

ISLAMIC CULTURE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

The Muslim Mind

The Essentials of an Islamic Community

By

MARYAM JAMEELAH

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

INTRODUCING THE AUTHOR

Maryam Jameelah was born in 1934 in New York at the height of the Great Depression—a fourth-generation American of German-Jewish origin. She was reared in Westchester, one of the most prosperous and populated suburbs of New York and received a thoroughly secular American education at the local public schools. Always an above-average student, she soon became a passionate intellectual and insatiable bibliophile, hardly ever without a book in hand, her readings extending far beyond the requirements of the school curriculum. As she entered adolescence, she became intensely serious-minded, scorning all frivolities, which is very rare for an otherwise attractive young girl. Her main interests were religion, philosophy, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology and biology. The school and local community public libraries and later, the New York Public Library, became “her second home.”

After her graduation from secondary school in the summer of 1952, she was admitted to New York University where she studied a general liberal arts programme. While at the university, she became severely ill in 1953, grew steadily worse and had to discontinue college two years later without earning any diploma. She was confined to private and public hospitals for two years (1957-1959) and only after her discharge, did she discover her facility for writing. Allama Muhammad Asad’s two books—his autobiographical *The Road to Mecca* and *Islam at the Crossroads* ignited her interest in Islam and after correspondence with some prominent Muslims in Muslim lands

and making intimate friends with some Muslim converts in New York, she embraced Islam at the Islamic Mission in Brooklyn, New York at the hand of Shaikh Daoud Ahmad Faisal, who then changed her name from Margaret Marcus to Maryam Jameelah.

During extensive correspondence with Muslims throughout the world and reading and making literary contributions to whatever Muslim periodicals were available in English, Maryam Jameelah became acquainted with the writings of Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi and so, beginning in December 1960, they exchanged letters regularly. In the spring of 1962, Maulana Maudoodi invited Maryam Jameelah to migrate to Pakistan and live as a member of his family in Lahore. Maryam Jameelah accepted the offer and a year later, married Mohammad Yusuf Khan, a whole-time worker for the Jama'at-e-Islami who later became the publisher of all her books. She subsequently became the mother of four children, living with her co-wife and her children in a large extended household of inlaws. Most unusual for a woman after marriage, she continued all her intellectual interests and literary activities; in fact, her most important writings were done during and inbetween pregnancies. She observes *Purdah* strictly.

Her hatred of atheism and materialism in all its varied manifestations—past and present—is intense and in her restless quest for absolute, transcendental ideals, she upholds Islam as the most emotionally and intellectually satisfying explanation to the Ultimate Truth which alone gives life (and death) meaning, direction, purpose and value.

April 15, 1976

UMAR FAROOQ

THE MUSLIM MIND

To become a Muslim involves far more than observance of rituals. Although the rituals are indispensable, they cannot achieve their purpose unless the entire mental, moral and spiritual outlook of the convert is changed. The most important change which took place after I embraced Islam was the transformation of my mind from a Kafir mind into a Muslim mind. In order that the outsider may gain deeper understanding into the workings of the Muslim mind, I shall attempt to describe from personal experience how a Muslim looks at the world, how he regards life and the effect of his faith upon his behaviour, his tastes, and his aspirations. Much will surprise or even shock the outsider until he attains sufficient insight into the inner meaning and intrinsic merit of genuine Islamic values.

The most essential belief in Islam is the concept of man as the slave of God. The Arabic word for "slave of God" is "Abdallah" which is among the commonest names in every Muslim country. "Islam" itself means literally "submission to the will of Allah" and all who choose to do so are Muslims. Since God is the supreme and only sovereign of the universe, the Christian concept of "division of Church and State" appears utterly illogical to the Muslim mind. The purpose of Islamic rule is to enforce the law of God in the Quran and Sunnah. The Muslim ruler cannot become a law unto himself nor has he the right to create any new legislation on his own. The

Shariah or sacred law can never be changed and only can be interpreted within strict limits. Everything belongs to God. Man owns nothing and is utterly dependent upon Him. All that a man possesses, even his own body, is merely loaned to him by God to put to the best possible use. If a man shirks this responsibility, he will be severely punished. To serve God as His slave, a man must be willing to sacrifice everything, if necessary—his personal happiness, his pleasures, his desires, conveniences, wealth, his possessions and even his life. The genuine Muslim will not hesitate to sacrifice all his transitory pleasures for the greater good. In so doing, he attains lasting happiness and serenity of mind. To be a “slave of God” means freedom from the tyranny of men. A true Muslim does not fear any man. He fears only God.

The Muslim divides the world into two opposing camps—Dar-ul-Islam or the Abode of Islam and Dar-ul-Harb, or the “Abode of the Unbelievers.” The worst affliction of mankind is not poverty, disease or illiteracy but Kufr. Teen-age pregnant brides, unwed mothers, venereal disease, abortions, rapes, illegitimate children, drunken derelicts and chauvinistic nationalism—all reflect the consequences of Kufr. Whatever is in harmony with Islamic teachings constitutes the supreme good while Kufr is open rebellion against God which can never be tolerated. A Muslim judges his fellow man solely on the basis of the correctness of his belief and its practical implementation in his daily life. A man’s race, nationality, wealth or social position have no relevance to his intrinsic merit as a human being. If a man does not make any attempt to practice

what he professes to believe, he is no more than a hypocrite and really has no faith at all. The Muslim is convinced that a man's deed is utterly dependent upon his creed because he cannot conceive of morality and ethics apart from their supernatural, theological foundations.

The true Muslim has no fear of death, because death is only the passage-way to life eternal with God. If a Muslim contracts an illness, he will do all medically possible to promote his recovery but after doing all he can, should these medical means fail to restore his health and save his life or those of similarly afflicted loved-ones, he will accept death with serene resignation. The Muslim believes that God has set the span of each life in advance so that nobody can die before his allotted time nor can all the doctors and medicines in the world delay his demise one instant longer.

The true Muslim is not a fanatic. The Holy Quran forbids spying and backbiting. He does not believe in heretic-hunting. No Muslim, however wrong he may be, ever can be ex-communicated by another Muslim unless he publicly renounces his faith. The Muslim does not persecute other religions nor try to convert people by force. Religious minorities in the Muslim state live in autonomous, self-contained communities of their own where they are allowed to follow their religious laws, educate their children as they see fit and perpetuate their culture in addition to the complete safety of their lives and property. However, despite all these rights guaranteed to the protected minority by the Shariah, although all men are considered by Islamic teachings as deserving of

equal justice and fair treatment as human beings, a non-Muslim can never be considered as equal to the Muslim. The non-Muslim under Muslim rule is exempt from military service because only those who believe in the cause of Islam can fight for it. For the same reason, the non-Muslim is not eligible to occupy strategic positions in the Government. A Muslim feels the closest bonds of kinship with all other Muslims regardless of racial or national origin. He can never feel at home among non-Muslims.

Those who imagine that the morality of Islam makes of it a heavy burden for humanity as to prevent its realization in their lives derive this belief from the tribulations undergone by the individual Muslim living in a society which is not governed by Islam. Under such circumstances, the morality of Islam is in reality a heavy burden; it almost crushes the individuals who live with their pure Islam in the polluted society of ignorance. A specific environment, then is indispensable for the life of this concept, an environment with its own specific values. Islam is a realistic system and it therefore supposes that the people who live according to its path will be living in an Islamically-governed society. Without this environment, the life of the individual becomes impossible or at least extremely difficult. Therefore whoever wishes to be a Muslim should know that he cannot devote himself to his practice of Islam except in a Muslim environment dominated by Islam. He is mistaken if he imagines that he can realize his Islam in the midst of a society devoid of Divine guidance.*

Islam is a universal faith actively seeking converts. Unlike the Christians, we feel no need for professional missionaries. Every Muslim is a missionary. To propa-

**This Religion of Islam*, Sayyid Qutb, Al-Manar Press, Palo Alto, California, 1967, pp. 32-34.

gate Islam as far as he possibly can is his sacred duty. It may surprise non-Muslims to learn that vast areas of the world (particularly South-East Asia and Africa) have turned Muslim through the activities of ordinary Arab and Indian merchants and traders. No force or violence was ever used. Nor were any of these countries politically subjected by them. This was possible only because those merchants and traders put Islam first and business afterwards.

Like the strict orthodox Jew, the Muslim believes that man draws closest to God through obedience to His sacred laws. Therefore he draws no sharp distinction between ritual and morality which are inseparably intertwined. The Muslim does not separate the spirit from its outer form because he is convinced that no belief is effective without its tangible expression. Ablution and prayers must be performed in a precise manner after the practice of the Prophet. The Muslim who performs his Salat as he should, develops a keen conscience and high character because there is nobody but God to see if he does it properly. No other religion places so much emphasis upon the necessity of personal hygiene and cleanliness. Physical purity affects spiritual purity and the outer man is an expression of the inner man.

The penal law of the Quran and Sunnah is the subject of the greatest misunderstanding on the part of non-Muslims. What Islam regards as the worst crimes against society are hardly considered crimes at all in Western countries and, with the possible exception of theft, legal penalties are rarely, if ever, enforced. The Muslim does

not believe that the merit of a law depends upon its leniency nor that the criminal deserves greater sympathy than society. To the Muslim, the penal law of the Quran and Sunnah is not the cruel and barbaric product of primitive 7th century Arabia irrelevant for today ; on the contrary, he is convinced that it is far more humane than the extreme psychological deprivation and moral depravity of our modern prisons and in the context of a genuine Islamic society, infinitely more effective in combating crime than any man-made law.

A Muslim believes that the strict segregation of the sexes is essential for a wholesome society. This means that men and women are forbidden to intermingle freely. That is why a Muslim cannot tolerate mixed social functions, co-educational schools or courtship before marriage. Men must not look at strange women nor women at strange men. Modest dress is required at all times ; women are required to shroud their entire bodies whenever they find it necessary to go out and behave as inconspicuously as possible in public. A woman's beauty is for her only. Her body is not under any circumstances to be on public display exposed to the vulgar gaze of strangers. Public demonstrations of affection between men and women are severely punished. In Islam, the man is responsible for his social duties outside the home while the woman is responsible for everything within the home. Therefore it is not for women to compete with men in business or politics. The Muslim knows only too well that once the woman leaves the home, there is no home !

Celibacy is condemned by the Quran and Sunnah and every normal man and woman is expected to marry. Although a man is permitted to marry up to four wives, Islam does not ordain polygamy ; it is not even encouraged ; it is merely allowed. The overwhelming majority of Muslims have always been monogamous. The restricted polygamy permitted by Islam curtails illicit sex to a minimum because if a man desires relations with another woman, he must marry her first, undertake the responsibility of her support and fatherhood.

Islam differs from all the other religions in its discouragement of the "arts". A Michaelangelo, a Rembrandt, a Beethoven or a Mozart would not receive any acclaim in a Muslim community. Consequently, this is why in Muslim cities there is such a conspicuous absence of symphony concert halls opera houses, theatres and art museums. The genius of Islamic art has expressed itself most fully in an architecture that has never been surpassed and Arabic calligraphy.

Instrumental music is banned from the mosque and condemned elsewhere. The social status of professional musicians in the Muslim world is extremely low. Instrumental music detracts the mind away from the remembrance of God and eventually leads to lewdness. If a man feels compelled to give vent to his emotions, he is allowed to sing to please himself but it is better if he refrains. No respectable Muslim woman will sing in public. The only laudable music is chanting of Holy Quran, Adhan and unaccompanied chants in praise of the Holy Prophet.

Because dancing is the most powerful known stimulus to illicit sex, it is prohibited completely except possibly on the two Eid festivals, to stir up enthusiasm for Jihad or at weddings. Such festivities must never be mixed. Men dance with men and women with women only.

Acting in plays, whether on stage, cinema or television screen is discouraged for the same reason. Islam condemns plays, whether one participates in them as actor or watches them as spectator, because they encourage people to become increasingly preoccupied with their private fantasies and less and less with real life. Islamic cultural values regard it degrading to the human personality for an actor to dress up and pretend to be what he is not and utterly unthinkable for a respectable Muslim woman to perform as an actress in public.

Literary fiction in the form of either the drama or the novel is not indigenous to any Muslim country but oratory and poetry are highly developed and eloquent speech most keenly appreciated by Muslims everywhere, especially in the Arabic-speaking world.

True Islamic culture can have no part of the Western mania for sports and games which is their inheritance from ancient Greece. An Islamic state would encourage athletics as part of military training to promote physical endurance. Thus all sports having military value would be included as part of the physical training in schools and colleges. Horseback riding, swimming, fencing, archery, weight-lifting, calisthenics, wrestling, mountain-climbing, etc. would be favoured. Cricket, foot-ball, base-ball, hockey, basket-ball, rugby, soccer, tennis and golf which are useless

for this purpose would be discouraged as as a waste of time and energy. Such athletics as are tolerated in an Islamic state, would be strictly amateur. Islamic culture does not honour professional athletes. Nothing could be more abhorrent to Islamic values than for whole populations to stop work for hours or even days on end to attend, watch on television or listen on the radio to a cricket or base-ball match and waste large sums of money which could be far more profitably spent elsewhere to construct vast sport stadiums.

The Islamic way of life is based upon transcendental values. Morality and truth are absolute, eternal and universal. They are instituted by God and not by man. Therefore man has no right to tamper with them. To the Muslim, the Quran is God's book—not Muhammad's book. He believes every word in the Quran is literally true and must be obeyed. The Quran is the source of all knowledge and to question any part of it is tantamount to rejection of God's guidance. The Hadith, or sayings of the Prophet, and the Sunnah or the practice of the Prophet, are essential for a correct interpretation of the Quran. One is meaningless without the other. Since the Quran is God's infallible, complete and final revelation to man, Islam cannot be "reformed" or "changed". It will never be "improved". Islam is complete and self-sufficient. It has no place for eclecticism. The Muslim understands "progress" as bringing his life into closer conformity with the letter and spirit of the Quran. His earthly goal is not worldly success but preparation for the Life Hereafter.

Islam demands the Muslim's total allegiance. A Muslim is a Muslim every minute of the day. Islam is rigorous to a degree inconceivable to a person of any other faith. Its laws control every aspect of his life from birth to death. Awake or asleep, Islam is always with the Muslim. He is never for a single instant allowed to forget what he is.

THE ESSENTIALS OF AN ISLAMIC COMMUNITY

If we profess to be Muslims who value the integrity of our faith, we must vigorously reassert our religious and cultural identity. It is not enough to condemn the atheism of modern civilization and its institutions so destructive to all we cherish. Instead we must always stress the positive and constructive values of the Islamic way of life and build them up as practical alternatives. Only after these alternatives are provided will it become possible to permanently demolish alien influence. In so doing we shall have to engage in a desperate struggle with vested interests within our ranks who will spare no pains to frustrate our efforts. They will invariably scorn the course of action suggested here as unworkable and the product of wishful thinking. They will point out that because of technological progress, all parts of the world have become so dependent upon each other that no people can remain aloof from modern civilization and hope to survive. They say that it is impossible for any government to function in the modern world based on a Law revealed more than thirteen centuries ago. They insist that the Shariah is a fossil and the Khalifate no more than a museum piece.

It is highly questionable who put "realism" and "practicality" before all else have ever stopped to ponder that were the Holy Prophet of the same turn of mind, he and his tiny band of followers in Medina would have given up

their cause as hopeless, deeming it impossible to fight against the greatest imperialistic powers of the time. Surely the Battle of Badr would never have taken place since the poverty-stricken Muslims were so few in number that they could barely muster an army of 300 ill-equipped men on foot against more than 3,000 well-armed Quraishis on horseback. Do they forget that it was the "realists" who feared the destruction of the idols in the Kaaba because these were the source of income not only of Mecca but of the whole of Arabia. Those who admire "practicality" must logically praise Mu'awiya's worldly triumph over Hazrat Ali and consider Hazrat Hussain hot-headed indeed because his chances of winning at the Battle of Kerbala were almost nil. Indeed, the distinguishing characteristic between the believer and the unbeliever is that while the unbeliever bases his actions upon opportunism and expediency, the believer does what is right regardless of worldly consequences.

We cannot attain an Islamic society until we recognize the supremacy of the Shariah. Ruler and ruled alike are all equally subject to the Divine Law, tyranny and despotism will find no place in an Islamic state. In order to derive full benefit from the Shariah, it must always be interpreted in a strict, literal sense and no concessions nor compromises whatsoever be made to the so-called "changing times".

This immediately raises the question of Ijtihad (use of independent judgment in interpreting the Shariah) versus Taqlid (or the reliance upon the authority of the previous jurists). It has become the fashion now-a-days to

blame the decadence, stagnation and decline of the Muslim world on Taqlid. This popular but misleading belief must be exposed for the fallacy that it, is for Taqlid was the result of these unfortunate circumstances and not the cause. During the Crusades and the Mongol invasions which destroyed so many centres of learning, the leading jurists and theologians were far-sighted enough to realize that society would disintegrate into utter chaos if unqualified, ignorant people were free to tamper with the Shariah as they pleased. The impact of modern Western civilization has created a similar situation of far more serious proportions. Now-a-days Western educated leaders with little or no appreciation of Islamic values, are claiming the right of Ijtihad to mutilate the Shariah beyond recognition. This they do by rejecting the Fiqh of the great classical jurists as no longer applicable to the present day and by casting doubt on the authenticity of Hadith in order to allow them the maximum freedom to introduce Western innovations. This is what the modernizers today understand as Ijtihad.

There is no doubt whatsoever that Ijtihad is a basic and indispensable tool of Islamic jurisprudence sanctioned no less than by the Holy Prophet himself. Thus Ijtihad can never be rejected on principle, but rather only its abuses condemned as interpreted and practiced today. Ijtihad is valid when : (1) it is applied only where there are no specific injunctions of the Quran or Sunnah ; (2) it does not conflict with Quran or Sunnah ; (3) no sophistry is used to obscure the true principles of the Quran and the

Sunnah.* It is glaringly evident that the modernists have violated every one of these rules. particularly the last.

Any attempt to revise the Shariah in the light of modern conditions is bound to destroy the last vestige of permanency and stability which a Muslim instinctively and correctly associates with the concept of Divine Law. For if revision is necessary now, it will certainly become necessary a few decades hence when when conditions will have changed again and so on until the Law of Islam will be entirely revised out of existence. If this were justified, what right would we have to claim the Law-Giver has conceived the Law of Islam as an eternal proposition? Would it not in that event be much more appropriate to say that this Law instead of *creating* conditions is *subservient* to them and that therefore it cannot be Divine Law? **

Education is the most important function of an Islamic society. A renaissance of Islam is impossible without popular support. It can never hope to succeed unless the rising generation understand and fully appreciate the value of our faith. How can this be accomplished?

First of all, we must recognize the mosque as the only proper place for the education of our youth. Every mosque should also be a school. Secondly, the study of Arabic must be made compulsory at all educational levels and given first priority. Every Muslim child should learn not only to read and recite but fully understand the meaning of the original text of Quran in Arabic. Arabic must be the medium of instruction and Quran, instead of being just another incidental subject, must be the focal point around

* *Islamic Law : Its Scope and Equity*, Said Ramadan, Macmillan, London, 1961, p. 68.

** *The Principles of State and Government in Islam*, Muhammad Asad, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1961, pp. 2-3, 102-3.

which the entire curriculum revolves. All other subjects should be taught in relation to Quran to avoid any sharp distinction between religious and secular learning. In this way, the entire educational curriculum will be integrated harmoniously. The study of European languages, literature, philosophy and law should be confined to the universities, preferably on the graduate level. Under no circumstances should we expose our children to secularism because there is no deadlier poison to impressionable, immature minds. On the other hand it, is essential that those in positions of authority and influence possess through familiarity with modern civilization in order to effectively combat its influence.

In order to give our youth a clear understanding of the past in relation to the present, we must revolutionize our attitude in regard to Islamic history. Too many of our educated elite regard the transmission of Greek philosophy by the Mu'tazilites (rationalists) to medieval Europe as the most important contribution of Islamic civilization to humanity. Such Hellenistic philosophers as al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd have been praised more than they deserve. A truer perspective of Islamic history enables us to understand why the achievements of Umar ibn Abd al Aziz, Salah-ud-din Ayubi and Alamgir Aurangzeb were so much greater. Instead of boasting of Islam's contribution to Western civilization, we must be aware of the fact that the transmission of Greek learning to medieval Europe was quite coincidental and had nothing to do with Islam itself. Since Islam is of infallible Divine origin and therefore complete, self sufficient, and indepen-

dent of man-made philosophy, it is futile to attempt to justify its validity by a comparison with any other civilization, past or present. Hence the uselessness of trying to prove the greatness of Islamic civilization by boasting of its contributions to medieval Europe, for Islam exists independently for itself and not as subservient to other cultures.

Although it is a religious duty for our rulers in their personal capacity to give their full moral support and generous financial contributions for the maintenance and growth of our educational system, our schools should be freed from direct state control and allowed to flourish on an independent basis. Those who have wealth should be induced to contribute financially to schools at all levels both through Zakat and voluntary charity. With our educational system supported financially through Zakat, voluntary charity, wills and the Waqf foundations, it shall then be possible to make all education completely tuition-free from the primary through the graduate university level. Although primary schools should be open to all children, secondary and university education should be limited to those youth who possess sufficient interest and intellectual capacity to profit by it. Although parents should be given every encouragement to send their children to school, they must not be forced by law to do so because it is the father who must decide how his children are to be reared—not the State.

An important function of an Islamic society is the protection of the family. Strong family ties of mutual affection and responsibility are indispensable for a healthy

society. Filial loyalty and respect and consideration for old people must be emphasized and encouraged in every possible way. The most effective means of doing this is to put an end to the cult of youth-worship. When women are made to feel dignified and important in bearing the major responsibility for preserving a wholesome home life, they will have no more desire to play the role of a man. No longer will they regard their dignity as human beings dependent upon competing with men in business and politics. Neither will they resent being required by law to dress modestly and conceal their bodies in public. An Islamic society must insist on segregation of boys and girls after puberty, ban immoral books, the publication of pictures in newspapers, magazines, books and commercial advertising, forbid the sale of alcoholic beverages and enforce the full penalties of the Shariah against illicit sex.

No poison is more deadly to Islamic moral values than the modern cinema industry. Therefore it is imperative to ban the importation of all foreign films and prohibit the production of domestic ones. Cinema and television must be limited strictly to educational purposes.

We must make every effort to combat the evil of nationalism and strengthen the bonds of the Ummah from one end of the Muslim world to the other. If the different Muslim countries are unable to unite politically at once, they can pave the way by eliminating visa requirements, passports, tariffs and custom duties in order to promote unrestricted freedom of commerce and travel.

Minority groups living under Muslim rule must be allowed religious and cultural autonomy in self contained

communities of their own and their rights scrupulously protected according to the laws of the Shariah.

We will never gain vigour and vitality until we recognize the catastrophic consequences of imitating a foreign culture and do everything possible to put an end to this. Let anyone who doubts the crucial importance of avoiding the adoption of Western dress and living habits, listen to what the historian, Ibn Khaldun (1332—1406) had to say on this subject :

The vanquished always seek to imitate their victors in their dress, insignia and other customs and usages. This is because men are always inclined to attribute perfection to those who have defeated and subjugated them. Men do this either because the reverence they feel towards their conquerors makes them see perfection in them or because they refuse to admit that their defeat could have been brought about by ordinary causes and hence they suppose that it is due to the perfection of the conquerors. Should this belief persist long, it will change into a profound conviction and will lead to the adoption of all the tenets of the victors and the imitation of all their characteristics. This imitation may come about either unconsciously or because of a mistaken belief that the victory of the conquerors was due not to their superior solidarity and physical strength but to the inferiority of the customs and beliefs of the conquered. Hence arises the delusion that such an imitation will remove the causes of defeat. In fact, every country which has powerful conquering neighbours tends to imitate those neighbours as we see among the Spanish Muslims who imitate their Christian neighbours in their dress and ornaments even to the extent of having statues and pictures on the walls of their homes and shops. And in this the careful observer will mark a sign of inferiority.*

Here in this single paragraph, Ibn Khaldun has

**The Muqaddimah* ; Vol. I, p. 266.

described with superb insight exactly what is wrong with us. The remedy is obvious. If our pride in our faith and its heritage is genuine, it must be expressed by our physical appearance. If we do not want to be like our enemies, we should not want to look like them either. Certainly we have no right to call ourselves Muslims if we are ashamed to be identified as such.

Only a very poor psychologist will say that these things are merely outward and therefore unimportant. Next to a man's body, his clothes and his home are the nearest things to his soul and have an incalculable influence upon it. It was easy for his soul to conform to Islam in the surroundings which Islamic civilization provided for it, but now, for no good reason, that God-given civilization has been pushed aside ; therefore we find in most so-called Islamic countries, men have shaved off their beards, forsaken their turbans and taken to wearing a dress which puts many obstacles in the way of ablution and which makes the movements of the prayer look ugly and even ridiculous and as for their homes, there is nothing in them to make one remember God and much to make one forget Him. One of the outward tokens of that inward dignity of the Muslim is the turban. The Holy Prophet praised the turban in many of his sayings just as he also enjoined upon men to grow their beards. It can also be said that the loose, flowing garments such as worn by him and his companions are the only true Islamic dress for this is the only kind of dress which conforms to the movements of the prayer. The Holy Prophet's house in Medina was an extension of his mosque and for more than twelve hundred years, every Muslim house was as an extension of the nearest mosque. Men took off their shoes to enter their homes ; the floors were strewn with ritually purified mats or carpets ; they sat at home as they would sit in the mosque and the ornaments on their walls were all reminders of God—Divine Names, verses from the Quran, sayings of the Prophet. This is the essence of Islamic civilization and there is absolutely no reason why any of the things I have mentioned here

should have been changed or why the Muslim home today should not still be as an extension of the mosque. Only in such surroundings as these can Islam truly flourish.*

What will the world be like under Islamic rule ?

When men recognize the sovereignty of God and the supremacy of His Law, all false values will be automatically swept away. It will be a world where men are slaves of God and not to each other. It would mean freedom from all forms of tyranny. It will be a world where a man is judged by his character and not by his worldly success. There will be no place for racial discrimination or class hatred. Congregational prayer, Haj, fasting and Zakat will create strong bonds of affection, trust and responsibility between man and his fellow man. The prosperous will enjoy their wealth as a bounty from God in which the poor have rightful share assured by law. It will be a world without artificiality or deception. Women will not try to be like men nor will the old feel ashamed of their age. Since this world will be recognized as only a temporary abode, people will be preoccupied with eternal salvation and shun as evil all that diverts them from the remembrance of God and the Hereafter. Night clubs, dance halls, theatres, bars, saloons, gambling casinos and brothels would soon go bankrupt and forced to close down for lack of business.

An Islamic society would not be utopia, for perfection does not belong to this world. Some of us will be tempted to break the Law but crime will be limited to isolated

*Al Haj Abu Bakr Siraj-ud-Din (formerly Dr. Martin Lings), quoted from *Muslimnews International*, London, January 1963, p. 19.

individuals instead of a raging epidemic. There will be no confusion in any mind as to what is right and what is wrong. Yes, even in an Islamic society human beings will suffer, for sorrow is as an inseparable part of this life as are its joys. There will be pain, hunger, sickness and death. But despair and boredom will be absent. Suicides will be unknown. Nobody will doubt the meaning or the purpose of life.

MUSLIMS AWAKE !

While the evils of atheism and materialism, supported by all the forces of modern technology, are working day and night to destroy us—spiritually, culturally and politically—rather than hold fast to faith in Allah, unite and combat our real enemies, we foolishly choose to tread the path of an alien civilization, hoping thereby in vain to attain social prestige and the comforts and pleasures of this transitory world in utter forgetfulness of the eternal Life Hereafter and thus totally neglect our duties as Muslims to Allah and our fellow-beings. This is not the way to "Progress" but can only result in our failure, degeneration and doom, both individually and collectively! Muslim brothers and sisters! Follow the path of the Quran and Sunnah, not as a set of dead rituals but as a practical manual of guidance for our conduct in daily life in private and in public, put aside sectarian and political controversies and let us all cooperate and work together in harmony for the cause of Allah in Islamic movements in whichever country you happen to live, do not waste valuable time in useless things and *inshallah*. Allah shall crown your life with great achievements here and supreme success in the Hereafter.

MARYAM JAMEELAH