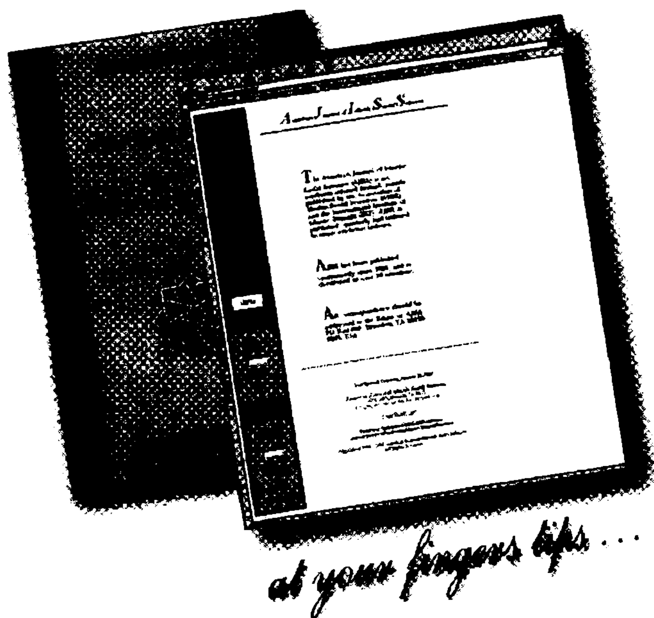
ABSTRACTS WITH HOME AND COLLEGE/AGENCY ADDRESS *MUST* BE POSTMARKED BY:
November 8, 2006.

***SEND ABSTRACTS TO*:**

Conference Coordinator
PO Box 6670
Scarborough, ME 04070-6670
Telephone: 207/839-8004
Fax: 207/839-3776
Email: naaasconference@earthlink.net
www.NAAAS.org

www.icsbook.info

AMERICAN JOURNAL
OF
ISLAMIC SOCIAL SCIENCES

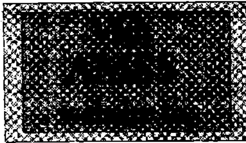


Visit AJISS website to:

- Sign up for email alerts of new AJISS publications.
- Review table of contents of past issues.
- Search the cumulative index of the table of contents of all previous issues.
- Access selective editorials, articles, book reviews, and conference reports ... and more.

www.amss.net/AJISS/

Association of Muslim Social Scientists



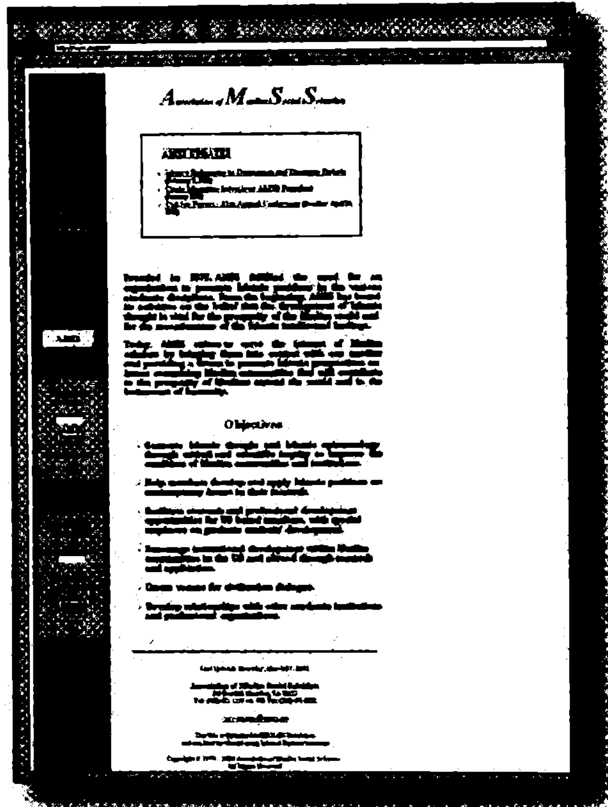
> Join AMSS mailing list.

> Learn about upcoming lectures, seminars, conferences and workshops.

> Fill out online membership form.

> Download copy of AMSS Bulletin.

> Read about AMSS news briefs and press releases.



www.amss.net

www.icsbook.info

Add a dimension to your sociology research...

sociological abstracts

Comprehensive, cost-effective, timely coverage of current ideas in sociological research

Abstracts of articles, books, and conference papers from nearly 2,000 journals published in 35 countries; citations of relevant dissertations as well as books and other media.

Now featuring:
- **Cited references**
- **Additional abstracts covering 1963-1972**

Available in print or electronically through CSA Illumina *(www.csa.com)*.

Contact sales@csa.com for trial Internet access or a sample issue.

ILLUMINA

www.csa.com

www.icsbook.info

In this issue

ARTICLES

Classification of Abrogation in the Qur'an: A Critical Analysis
Israr Ahmad Khan

Comparative Religion in Medieval Muslim Literature
Hilman Latief

Islamicjerusalem: A Model for Multiculturalism
Maher Abu-Munshar

The Islamic Concept of Education Reconsidered
Khosrow Bagheri and *Zohreh Khosravi*

REVIEW ESSAY

BOOK REVIEWS

FORUM

CONFERENCE, SYMPOSIUM, AND PANEL REPORTS

ABSTRACTS