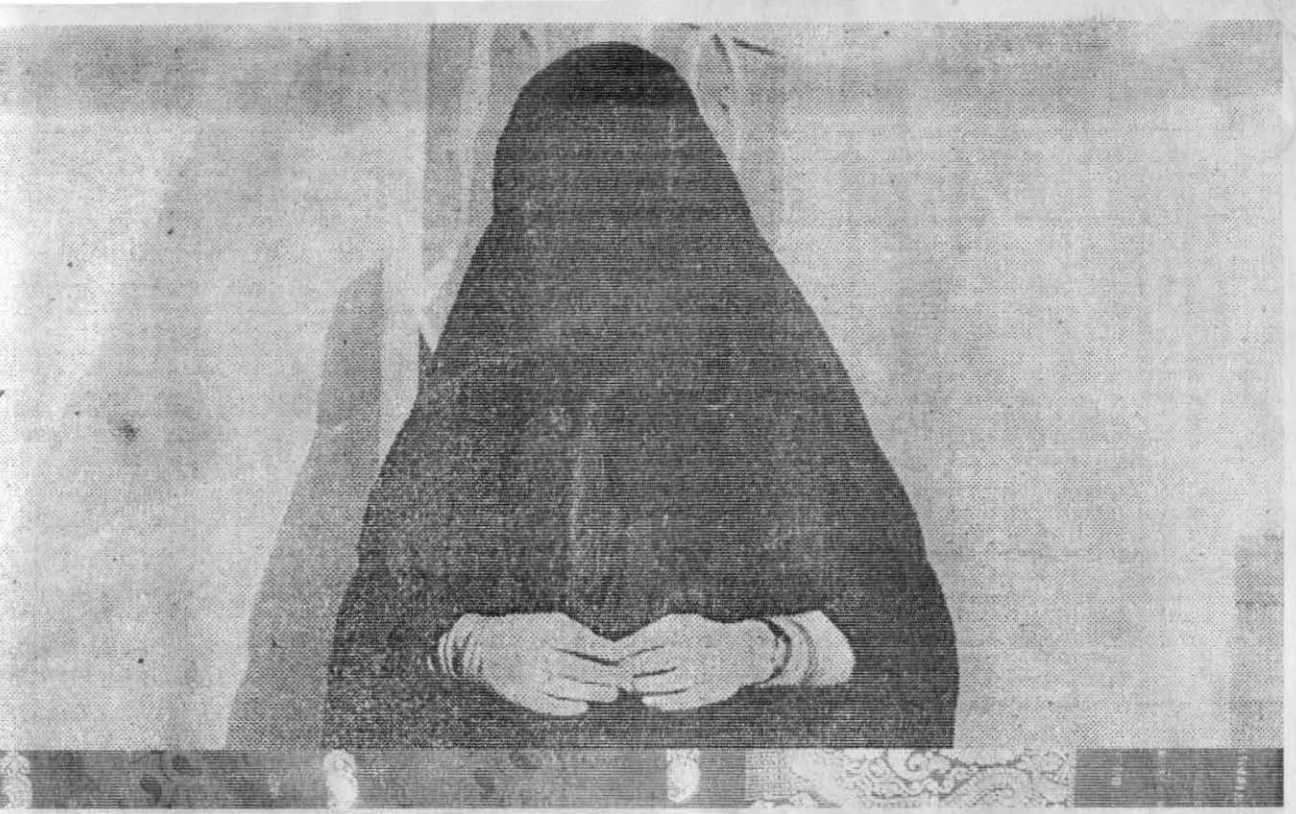


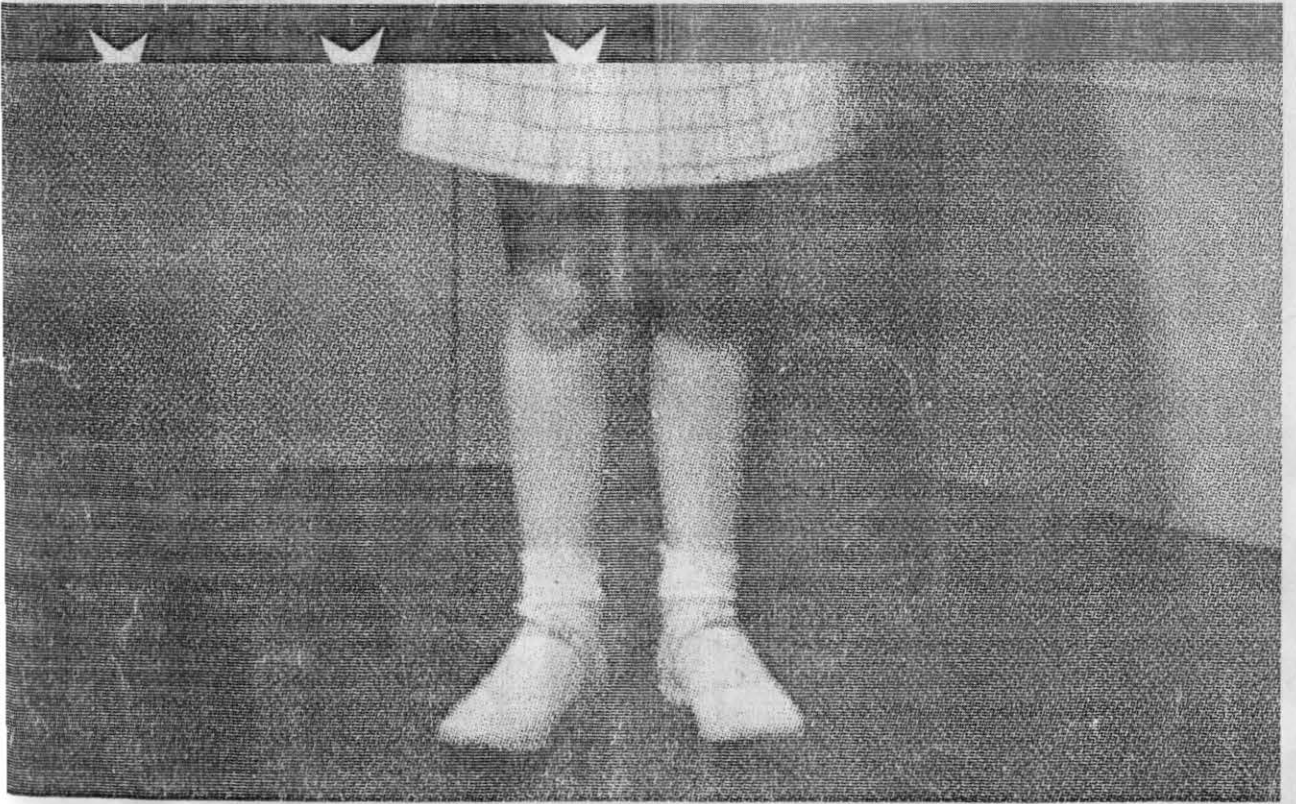
Feedback about my
biography by Deborah
Baker 2009-2011



THE CONVERT

A TALE OF EXILE AND EXTREMISM

DEBORAH BAKER



From New York Jew to Muslim fundamentalist

The Convert. A Tale of Exile and Extremism. By Deborah Baker. 246 pages. Graywolf Press, \$23.

BY LORRAINE ADAMS

Deborah Baker is a serious biographer who specializes in fairly crazy writers. Her study of the poet Laura Riding, who survived a suicide attempt in 1929 during her 14-year ménage-à-trois with Robert Graves and his wife, was a

BOOK REVIEW

Pulitzer finalist. Next came "A Blue Hand," her portrait of the Beats in India, few of whom were in robust mental health. Yet even these have nothing on Maryam Jameelah, a New York Jewish convert to Islam, who — as a disciple of Pakistan's most world-renowned fundamentalist — made a career out of condemning the West in dozens of books and pamphlets.

Ms. Baker not only makes us care about this disturbed woman and her Hectoring prose, she has succeeded in composing a mesmerizing book on one of the more curious East-West encounters. She proves once again how a marginal case can be an illuminating way into vast and much disputed subjects, in this instance the meeting of West and East and the role of women under orthodox Islam.

Sexual secrets? Suspense? Drama? Reversals? They're all here. With them come compromises on Ms. Baker's part as a biographer. In a "Note on Methodology" she explains she has presented "rewritten and greatly condensed letters" by Ms. Jameelah that are "reconstituted" versions of their originals.

She calls the book "a tale" that is "fundamentally a work of nonfiction." Whatever one calls it, this is a thor-

oughly New York yarn. The records that are its foundation can be found in the manuscripts and archives division at the main branch of the New York Public Library. When I visited recently, I found nine gray boxes of the letters, fiction, polemic, memoir, drawings, paintings, photographs and videos that document the life of Ms. Jameelah, born as Margaret Marcus in 1934 in New Rochelle, New York.

Most of the letters in the archive are addressed to her parents. Liberal assimilated Jews, they raised her and a sister in the Westchester County, New York, village of Larchmont, "a wealthy suburb of mock-Tudor homes." Ms. Jameelah did not begin speaking until age 4, but when she did, her mother told her, it was in complete sentences. At 10, she was drawing Arabs based on photographs in the National Geographic magazines at the school library and planning to live in Palestine or Egypt as a painter. At 15, while her friends were listening to Frank Sinatra, she was buying records by the Egyptian singer Umm Kulthum on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. After dropping out of New York University, she spent years reading Muslim texts in the public library's Oriental division. At 27, she converted to Islam with the help of a Brooklyn imam, and the following year, 1962, boarded a freighter for Pakistan, never to return to the United States.

Before she departed, she donated an unpublished novel and accompanying drawings to the Oriental division, where she had spent so much time. From Lahore, where she still resides, Ms. Jameelah continued to send documents to the library through 2005.

Ms. Jameelah's parents were dumfounded by her zigzagging fixations and flirtations — first with Holocaust photographs, then Palestinian suffer-



MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVES DIVISION, THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

The writer Maryam Jameelah in 1962.

ing, then a Zionist youth group and, ultimately, fundamentalist Islam. While her classmates fell happily into "boys, dates, dances, parties, clothes and film stars," Ms. Jameelah recoiled, refusing to date or form friendships.

Extensive psychoanalysis didn't help her stay in college or get a job. Finally, in 1957, at age 23, she voluntarily checked into psychiatric hospitals for about two years. Ms. Baker's work on the Beats makes her particularly awake

to the deficiencies of the psychiatry of the time. "Margaret Marcus was not the sole misfit in the 1950s asylum. Artists, poets, homosexuals, Communists and unhappy housewives joined her."

But she may be the only such '50s misfit who sent letters to one of the world's most notorious Muslim fundamentalists. After her hospitalization she reached out to Abul Ala Mawdudi of Pakistan, the founder of Jamaat-e-Islami, a political party favoring a radicalized version of Islamic governance that became a powerful force in Pakistani politics. In later years, Mawdudi would be a strong influence on both Osama bin Laden and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

Mawdudi became her correspondent and protector. He compared her to an "equatorial sapling struggling to survive in an Arctic climate" and invited her to live with his family. Whatever the reason for the invitation, it is clear his rigid Islam solved some problems. Her virginity was prized. Purdah suited her reclusiveness. Her frenetic writing — her archived letters are single-spaced and multi-paged — matched Jamaat-e-Islami's interest in promoting her diatribes against secularism and women's rights.

But Mawdudi's misinterpretation of her illness backfired. The charming autodidact of her letters became, in the flesh, a logorrheic pest with an explosive temper. Within a month, after she refused to get a job and declined marriage proposals, he sent her to live with friends 80 kilometers, or 50 miles, from Lahore. There, she tried to learn Urdu and how to cook. Seven months later, Mawdudi committed her to a Lahore psychiatric hospital. After her release, she married a Jamaat worker who, with Mawdudi's blessing, published her books. She never became a part of her mentor's inner

circle; but then, no women did.

Her prose was not the key to the popularity of her books. "The true source of Maryam Jameelah's authority arose not from her readings and argument, but from the circumstances of her life," Ms. Baker writes. "Every book she wrote is framed by an account of how ... the daughter of secular Jewish parents ... came to reject America and embrace Islam" and "sacrificed the supposed freedoms and privileges of a Western lifestyle to live ... by the sacred laws laid out in the Holy Koran."

Ms. Baker sidesteps one of the book's most crucial questions: "Was Maryam Jameelah a schizophrenic? I couldn't say." Yet the letters led me to believe she was.

Assessing her life's work, Ms. Baker criticizes Ms. Jameelah for presenting "a savage and titillating portrait of America" while disclaiming "all responsibility for the crimes" committed by young terrorists who were inspired by her. She also wonders why Ms. Jameelah was intent on limiting the role of women to that of wife and mother, a way of life she herself "never managed to live." Ms. Baker says Ms. Jameelah's children were raised by her husband's first wife.

Ms. Baker's visit to Lahore to confront Ms. Jameelah on such issues ends the book. While I wish she'd spent more time with her subject in person, the disclosures she elicits there about Ms. Jameelah's childhood are stunning. As it is, Ms. Baker's captivating account conveys the instability, faith, politics and improbable cultural migration that make Ms. Jameelah's life story so difficult to sum up yet impossible to dismiss.

Lorraine Adams is the author of "Harbor" and "The Room and the Chair." She is now writing a novel set in Pakistan.

Ahmed Rashid and Fatima Bhutto and the Indian novelist Kiran Desai. Their comments will appear on the back of the book.

The Convert: A Parable of Islam and America

Deborah Baker, Graywolf, \$23 (256p) ISBN 978-1-55597-582-1

Pulitzer finalist Baker (*A Blue Hand*) unravels the often contradictory life of an American woman who became one of the pre-eminent voices of Islamic revivalism, in this stellar biography that doubles as a mediation on the fraught relationship between America and the Muslim world. Margaret Marcus was a secular Jew in Mamaroneck, N.Y., before she became fascinated with Islam and moved to Pakistan in 1962 and took the name Maryam Jameelah. Baker, who discovered the archive of Marcus's papers in the New York Public Library, carefully reconstructs her movements after her arrival in Lahore, Pakistan, using letters Marcus sent to her parents and articles she published in various Islamic magazines. Jameelah's criticism of the West is unwavering: she denounces American foreign policy, particularly its support of Israel, and secularism in general, insisting that law be derived from the Qur'an. As Baker digs deeper into her subject's difficult life--Jameelah's time in Pakistan grew increasingly strained--she ponders the effect Jameelah's writings on global jihad may have on today's al-Qaeda and Taliban. This is a cogent, thought-provoking look at a radical life and its rippling consequences. (May)

Sincerely,

Deborah

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www.deborahbaker.net

236 Carlton Avenue

Brooklyn NY 11205

USA

718-852 6768 mob 646 240 7609

[Front cover]

The Convert

A Tale of Exile and Extremism

Deborah Baker

[Front Flap]

\$23.00

What drives a young woman raised in a postwar New York City suburb to convert to Islam, abandon her country and Jewish faith, and embrace a life of exile in Pakistan? *The Convert* tells the story of how Margaret Marcus of Larchmont became Maryam Jameelah of Lahore, one of the most trenchant and celebrated voices of Islam's argument with the West.

A cache of Maryam's letters to her parents in the archives of The New York Public Library sends acclaimed biographer Deborah Baker on her own odyssey into the labyrinthine heart of 20th century Islam. Casting a shadow over these letters is the enigmatic figure of Mawlana Abul Ala Mawdudi, both Maryam's adoptive father and mentor, and the man who laid the intellectual foundations for militant political Islam.

As she assembles the pieces of a singularly perplexing life, Baker finds herself captive to the larger questions raised by Maryam's journey. How, exactly, did the cold war devolve into the war on terror? Is the argument between Islam and the West a metaphysical one or a historical one? Is Maryam's story just another bleak chapter in the so-called clash of civilizations? Or does it signify something else entirely? And then there's this: is the life depicted in Maryam's letters home and in her books an honest reflection of the one she lived? Like many compelling and true tales, *The Convert* is stranger than fiction. It is both a gripping story of a life lived on the radical

"In this unusual, sometimes funny and sometimes frightening biography Deborah Baker deftly explores the urgency and lunacy of conversion, Pakistan--and America's--romance with fundamentalism, and the necessity for a less blinkered vision of Islam." --Fatima Bhutto

Bar code:

ISBN 978-1-55597-582-1

[logo]

Graywolf Press

Dear Aiman,

I hope this finds you and your family well and that school is also going well for you.

I am writing to tell you that my book about your grandmother is coming out this May. I am attaching a cover of the book. I hope you like it. If you write her please tell her I will send her copies as soon as they are available. I am in India at the moment, on my way to China for some book festivals, but will be back in the US in March and will write her then. In the meantime, the book has received a very positive advance review from the publishing trade magazine Publisher's Weekly. It has also received very positive notices from the Pakistani writers

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edge and a profound meditation on the roots of terror in our age of dread.

[Back flap]

Deborah Baker is the author of *In Extremis: The Life of Laura Riding*, a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize, as well as *A Blue Hand: The Beats in India*. She divides her time between Calcutta, Goa, and Brooklyn.

[Back cover]

How did Margaret Marcus of Larchmont become Maryam Jameelah of Lahore?

Advance Praise for *The Convert*

"Deborah Baker's astonishing book reads like a detective story but is also a work of enormous beauty and understanding. She has explored the most difficult of subjects in an evocative and original way, powerfully conjuring a bygone, albeit simpler era when the argument between Islam and the West first arose fifty years ago. *The Convert* is the most brilliant and moving book written about Islam and the West since 9/11." --Ahmed Rashid, author of *Taliban* and *Descent into Chaos*

"With remarkable even-handedness, Deborah Baker reveals the terrible costs of belonging exacted by two very different, battling cultures. Sweeping books on the big wars can't do what this focused gaze on a single misfit so vividly accomplishes." --Kiran Desai, author of *The Inheritance of Loss*



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ
الرَّحْمَنِ
الرَّحِيمِ

Tromsø, Norway; Friday 24th February 2011

Assalaam aleikum, my dearest sister Maryam.

Alhamdulillah Rabbi l'alameen, by His grace you have recovered and are taken care of your beloved family. I cant tell you how extremely happy I was to hear from you again, yet very concerned when you told me the news that you'd been to the hospital! May Allah the Almighty make it easy for you.

I am on vacation at my mother's home in Tromsø, north of Norway, with my daughter and the two youngest sons. It is tremendous much snowfall, but so lovely. Oslo doesn't get this charm no matter how much snow might be falling. Because of clouds, we cant view the beautiful north light which usually decorates the horizon this time of the year, but we still have some days left before returning to Oslo, so we might catch the view of some of it, inshaAllah.

What good news that your family has the joy of marriage union. Mabruk!! And yes, I fully understand your concern how your family members will cope with the lifestyle in the arch-Western location USA. But with faith and proud Muslim identity, I believe a Muslim can go through no matter what and wherever as long as one have a sure trust in Allah azza wa Jall. Yes, the challenge is big, and fitna surrounds a servant of Allah in these countries, so the best way to hold on to the rope of Allah, is to be steadfast and not at least religious. To my understanding, the essence of being a Muslim is to be religious, otherwise it becomes just an identity.

I enclose a newspaper from August last year, but it has some articles you might find interesting.

It is so shameful to read about American soldier's attitude and behaviour in Afghanistan! No matter the population get provoked towards all foreign groups in the country. Just the other day the Norwegian base was attacked as revenge for the disrespectful act of the American soldiers who burned copies of the holy Qur'an, as a climax after urinating on dead Afghani

(8)

fighters! Do they ever want peace??!! The Norwegian troops agree to stay until next year if the mission is nursery aid and building schools, but this doesn't matter to Taliban; Norwegians are foreigners to them in anyway! Some years ago a Norwegian war-journalist wanted to make a documentary about the Taliban from within, which at first seemed successfully. He had a deal with a warlord, went with this group up in the mountains, where the journalist where kidnapped. No ransom was asked for to the Norwegian government, they just wanted to know if he was a spy, which he proved not to be. During his captivation the journalist converted to Islam, to the joy of the whole camp of Taliban, and they slaughter a goat for him and made a feast. But other Taliban warlords refused to believe that he was sincere enough,- insisted that he was a spy and wanted his head chopped off. At the same time the Norwegian connection in Afghanistan all of a sudden looked at the journalist with suspicion when he managed to send a message to them that he was safe, because the roomer has reached them that he had become a Muslim. So no rescue team came to his help. Subhanallah, after his safe return to Norway he wrote a book about the whole incident, and each time interviewed in the media, they asked him if it was true that he had become a true *practising* Muslim. Note the choice of word "*practising*"! He confirmed it, but also said that was his own business and nobody else's!

Sister, I'll pray for your well being, and inshaAllah I'll hear from you soon. May Allah azza wa Jall bless you and your family, fill your home with joy and tranquillity. I love you for the sake of Allah, and let us remember each other in our prayers!

Wa assalaam, your sister in faith.

Btoul



Tromsøe city, daytime at wintertime!

Oslo 18 April 2012 / 26 Jumada I 1433

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Assalaam aleikum, my dearest sister Maryam!

May you receive this letter in good health and blessed with tranquility and strong faith.

Please receive my apology for delayed response as I haven't got the opportunity

to write earlier. I was deeply disturbed to read about your stroke and illness, and likewise overjoyed to be reassured that you are now fully recovered and taken care of by your lovely family. How blessed to be surrounded by close kinship at the peak of one's age. Alhamdulillah!

Yes, I spent a very good vacation with my mother in Tromsø earlier this winter. I even got the chance to go skiing with her on occasion. Even as 70 years old, she is much better in skiing and more sporty than I!! I was dressed up in big clothes and hijab, and even though, nobody cared to look twice at a fully covered Muslima entered the Norwegian dominion sport skiing up in the forest! I think they rather looked at it as something positive. Little they would know that I was in fact ethnic Norwegian grown up doing skiing every winter (though twenty years since last time..)!

And this ethnic question is in focus these days in Norway, as the trial against the terrorist mass murder from last summer started a couple of days ago. You might remember the case when an ethnic Norwegian bombed the parliament house here in Oslo, killing 8, and then went to

an island where it was held a political youth camp, and massacre 69 of them. Part of the court is media broadcasted, but most of the conversation between lawyer and prosecuted is not shown live, only extract from speeches. The reason is not to give him propaganda to his ideas. The pre court subject has been wither he was a psychotic, mental ill person who should spend his punishment locked up in a mental hospital, or a cold manipulating, narcissistic man with an imaginable mission to "save" Norway from multiculturalism and islamophobia. So far it is more likely the latter we are dealing with. He claims to be a hero, and says he would do it again, and regret he didn't do more. The trial is set to last ten weeks, so it is still more to come. Not surprisingly he sets the propaganda against Muslims, and the importance of finding back to the original ethnic Norwegian race. The court looks at these arguments as ridiculous and childish, which makes the prosecuted, who is mostly very cold and calm, much disturbed. As he is not alone with nazi and nationalistic ideas, it is very important for him not to be marked as psychotic lunatic.

May Allah protect our children and their offspring from all harm.

An even bigger tragedy is the ongoing conflict in Syria where thousands being killed, hurt, tortured and fugitive for more than a year now. This is one of the most evil roots in the shade of the Arab Spring. What takes it so long? My daughter wrote an essay on the subject and alhamdulillah, got the highest remark. During the process, she showed me the intriguing groups in Syria where sunni is in minority, and the Alawis along with other sub groups, are part of the parliament and cabinet, including the president himself. These sect believe that the president is the next incarnation of God (astarghfirullah), and nothing ever can stop these movement. If somebody doesn't obey order, they are killed immediately as traitors. It was even shown on the internet people, including women in hijab, doing sojoud over the picture of Assad!! SubhanAllah! Now, UN are just playing by a procedure role, a kind of step by step, but in reality they are afraid to take military

actions as they quickly did to Gaddafi and Libya. In the meanwhile, the genocide continues. May Allah help our brothers and sister in faith.

The spring has come to Oslo, but the cold weather and even some snowflakes returned these last days. Its good for my husband who is so much disturbed by the pollen allergy. And by the way, he sends his best salaam and greetings to your husband as well.

May Allah give you health, peace and tranquility, bless you and your family. And may He give us the love of those who loves Him, and the love of every good actions that brings us closer to Him. Amin

Your sister in faith, Batoul

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Date: 24-09-2011

Assalamu Alaikum!

I am the granddaughter of Mrs. Maryam Jameelah. I got your letter from my uncle Haider Khan and I am his niece. I showed your letter to my grandmother Mrs. Maryam Jameelah and she asked me to convey you her answers to your questions.

There are lot of websites on internet where information on her can be searched, you just have to write her name on Google and you can visit a lot of sites about her e.g. Scribd.com contain portions of her books which you can read online.

About the book 'The Convert: A Tale of Exile and Extremism' by Deborah Baker, there are lot of misconceptions of the author in this book. Deborah visited Mrs Maryam two or three times and she expressed that her books inspired terrorism, it's because the role of Mujahedeen in Islam is mentioned in her books. As a true Muslim, we all know the truth about Mujahedeen and that they fight for Islam. Deborah Baker has related Jihad with terrorism. The meaning of Jihad can clearly be understood by studying Mrs Maryam Jameelah's books e.g **Ahmed Khalil**. She is not happy with what Deborah Baker has written about Maulana Maudoodi in her book. The letters Deborah Baker has used in her book are altered. The original letters can be found in Maryam Jameelah's following books: **Correspondence between Maulana Maudoodi and Maryam Jameelah, At home in Pakistan and Memoires of Childhood and Adolescence**. Detailed information on her can be found in these books. The relation between Maulana Maudoodi and Maryam Jameelah was that of a father and daughter.

My grandmother's words after reading "The Convert" were that she was not at all surprised with what Deborah had written about her. She said that it was written by a non-Muslim from an American point of view and it was expected. Another important thing is that my grandmother did not receive a copy of the book until after it was published.

She is living a happy and contented life with her family. She is the second wife of my grandfather Muhammad Yousaf Khan. Now days she spends most of the time reading and reviewing books. I asked her to suggest you one of her books that will be helpful to you and she suggested **Islam in theory and Practice**.

I hope you find this information useful. If you have any other questions regarding your search, feel free to contact me.

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السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Mr. Haider khan;

I am a fifty years old master's student from Saudi Arabia, type in research about MRS Maryam Jameella, three years ago, and I am now in the final stages of my research, it is the first Arabic research about MRS Maryam Jameella life and books, I would like to ask Some questions, about her;how is she doing now.

If you are familiar with some of the opponents of the ideas of Mrs. Maryam Jameella from Muslim intellectuals, could you please give me some information about that, and I want to ask you about,Deborah Bakerbook that she wrote about Mrs. Maryam;('The Convert: A Tale of Exile and Extremism' by Deborah Baker) I think that book has a lot of lies in it, Is it true that Mrs.

Maryam met with Deborah Baker and gave her approval on the book.,

Hope you respond, sir, it will be useful to my research that I find any information about Mrs.

Maryam Jameella I hope that you give me some information about her and family now.

I pray to ALLAHthat this research will be in the balance of her good deed.

Nora Hassan Al-Ghamdi

Umm Al-Qura University in Makah,

P.S

I took your email address from Sheikh; DR.Mohammad Sharif from Jeddah,I hope that you forgive me for theWeak language.

planning to live in Palestine or Egypt as a painter. At 15, while her friends were listening to Frank Sinatra, she was buying records by the Egyptian singer Umm Kulthum on Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn. After dropping out of New York University, she spent years reading Muslim texts in the public library's Oriental division. At 27, she converted to Islam with the help of a Brooklyn imam, and the following year, in 1962, boarded a freighter for Pakistan, never to return to the United States.

Before she departed, she donated an unpublished novel and accompanying drawings to the Oriental division, where she had spent so much time. From Lahore, where she still resides, Jameelah continued to send documents to the library through 2005. In the days I spent reading through the files Baker used, I felt transported to a now lost version of Lahore, but also to Jameelah's New York. Her affectionate letters home contrast sharply with her tendentious books, many of which are fixtures in madrasas around the world.

Jameelah's parents were dumfounded by her zigzagging fixations and flirtations — first with Holocaust photographs, then Palestinian suffering, then a Zionist youth group and, ultimately, fundamentalist Islam. While her classmates fell happily into “boys, dates, dances, parties, clothes and film stars,” Jameelah recoiled, refusing to date or form friendships.

Extensive psychoanalysis didn't help her stay in college or get a job. Finally, in 1957, at age 23, she voluntarily checked into psychiatric hospitals for about two years. Baker's work on the Beats makes her particularly awake to the deficiencies of psychiatry of the time. “Margaret Marcus was not the sole misfit in the 1950s asylum. Artists, poets, homosexuals, Communists and unhappy housewives joined her.”

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But she may be the only such '50s misfit who sent letters to one of the world's most notorious Muslim fundamentalists. After her hospitalization she reached out to Abul Ala Mawdudi of Pakistan, the founder of Jamaat-e-Islami, a political party favoring a radicalized version of Islamic governance that became a powerful force in Pakistani politics; in later years, Mawdudi would be a strong influence on both Osama bin Laden and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

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Her prose was not the key to the popularity of her books. "The true source of Maryam Jameelah's authority arose not from her readings and argument, but from the circumstances of her life," Baker writes. "Every book she wrote is framed by an account of how . . . the daughter of secular Jewish parents . . . came to reject America and embrace Islam" and "sacrificed the supposed freedoms and privileges of a Western lifestyle to live . . . by the sacred laws laid out in the Holy Koran."

Baker sidesteps one of the book's most crucial questions: "Was Maryam Jameelah a schizophrenic? I couldn't say." Yet the letters led me to believe she was. Baker mentions that Jameelah was medicated with Compazine, but blurs the implications when she omits that it's prescribed for schizophrenia. She also leaves out instances when Jameelah unambiguously acknowledges why she takes the anti-schizophrenic medication Thorazine. In a letter of Sept. 15, 1981, for example, Jameelah wrote: "I have to take Thorazine every night. I know if I stop taking it, I will soon relapse into the same condition I was before I went to the hospital both in New York and Lahore."

Assessing her life's work, Baker criticizes Jameelah for presenting "a savage and titillating portrait of America" while disclaiming "all responsibility for the crimes" committed by young terrorists who were inspired by her. She also wonders why Jameelah was intent on limiting the role of women to that of wife and mother, a way of life she herself "never managed to live." (Baker says Jameelah's children were raised by her husband's first wife.)

Baker's visit to Lahore to confront Jameelah on such issues ends the book. While I wish she'd spent more time with her subject in person, the disclosures she elicits there about Jameelah's childhood are stunning. As it is, Baker's captivating account conveys the instability, faith, politics and improbable cultural migration that make Jameelah's life story so difficult to sum up yet impossible to dismiss.

Deborah Baker is a serious biographer who specializes in fairly crazy writers. Her study of the poet Laura Riding, who survived a suicide attempt in 1929, during her 14-year ménage-à-trois with Robert Graves and his wife, was a Pulitzer finalist. Next came "A Blue Hand," her portrait of the Beats in India, few of whom were in robust mental health. Yet even these have nothing on Maryam Jameelah, a New York Jewish convert to Islam, who — as a disciple of Pakistan's most world-renowned fundamentalist — made a career out of condemning the West in dozens of books and pamphlets.

Enlarge This Image

The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

Maryam Jameelah in 1962.

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Sexual secrets? Suspense? Drama? Reversals? They're all here. With them come compromises on Baker's part as a biographer. In a "Note on Methodology" she explains she's presented "rewritten and greatly condensed letters" by Jameelah that are "reconstituted" versions of their originals. She calls the book "a tale" that is "fundamentally a work of nonfiction."

Whatever one calls it, this is a thoroughly New York yarn. The records that are its foundation can be found in the manuscripts and archives division at the main branch of the New York Public Library. When I visited recently, I found nine gray boxes of the letters, fiction, polemic, memoir, drawings, paintings, photographs and videos that document the life of Jameelah, born as Margaret Marcus in 1934 in New Rochelle, N.Y.

Most of the letters in the archive are addressed to Jameelah's parents. Liberal assimilated Jews, they raised her and a sister in the Westchester County village of Larchmont, "a wealthy suburb of mock-Tudor homes." Her mother went to Smith, and her father worked in his family's tie business. Jameelah didn't begin speaking until age 4, but when she did, her mother told her, it was in complete sentences. At 10, she was drawing Arabs based on photographs in the National Geographic magazines at the school library and

April 18, 2012

Maryam Jameelah
C/O Muhammad Yusuf Khan
15/49 Sant Nagar
Lahore

Subject: Your biography by Deborah Baker

Dear Muhtarma Maryam Jameelah,

Assalam-o-alaykum!

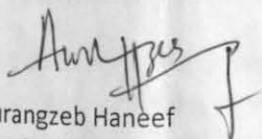
I hope this message finds you in good health and happiness. I am a faculty member at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), where I teach courses in Islamic Studies.

With this note I am attaching a copy of my review of Deborah Baker's biography: *The Convert: A Tale of Exile and Extremism*. Perhaps you have already seen this. I enjoyed reading the book and I was fascinated by your story.

I was also in touch with Deborah Baker and she was kind to respond to some of my observations. She shared email address of your granddaughter Aiman who encouraged my desire to pay you a visit. Therefore, I wonder if you would be willing to see me at your place and talk about your experiences in Lahore and your thoughts on "Islam and the West."

I would be grateful to receive a reply.

Kind regards,



Aurangzeb Haneef
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Between Islam & the West: The life of Maryam Jameelah

Aurangzeb Haneef | 2/12/2012 12:00:00 AM

Deborah Baker is an acclaimed biographer whose second book, *In Extremis: The Life of Laura Riding* was shortlisted for the Pulitzer Prize in Biography in 1994.

In 2008-09 she was a Fellow at the Dorothy and Lewis C. Cullman Center for Writers and Scholars at the New York Public Library where she wrote *The Convert: A Tale of Exile and Extremism*, which was one of the finalists for the 2011 National Book Award. In an isolated section of the library, one day Baker found a casebook while looking for something interesting. 'Inside this casebook, like a small pulsating heart, lay a warm knot of baby-micene stitching in a hollow of shredded legal citations.' Another day, in the Manuscripts and Archives Division she found something similar, crying for her attention: *Maryam Jameelah Papers*, 2.5 linear feet (9 boxes). Baker happily responded.

Maryam Jameelah was Margaret Marcus, a Jewish-American woman who embraced Islam and exiled herself to begin a new life in Lahore in 1962. She was invited to Lahore by Maulana Maududi, the founder of *Jamat-islami*. *The Convert* is the story of her life from being Margaret to becoming Maryam, between Islam and the West a story that tries to untangle the warm knot of a small pulsating heart.

Margaret converted at the age of 27 in suburban New York. But for her, it was not about forsaking Judaism. Rather, it was about finding a place for herself in a society where she was a misfit. Maududi's invitation to Pakistan provided an exit for her stagnant and isolated life. She could finally belong somewhere.

Before being invited to Lahore, Margaret had exchanged letters with both Maududi and Sayyid Qutb, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Both of them had talked about the moral decadence of the West and its imperial ambitions based on its Capitalist agenda and its general disdain toward Islam. While views of Maududi and Qutb were shaped by limited encounters with the West, Margaret's beliefs arose out of her intimate experience of the worst of what her society had to offer: a world rooted in individual materialism unchecked by a moral and religious code.

She used her experience to write scathing condemnations of her society. Now, here was an insider who could criticise the West in a more convincing manner to supplement the *Jamat's* own narrative. From being an outcast to becoming a celebrity, Maryam began to find her ground. She even thought she was finally happy.

But life in Pakistan brought its own sets of challenges and setbacks. In one of her own books, *At Home in Pakistan*, Maryam acknowledged that her impression of Maududi from his letters turned out to be 'very different' from the Maududi she met after her arrival in Lahore. He was 'equally surprised and dismayed' upon meeting her. Maryam had imagined living in Lahore would be living in a traditional and orthodox Muslim society. But to her, it seemed to be far off from the goals and ideals of Maududi and his *Jamat*. What had begun as a quest for the truth had turned into a place of disillusionment.

There are several surprises in the book which come at precise moments when one is just getting comfortable with the predictability of the story. The tale works more like a detective novel. One of the most fascinating parts is where Maududi distances himself from Maryam and she is ultimately sent to a mental institution - in an ironic replay of her past. Maryam's release and her marriage to an already married *Jamat* worker are further dramas that keep the reader engaged in Maryam's fascinating journey as a convert.

The structure of the book reflects Baker's own progression of learning about Maryam and her own quest of finding answers to difficult questions about Maryam's life.

Baker appears as vulnerable to sudden shifts as she discovers the story along with the reader.

HER reconstruction of Maryam's life is primarily based on Maryam's letters.

She has also reviewed some of her books to gain a better understanding of Maryam's personality and worldview. But working with letters posed some problems.

Baker edited some of these letters for voice and brevity. She also took some liberty in mixing the contents of different letters into one to highlight some of Maryam's experiences. In all honesty she discloses this in 'A Note on Methodology' after telling the story. This raises an important question: Did she mislead her readers through the book? No. She has been extremely careful in presenting Maryam's thoughts and feelings to her readers. I looked at some of the letters published many years ago in two separate books in Lahore, and found something interesting.

There were variations between letters which appeared in Lahore publications and those in *The Convert*. But these were insignificant variations. Baker took great care in keeping the original voice and message as far as I could find.

Interestingly, this exercise led me to another discovery. In a letter dated early August 1963, Baker quotes Maryam: 'Well, from that moment on I realised that Maududi family unity and solidarity were valued above the teachings of the Prophet and that no criticism from an outsider would be tolerated.'

This line is missing from the letter dated August 3, 1963, published in Lahore by her husband. Clearly, the Jamat could not allow this to go public. Maryam's letters were edited for publication in Lahore and some material which seemed damaging was removed.

There was one more problem with the letters. Maryam revealed at a later time that she had not been entirely truthful in some of her earlier letters to her parents about life in Pakistan. On closer examination Baker found that many of the letters seemed to have been re-typed. This raised a serious question: How much could she rely on these letters to re-construct Maryam's life as it happened? After telling the story from these letters she tries to find explanations to understand some parts of Maryam's life which do not make sense to her.

This takes her and the reader to an exciting conclusion of the book.

IN the book, Maryam's letters are followed by Baker's reflections, which are often critical of Maryam's views and those of her mentors. Baker raises pertinent questions to get rid of the simplistic view of the relationship between the so-called Islam and the West: 'Was the enmity between Islam and the West metaphysical or historical?'; 'By what mechanism did America and the world's Muslims suddenly become each other's evil caricatures? Metaphor? Narrative? Racist propaganda?' She is both empathetic to as well as critical of Maryam's positions, and her empathy is always lined with a certain hint of wariness. While she wants us to like her she also wants us to be cautious. It is a hard balance to maintain. And she does it well.

Baker treats other characters with similar balance, including Maududi and his opposites, the secular and Westernised elite of Lahore. When she questions Maududi's ideology she seems to side with his opposition. But she also seems to understand and almost agree with him when she critically observes a section of these elite: 'Cigarettes, illicit alcohol, and dancing girls? No wonder the ranks of civil society were so thin and in need of hired guns. Such a limited notion of individual freedom

would mean little to those who had difficulty putting food on the table. I recalled Maududi's warning to the students at Lahore Law School almost exactly 60 years before: Pakistan's secular and Westernised elite would hijack Pakistan for their own ends.

This is simply brilliant. She forces the reader to consider each side of the argument in its own perspective. Her empathy with each side makes one re-think the whole secular-religious divide and the role of this dichotomous relationship in the development of Pakistan, its identity and its future.

Baker has been fairly thoughtful and balanced in her treatment of characters and their views. And she has constructed a fascinating story. But I must also share my observation about her treatment or lack thereof of two concepts: extremism and radicalisation. She does not explain either of these very loaded terms and ends up using them loosely. Is Maududi an extremist in her view? What does it mean to be radicalised? Is writing against Western capitalism an act of extremism and radicalism? How, why, and in what context may these writings incite violence? In an almost desperate attempt to find answers to some questions in the end, it seems that she oversimplifies the realities of post-colonial Muslim experience. As a consequence, in a simplistic manner she attempts to draw a causal relationship between 'radicalisation' and the events of September 11: 'How could Maryam be sure her writings hadn't played a role in the radicalisation of Muslim youth?' She asks Maryam again: 'And 9/11? Was it justified?' In an earlier reflective moment Baker teases the thought that perhaps these attacks were a response to American intervention in the Muslim world: 'Did we take after them or did they take after us?' Somehow she misses to connect this thought in her final analysis.

It is indeed true that a certain hateful caricature of the West has made inroads into the modern Jihadi literature adding fuel to the fire. But for actual violence to take place against the West, the Jihadis have always needed a justification based on Western acts of direct interference, aggression and oppression in Muslim societies. This bit is quite clear from their literature.

I agree with Baker that ideas of Maududi, Qutb, and Maryam have certainly played a role. But these cannot be understood to be the sole influence. There is more to the whole picture of Jihad than she has been able to present in the concluding parts of the book.

I AM baffled but also amused with Baker's treatment of the book in the final sections. Maryam's last location and its role in the overall story leap again as a surprise which threatens to shatter the carefully constructed narrative. Baker says: 'Only then did it occur to me that I had made the same mistake [Maududi] had made. From a series of letters, I had conjured an entire being. I imagined I knew Maryam Jameelah.' And following Baker, so had I, until I started reading the last sections of the book. But, unlike a detective novel, not everything comes together in the end. Baker's frustration and anger are almost palpable when she fails to get answers from Maryam for some of the questions which are crucial to completing the story. Perhaps they remain a mystery to Maryam as well.

The only way it can make sense is that Margaret's journey to find meaning, truth, and belonging in a foreign land took unexpected turns marked with challenges, disappointments, and delusions for Maryam. And the end was a reflection of this unfinished, yet fascinating quest, which was told wonderfully by Deborah Baker.

Perhaps, one day it will all be clear. Or, perhaps, I will go and see Maryam Jameelah myself. E The reviewer is a faculty member at LUMS

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12-01-2012

Bismillah-i-rahman
-i-Rahim

I certainly remember The Islamic Mission in Brooklyn on 43 States Street. I went there to formally adopt Islam in 1961-1962. Shaikh Daud Ahmad Faisal taught me Islam and his wife Khudiyah taught me Namaz (shahadat), I do not know if they still remember me or have passed away.

I do not remember any of the younger people you mentioned.

I am very happy you think

(22)

of me all these years. With all
my dua and best regards.

Maryam Jameelah
for
Maryam Jameelah

(23)

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Greetings of salam to you, Ms. Baker

I would like to be in contact with Maryam Jameelah. She was like my older sister when I lived with our Mama Khadijah and our Baba Daoud Ahmad Faisal as their unofficially adopted son. We had a mutual younger "sister" Dola Gazaly, the daughter of a Yemeni immigrant named Ali Gazaly. I am hopeful that Maryam will remember me. She used to come to the Islamic Mission of America at 143 state street in Brooklyn in 1957 or 1958 and I still remember the telephone number there to be, or to

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to have been, TR (iangle) 5-15934

Please ask her to contact me
via yousef_salem@juno.com.

I am in Sunnyvale, California.

Thankyou kindly and I would
appreciate it if you would
confirm receiving my message.

Dear Yusef Salem,

Thank you for your email.

Maryam Jameelah has not
been keeping well for the last
couple of months but I am copying
her nice so she can pass on the
message to her. You can always

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write to her directly c/o Muhammad
Yusuf Khan. The Lahore address is
in my book.

I'm sure she will be happy to
hear from you.

Shiraz Gull

From: Catherine Shaw [catherine.shaw@islamic-foundation.org.uk]
Sent: Wednesday, April 04, 2012 1:48 PM
To: 'shiraz Gull'
Subject: RE:

Dear Shiraz

Many thanks for your e mail. I don't know what happens to Maryam's post these days! I have checked and she has been sent copies of the MWBR as and when they are issued. The present one has just arrived and I will personally send her a copy! In any case I will of course show her message to Professor Khurshid and Dr Manazir.

With very kindest regards

Catherine

Catherine Shaw
PA to Dr. Manazir Ahsan
The Islamic Foundation
Markfield Conference Centre
Ratby Lane
Markfield
Leicestershire
LE67 9SY
Tel: (01530) 241906
Email: Catherine.shaw@islamic-foundation.org.uk

*Dear Sister in Islam
Wa Alaikum Salam
This is for your kind
information, please*

*Al-Lone
4/4*

This e-mail and any attachments are confidential and intended solely for the use of the addressee only. If you have received this message in error, you must not copy, distribute or disclose the contents; please notify the sender immediately and delete the message. This message is attributed to the sender and may not necessarily reflect the view of The Islamic Foundation (IF) or Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE). Agreements binding IF or MIHE may not be concluded by means of e-mail communication. E-mail transmissions are not secure and IF or MIHE accepts no responsibility for changes made to this message after it was sent. Whilst steps have been taken to ensure that this message is virus free, IF or MIHE accepts no liability for infection and recommends that you scan this e-mail and any attachments.

From: Shiraz Gull [mailto:shiraz@ips.net.pk]
Sent: 04 April 2012 08:43
To: 'Catherine Shaw'
Subject:

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Dear Catherine,

I hope you are in the best of health and spirits.

I have received a letter from Sister Maryam Jameelah which reads as under:

➤ ATTENTION BRETHREN IN FAITH !!HAVING HEARD NO WORLD FROM YOU SINCE SEPTEMBER AND NO ISSUE OF MUSLIM WORLD REVIEW WHY DID MWBR CLOSE DOWN WITHOUT WARNING? AWAITING ANXIOUSLY LATEST NEWS FROM MANAZIR AHSAN AND PROF. KHURSHID SAHIB, HOPING FOR UNINTERRUPTED POBIT ACTION. --- YOUR SISTER IN FAITH --- MARYAM JAMEELAH .

shiraz Gull

From: Manazir Ahsan [manazir@islamic-foundation.org.uk]
Sent: Wednesday, April 04, 2012 6:27 PM
To: Shiraz Gul; shirazgull.ips@gmail.com
Subject: Maryam Jameelah
Attachments: Letter to Maryam Jameelah 4.4.12.doc; Letter to Maryam Jameelah 5.10.11.doc; Books Received List - 2 Dec 11 - 20 Mar 12.docx

Dear Shiraz

I have shown Maryam Jameelah's message to Dr Manazir and he has responded as above. The 2 items he has referred to in his letter are also attached. Dr Manazir would be most grateful if you would be kind enough to get all three documents to her in response to her message.

With kindest regards

Catherine

Dr Manazir Ahsan
Director General
The Islamic Foundation
Markfield Conference Centre
Ratby Lane
Markfield
Leicestershire
LE67 9SY
Tel: (01530) 244944

Dear Shiraz
It is for your kind
personal please.
[Signature]
5/4

Email: manazir@islamic-foundation.org.uk

This e-mail and any attachments are confidential and intended solely for the use of the addressee only. If you have received this message in error, you must not copy, distribute or disclose the contents; please notify the sender immediately and delete the message. This message is attributed to the sender and may not necessarily reflect the view of The Islamic Foundation (IF) or Markfield Institute of Higher Education (MIHE). Agreements binding IF or MIHE may not be concluded by means of e-mail communication. E-mail transmissions are not secure and IF or MIHE accepts no responsibility for changes made to this message after it was sent. Whilst steps have been taken to ensure that this message is virus free, IF or MIHE accepts no liability for infection and recommends that you scan this e-mail and any attachments.

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Books Received

It should be noted that acknowledgement of receipt of these books is no guarantee of review. However, efforts will be made to review them in subsequent issues

ALKAF, Sayyid Hamed Abdur Rahman, *The Simplified Qur'an: Simple Translation and Tafseer of the Glorious Qur'an*. Tolichowki, Hyderabad AP: Good Tree Publications, 2011. 205pp.

ANSARI, Humayan, *The Making of the East London Mosque, 1910 - 1951*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. 360pp.

ANTHONY, Sean W., *The Caliph and the Heretic: Ibn Saba' and the Origins of Shi'ism*: Leiden: E J Brill, 2012. 333pp.

BAER, Marc David, *Honored by the Glory of Islam: Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 344pp.

COLLINS, John, *Global Palestine*. London: Hurst & Company, 2011. 201pp.

CONTADINI, Anna, *A World of Beasts: A Thirteenth Century Illustrated Arabic Book on Animals (the Kitab Na't al-Hayawan) in the Ibn Bakhtishu*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2012. 175pp.

DABASHI, Hamid, *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism*. London: Zeb Books, 2012. 254pp.

DAFTARY, Farhad, *Historical Dictionary of the Ismailis*. Maryland, USA: Scarecrow Press, 2012. 261pp.

DEOL, Jeevan and KAZMI, Zaheer (Eds.), *Contextualising Jihadi Thought*. London: Hurst & Company, 2012. 397pp.

FAROQHI, Suraiya, *Artisans of Empire: Crafts and Craftspeople Under the Ottomans*. London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2012. 244pp.

FAROUQUI, Ather, *Muslims and Media Images: News Versus Views*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 368pp.

FISH, M Steven, *Are Muslims Distinctive: A Look at the Evidence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 400pp.

FROMHERZ, Allen J., *Qatar: A Modern History*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2012. 224pp.



- GUO, Li, *The Performing Arts in Medieval Islam*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2012. 233pp.
- HIRST Jacqueline Suthren and ZAVOS, John, *Religious Traditions in Modern South Asia*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2011. 303pp.
- KHALEK, Nancy, *Damascus after the Muslim Conquest: Text and Image in Early Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 224pp.
- KHOSRONEJAD, Pedram, *The Art and Material Culture of Iranian Shi'ism: Iconography and Religious Devotion in Shi'i Islam*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2011. 320pp.
- KLEMM, Verena & WALKER, Paul E. (Eds.), *A Code of Conduct: A Treatise on the Etiquette of the Fatimid Ismaili Mission*. London: I. B. Tauris Publishers in assoc with Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2011. Pp. English 84, Arabic 74.
- LANCIONI, Giuliano and BETTINI, Lidia (Eds.), *The Word in Arabic*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011. 249pp.
- LONGVA, Anh Nga and ROALD, Anne Sofie (Eds.), *Religious Minorities in the Middle East: Domination, Self-Empowerment, Accommodation*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011. 347pp.
- MACLEAN, Gerald, and MATAR, Nabil, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 352pp.
- MARSHALL, David (Ed.), *Communicating the Word: Revelation, Translation, and Interpretation in Christianity and Islam*. Washington, USA: Georgetown University Press, 2011. 179pp.
- MATTHEE, Rudi, *Persia in Crisis: Safavid Decline and the Fall of Isfahan*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2011. 416pp.
- ORFALI, Bilal, *In the Shadow of Arabic: The Centrality of Language to Arabic Culture*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011. 551pp.
- REISMAN, David and OPWIS, Felicitas (Eds.), *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture and Religion: Studies in Honour of Dimitri Gutas*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2012. 475pp.
- RIZVI, Kishwar, *The Safavid Dynastic Shrine: Architecture, Religion and Power in Early Modern Iran*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2011. 288pp.
- RUTHVEN, Malise, *Islam: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 172pp.

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SABRY, Tarik (Ed.), *Arab Cultural Studies: Mapping the Field*. London: I. B. Tauris, 2012. 313pp.

SAMAD, Yunus, *The Pakistan-US Conundrum: Jihadists, the Military and the People - The Struggle for Control*. London: Hurst Publishers, 2011. 308pp.

SESEMANN, Rudiger, *The Divine Flood: Ibrahim Niasse and the Roots of a Twentieth-Century Sufi Revival*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 352pp.

Van LINSCHOTEN, Alex Strick and KUEHN, Felix, *An Enemy We Created: The Myth of the Taliban/Al Qaeda Merger in Afghanistan, 1970 - 2010*. London: Hurst & Company, 2012. 510pp.

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THE MUSLIM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

MWBR.cs

5th October 2011

Maryam Jameelah
c/o Mohammad Yusuf Khan
15 / 49 Sant Nagar
Lahore
PAKISTAN

Dear Maryam

I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirit. Dr Manazir's secretary, Rebecca left at the end of July and I returned in the middle of September! Please excuse any delay therefore in responding to your letters.

Your letter of 5th September to Dr Manazir has arrived and he is sad to note that you have been cut off again for many weeks. He has asked me to pass on his warm greetings to you and to Khan Sahib with the hopes that you are both keeping well.

Professor Khurshid Ahmad is with us at the moment but scheduled to return to Pakistan over the weekend. I spoke with him yesterday and requested that he take with him the following book to pass on to you:

Manah: An Omani Oasis, An Arabian Legacy by Soumyen Bandyopadhyay

It is a beautiful book and I felt sure you would like it. As always, we look forward to receiving your review once you have had the chance to give it your attention.

I hope you and Khan Sahib are keeping well and look forward very much to renewing our correspondence.

With kind regards

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Catherine Shaw

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Email: i.foundation@islamic-foundation.org.uk ▪ Website: www.islamic-foundation.org.uk

THE MUSLIM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

4th April 2012

Dear Sister Maryam Jameelah

Assalamu Alaykum wa Rahmatullah

I hope you, Khan Sahib and all the members of the family are keeping in the best of health and *iman*. I have just received a message from IPS that you have not received the *MWBR* since September 2011.

I have checked my office records and it shows that every issue has been sent by Airmail as we do to all our regular contributors who live overseas. As you will see in the attached letter, Catherine has already written to you on 5th October and has sent a beautiful book - *Manah: An Omani Oasis, An Arabian Legacy* by Soumyen Bandyopadhyay for favour of review. This book was sent through Professor Khurshid when he was returning to Pakistan in October. Catherine also sent an additional *MWBR* at that time. It seems you have not received either the book or the *MWBR*.

It really puzzles me that books and journals are not reaching you for some reason.

Al-Hamdulillah, the *MWBR* is still being published regularly and there is no plan to discontinue it. Catherine has sent, direct to your home address, the most recent as well as the last two issues by Airmail. Please do acknowledge safe receipt and also enquire from IPS what has happened to the book sent through Professor Khurshid.

I have asked my office whether we have received any review from you as you are a very prompt and regular writer for the journal. Now I understand that, since you have not received the book, hence you were unable to write a review.

I am sending with this letter via Shiraz Gul at IPS, the most recent 'Books Received' list. If you would like to select some titles, if they are still available, we will endeavor to send them to you.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and Catherine's together with the 'Books Received' list.

Please convey my salam and regards to Janab Khan Sahib.

With best regards and requests for prayers.

M. M. Alson.

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Email: i.foundation@islamic-foundation.org.uk ▪ Website: www.islamic-foundation.org.uk

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THE MUSLIM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

MWBR.cs

1st May 2012

Maryam Jameelah
c/o Mohammad Yusuf Khan
15 / 49 Sant Nagar
Lahore
PAKISTAN

Dear Maryam

I hope this letter finds you in good health and spirit. We are in receipt of both your recent letters and are so glad that at last the *Muslim World Book Review* has caught up with you!

The title, *An Omani Oasis: An Arabian Legacy* by Soumyen Bandyopadhyay was in fact given to Professor Khurshid early in October last year. He was visiting the Foundation and was happy to take the book and pass it on to you. I suspect that, with all the pressures of his work, this has not happened yet and will speak to Shiraz Gul to ascertain where the book is. I will of course request him to pass it to you as soon as he can.

In the meantime, I have put in the post a title you may be interested in – *Children of Dust* by Ali Eteraz. Since this is a smaller book it will hopefully reach you in good time. I have posted it to IPS, care of Shiraz.

I hope you and Khan Sahib are keeping well and look forward very much to hearing from you soon.

With kind regards



Catherine Shaw

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