CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF INDIAN ISLAM

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The Sub-Himalayan continent is practically as vast and as varied as Europe itself. The contacts with Islam began naturally with coastal regions, gradually and with a chequered history to embrace the whole country. There are numerous dynasties to deal; different centers have come into lime light at different epochs; and there is the history of over thirteen centuries to tell. It is just to initiate in the problems, not even all, that one can attempt in an article.

First Contacts

The Arabs had contacts with India even before Islam, not only with Sind and Gujrāt which lie so close to the Eastern borders of Arabia, but also with Malābār, in connection with commerce. Can't we perceive that in the saying of the Prophet, when he had received the delegation of a Yamanite tribe and had asked: "Who are these people who look like the people of Hind?" Or when a Yamanite deputation had gone to Ctesiphon to ask for the help of Chosroes against the Abyssinian occupants, and said: "We have been invaded by crows", the emperor asked: "Which crows, Indians or Abyssinians?" More positive evidence is furnished by Ibn al-Kalbī, who says: "Thereafter the fair of Dabā (in ʿUmān) which is one of the two principal ports of Arabia. There come the traders of Sind, of Hind, of China, of the people of the East and West. Its fair used to open on the last day of the month of Rajab. The method of sale there was simple negotiation. (The ruler) al-Julandà ibn al-Mustakbir levied a tithe there as well as in the fair of Ṣuḥār; and in this matter he used to do like other kings in other places." [1].

[1] Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, p. 265-6.

No wonder then that the relations of Islam with this neighbour began as early as the time of the second caliph, ʿUmar, as we are told by Balādhurī, Qudāmah ibn Jaʿfar and others.

I shall however not deal with the legend in Malābār, that a raja of that country embraced Islam at the observation of the fissure of moon, (that miracle attributed to the Prophet of Islam, having occurred before his migration to Madīnah), travelled to Arabia to pay personal homage to the Prophet, and died in Ẓafār (Yaman) on his return journey. Nor even with the tombs of two companions of the Prophet, on the Eastern coast of South-India, Tamīm al-Anṣārī in Cavelong (about 40 miles South of Madrās), and ʿAkkāshah at Maḥmūd Bandar (Porto-Novo) further to the South. It is to remind that the tombs of the same two personalities are found in Afghānistān also, and possibly in other places likewise.

The first thing that occurs to me worthy of note is the history of the country. Pre-Islamic India did not possess it, and for that period we depend now either on legends and folklore or rare inscriptions, if not foreign works such as those of Megasthenes and the like. Since the time the Indian regions became part of the Muslim world, we are on sure and solid ground. In his "India", al-Bērūnī has even tried to preserve for us data about ancient times for which he is practically the sole source.

Early Intellectual Activity

Unlike North-Western coast, the penetration of Islam in Deccan (i.e. South India) was peaceful, and remained so for over five centuries. The proselytising zeal of Arab traders is well-known; and they frequented also in Deccan. My own family is said to have taken refuge and settled there in the time of al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf (in the first century of Hijrah) to escape insults and tyranny. In the time of Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, the members of the family were respected even by local rulers for piety and learning. Evidently many others shared the same fate, and a historian describes their first arrival: "[The persecuted Muslims] somehow or other reached different ports (of Deccan). The Hindus, seeing them of a different nationality, prevented them from landing. After long solicitude and humble petition, however, they let them settle in those ports. This was on the condition that they (the Muslims) would follow Hindu customs

and would wear the costume of the country. The poor Muslims were constrained to accept the terms; and 'as the country so the dress', they took to wearing Hindu costumes. They took to different professions according to their conditions and aptitudes. They had, however, to be very careful, and observe extreme scruples [lest they be detected]. So, they performed the *adhān* (call to religious service) as well as the recitation of the Qur'ān in a way that no Hindu would hear them." [1]

The seventeen years old general Muḥammad ibn Qāsim could push very far the work commenced in the time of 'Umar, and Sind and the Panjāb were definitely added to the Caliphate in the nineties of the first century of Hijrah. Unlike Deccan, this region saw an Islamic government. No wonder then, that soon after Sind-Panjāb quota began to enrich Islamic science. Not only that India got date-palms, and 'Irāq buffaloes and Zuṭṭ (i.e. *Jāṭ*) slaves—from whom hailed, as it is said, also the mother of Abū Ḥanīfah—; but also intellectual activity took shape. Under 'Umar II, a great proselytising activity was crowned with success, attracting even rajas and rulers. Among the immigrants, we have ar-Rabī' ibn Ṣubaiḥ as-Sa'dī, who died and was buried in Sind in 160 H., was among the earliest authors of the region, taken notice of by Ḥajji Khalīfah.

One is astonished to see Abū 'Aṭā', hailing from the soil of Sind (2nd century of Hijrah), acquiring so much proficiency in Arabic, that he composed verses in it and was considered a good poet.

Abū Ma'shar Najīḥ also hailed from Sind, yet migrated to Baghdād for literary avocations. He was so much respected by caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd as a traditionist, that when he died in 170 H., the caliph himself led the funeral service. According to Ibn Ḥanbal, this author shined particularly for his specialization in the political history of early Islam (*maghāzī*), and was disliked by the meticulous traditionists, because he did not observe much the rule of citing separately sources for each little information, but mixed up the material to make it a more coherent readable history. His *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* is cited by Ibn an-Nadīm.

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[1] 'Abd ul-Jabbār Khān's Urdu history of Deccan *Maḥbūb ul-Waṭan*, ed. Haiderabad, p. 40.

There is another Sindian, Abū ʿAlī, reputed for mysticism; there is a certain Ibn Duhn al-Hindī, who not only practised in the Bermakide hospital of Baghdād, but also translated several works into Arabic. Again, Ṣāliḥ ibn Bahlah (Bholla?), who performed wonders as a physician and once saved even the life of Ibrāhīm, uncle of Hārūn ar-Rashīd, who was considered dead and was to be buried. He was also among the courtiers of the caliph of the Thousand and one Nights' fame (cf. Qifṭī and Ibn Abī Uṣaibiʿah). Nor must I forget Abu Jaʿfar ad-Daibulī (3rd century of H.), who has preserved for us the first compilation, collecting the letters of the Prophet, on the authority of ʿAmr ibn Ḥazm.

About the year 270 H., — may be even much before — we see activity in another direction: At the demand of a certain raja (apparently of Sind-Panjāb region), a scholar was despatched, who translated the whole of the Qur'ān in the language of the raja; the raja is said to have embraced Islam. [1]

With the weakening of the ʿAbbāsid power, the influence of the Arabic language also declined, ceding place to Persian as the court language, this ever since the conquests of Maḥmūd of Ghaznah until the disappearance of the Mughal Empire in 1858 at the hands of the English. Arabic was still and always studied in Muslim India in higher academic classes, and also used as a vehicle of expression down to this day without interruption, yet that was rare: more and more the Persian and the Indian languages were employed for purposes of literary composition.

Products in Arabic

Voluminous works have been compiled in recent times to list Arabic works produced in the Sub-Himalayan continent or by its sons abroad. It will suffice to note here that there are lexicographers like Ṣaghānī (d. 650 H., author of *al-ʿUbāb*), and Saiyid Murtaḍà (of *Tāj al-ʿArūs*); there are traditionists like ʿAlī al-Muttaqī (d. 975 H.) author of *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl* and of *Tabwīb al-Ḥadīth*; there are jurists like ʿĀlim ʿAlāuddīn, author of the seven volumes of *Fatāwī Tātārkhānīyah*, Niẓāmuddīn presiding editor of the as voluminous *Fatāwī Hindīyah* (alias *ʿAlamgīrīyah*); there are writers

[1] Buzurg ibn Shahriyār, Merveilles de l'Inde, p. 2.

on jurisprudence (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*) like Muḥibbullāh al-Bihārī); polyhistors and political scientists and political-economists like Walīullāh ad-Dihlawī; masters of belles lettres like Ghulām ʿAlī Āzād Bilgrāmī, and host of others, whose works are still in use in the Arabic world with great respect.

The *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth* (critical study of traditions) is a well-known science, yet *Uṣūl at-Tafsīr* (how to comment and study the Qur'ān) seems to me to have been first cultivated in India (cf. *al-Fawz al-Kabīr*) by Walīullāh creating a new science "de toutes pièces". Natural sciences have also not lagged behind.

This enormous production is so much the more interesting as it pertains to a foreign language, at a time when neither the Arabs ruled the country, nor was it the official language of the country. Naturally this could not have been possible without good libraries. In spite of the wanton destruction of the extremely rich library of the Mughal emperors at Delhi, at the hands of a whimsical British commander, who would not tolerate the survival of the Mughal art of book-binding, in 1857, the India Office Library at London, representing an infinitesimally small fraction of the richness of Indian libraries, is yet one of the biggest in the West. Some round figures for what remains today may be of interest: My own family, in Haiderābād and in Madrās possesses at least 70,000 MSS.; the Haiderābād State Library has at least fifty thousands, much of which is not yet catalogued; other thousands are in each of Rāmpūr, Bāqīpūr (Bankipur), Calcutta, Madrās, Lucknow, Lāhore and other public libraries. Two years ago, a mission of the Arab League spent six months in Bhārat (non-Pakistani India), working day and night to microfilm MSS., and returned with the impression that it must return there to spend many times more time to exhaust even the bigger public libraries — leaving aside private collections — to microfilm rare Arabic MSS. (The figures given above of libraries are not exclusively, yet overwhelmingly, for Arabic MSS.)

Turkish

Emperor Bābur (1483-1530) has left his *Tuzak* or memoirs in Turkish. His son Humāyūn, when chased from India by a rival chief, wrote from Irān in Turkish a personal letter to the Sultan of Turkey; its original is still preserved. His descendants on the throne

of Delhi, until at least Muhammad Shāh (of 18th century) had more or less preserved this tongue for private use, yet literary monuments in this language are rare. Turcologists however will find it interesting to note that Turkish has left an indelible impression on the Urdu language, whose very name is in Turkish. This relates not merely to hundreds of words of Turkish origin, but even to the very construction of the language: a word for word and most literal translation from one language into the other renders it the most idiomatic phrase. This is the more remarkable, since Persian influence ought to have been very much greater, in view of historical circumstances, yet Urdu is more Turkish than Persian.

Persian

For almost eight centuries, Persian was the official language in Muslim India. It was employed not only by Muslims but also innumerable non-Muslims as a vehicle of their compositions in all the different walks of literary domains: religion, history, poetry, natural sciences and all else. Translations from Sanskrit, even of Hindu sacred books, abound. It was so wide spread, until recently, that my late father, when writing to his brothers and other contemporaries, used to find it awkward to write in any language except in Persian, although at home we spoke only Urdu. Another evidence: In 1937, when there was a session of the All-India Oriental Conference in Trivandrum (Travancore, near Cape Camorin), there was also a cultural exhibition. Among the objects displayed, there was a golden seal of the *maharani* (queen), used when writing to the British government; it was engraved in Persian characters, although she was a Hindu princess. Gulāb Singh is a well-known publisher, and a Hindu. So many other names, partly or wholly Persian or Arabic, even among non-Muslims of the country, are a common thing even to this day. I may refer to Jawāhar Lāl Nehru; *jawāhir* is Arabic for „jewels"; *la'l* is also Perso-Arabic, meaning ruby; and *Nehru* comes from *nahr*, a river, since his family lived on a river-side.

Persian has also been used for engraving the hundreds and thousands of inscriptions, and continues to be so to this day. The present Niẓām of Haiderābād has composed poems in Persian, which fill hundreds of pages.

Persian works produced in India are so important, both in quality

and quantity, that they alone would require a monograph to deal. I must however not fail to refer to works, for instance, which have potently contributed to the preservation of the purity of Islamic thought and practice in the continent. The story is long. It is well-known how Emperor Akbar (rule 1556-1605), for politico-eccentric reasons invented a new religion, the *Dīn Ilāhī*, and how court practices had demoralized Islam in the whole country. Shaikh Aḥmad, of Sihrind (now Sirhind), better known as Mujaddid Alf Thānī (or simply Mujaddid), proved man of the hour, and his ceaseless efforts, even from inside the prison, succeeded in a remarkable degree, weaning particularly the Emperor Jahāngīr from the heresies. His Persian *Maktūbāt* is an invaluable monument and a mine of information for the intellectual struggle and spiritual greatness of this "renovator of Islam at the dawn of its second millenium". The original work is in Persian, though translated in other languages also.

Urdu

Of the languages of purely Indian Origin, Urdu is by far the most important, from the point of view of the Islamistic literature. An Indo-Aryan tongue, it was easier for the masses to learn, and in fact it was understood in most parts of the continent. The mystics and moral educators used it long before the jurists, for the benefit of the common man. The last of the Mughal emperors, Bahādur Shāh II, has even left a voluminous anthology of his poems in this language. Englishmen have been, unintentionally, responsible for enriching it with Islamic literature. Having rival designs not only against the polity of Indian Muslims, the Mughal empire, but also against their religion, the Britishers conceived the idea to wean away the Indian Muslims from Persian, the repository of their culture and science. Wherever the Union Jack flew high, this policy was pursued with all the available resources and means. In Calcutta, their stronghold, they founded an academy for Urdu publications, both original compilations and translations. Christian missionaries flooded the country. After the wind-fall of 1858, when they succeeded in the wake of the Mughal rulers, they tried to suppress Persian and banish it from the country. Old schools were strangled; in the province of Bengal alone there were eighty thousand primary

schools — one for every four hundred inhabitants — with a proportionate number of higher schools. These were abolished, as the bequests on which they depended, were confiscated purely and simply, in favour of the general exchecquer. Moreover, the government of British India began to popularize English and banish all religious teaching, both Islamic and Hindu, from government schools. The coup d'état of 1858 was a rude shock, yet it opened the eyes of the *'ulemā'* to the gravity of the situation.

It is thus, that 'Abd ul-Qādir Dihlawī translated the Qur'ān into Urdu; and his contemporary in the South, Bāqir Agāh of Madrās, produced a large number of juristic and other religious works in the same language. The Indian India — or the Native States — proved another pocket of resistance, Haiderābād particularly, which was as big as Italy, and practically independent. So, in 1856, a university was established there to reorganize education, first under the name of *Dār ul-'ulūm* and later styled as the 'Osmania University, with Urdu as the medium of instruction, and many faculties.

The 'Alīgarh institute of Sir Syed Aḥmad Khān, started activity in another direction, conceived on apologetic lines, for the defense of Islamic culture against the onslaught of the English culture. An ever increasing number of men and institutions took up the same work.

The feverish activity of the last hundred years, a defiance to the British challenge, has enriched Urdu beyond even the most sanguine hopes of a people thrown out of the ruling power, suspected and discouraged by the new rulers, and very much backward economically. For instance translations of the Qur'ān, of all the important compilations of Hadīth (particularly the six canonical works), of the voluminous juristic works like *Hidāyah* of Marghīnānī and *Fatāwī 'Alamgīriyah*, of the *Iḥyā al-'ulūm* of Ghazzālī, of the histories of Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn Sa'd, Mas'ūdī and hundreds of other classics have been published in Urdu, not to speak of original works. (The *al-Fihrist* of Sajjād Mirzā Bēg, for Urdu bibliography, is already long out of date.) The vigour of the Indian Islam may be judged by the fact that the bibliographical portion of the fourth edition of my "Qur'ān in Every Language" (ready for press) notes 86 translations of the Qur'ān for Urdu alone, most of which are printed. Original works are also valuable; slowly they are attracting foreign translators. The Qur'ānic commentary of Maḥmūd ul-

Ḥasan has been translated into Pashtu and Persian; some works of Islamic history by Shibli are available even in Turkish, not to speak of translations into English or India's other local languages.

Urdu also possesses many of the world's classics, translated from English, German, French, etc., many through the impetus of the 'Osmania University (victim of cultural genocide since 1948, since Urdu is banned there now as medium of instruction, and its magnificent Urdu Translation Bureau abolished).

Other Indian Languages

It is natural that Sindhi, Kashmeri, Balūchi and Panjābi should be written in Arabic characters. Bengali too used to be originally in that script; but the unexpected victory and occupation of it by the British in 1757 turned the scales: the new rulers, the English East India Company, patronized the script of the minority population, the Devanagari, for political reasons, and it is now in use even among the Muslims (though since the establishment of Pākistān, Arabic script is increasingly being used there; and as early as in 1949, I saw there a review entitled *Ḥurūf ul-Qur'ān*, in Bengali language yet Arabic characters). All these "Muslim-Majority languages" of India possess considerable literature of Islamic value. All of them possess one or several translations of the Qur'ān, works on Muslim law, Islamic history and the like.

In the Southern India, Malābār and Tāmilnād have received the impact of Islam most. No wonder then, that in spite of the Dravidian scripts in use among the non-Muslim majority population of the regions, Muslims there have used uptil now the Arabic script, and possessed even periodicals in it. I have found even translations of the Qur'ān in these languages, published in Arabic script. They are styled as "Arab Tamil" and "Arab Malayalam", to distinguish them from the same languages written in Dravidian scripts, also used by Muslims as vehicle of expression. These Dravidian scripts also possess translations of the Qur'ān besides other literature on Islam. Same is the position of Gujrāti, where the Arabic script is now used much less than in Tamil and Malayalam. It too possesses several translations of the Qur'ān. Konkani is another "Muslim" language of the South, with some Islamic literature.

Telugu is less represented for the purpose. Bāqir Āgāh has left

some poems in Telugu, written in Arabic characters, but I am not aware of other literature in that script. Of course Muslims have produced many important works in that language, written in the Dravidian script, particular to this language. Mahmūd Wanderman, Qāsim Khān, ʿAbd ul-Ghafūr and others have as much as six translations of the Qur'ān in Telugu. The Kanarese seems to be a bit backward in this respect; Muslim minority is also weak there. The region speaking Marathi had successfully rebelled against Muslim rule even in the time of Awrangzeb; this is perhaps to explain the scarcity of Islamic literature, although it is not devoid of a translation of the Qur'ān.

I confess I do not know any Indian language except Urdu, my mother tongue; hence it is possible, even probable, that I have remained unaware of the literary gems in these languages concerning our subject.

I must not neglect another aspect of the contribution of the Muslims of the Sub-Himalayan continent: They are producing ceaselessly a vast literature in many languages of the world, particularly of the West, where they are going since long generations for higher studies and preparing their theses for doctorate, a considerable number of which theses pertain to Islamic subjects. English, French, and German are particularly represented in this field. I remember when once a scholar and minister of Tunis saw a French work of an Indian Muslim on the battlefields of the Prophet, with maps of these fields, he had remarked in admiration: "If Indian Islam has produced so far nothing except this work, that suffices for that region!" It was certainly an exaggeration, yet he was sincere because no Muslim had attempted that work during the last fourteen centuries of Islam, in spite of millions of pilgrims who have visited these places, from kings and commanders to commoners.

Arabic Orthography

The reforms of the Arabic script, of the time of the Umaiyads, consisting of distinguishing resembling letters by dots, and using signs for vocalisation, suffice for the Arabic language; these signs point out with precision the exact pronunciation, and at the same time retain the stenographic values of this script. Other languages, adopting this alphabet required both additions and substractions,

since Arabic did not possess certain sounds found in other languages, and it did possess certain nuances of sounds not required for others. The Persians, for instance, required new letters to represent p, ch, zh, g; Turks, Indians, Afghans, Indonesians, Berbers, Central-Africans and others have each their own particular requirements. Urdu speaking population had naturally added its own quota. But this is not what I was about. India's contribution is much more fundamental and of general utility in another aspect of the script, as follows:

Leaving aside the doubling of consonant, lengthening of long vowels, and marking the syllables by means of signs, Arabic script has only three signs to represent the shorter vowels a, i, u. It has not got the so very common e and o (and ē and ō), not to speak of the English a (as in "fat"). As far as I know, it goes to the credit of the 'Osmania University of Haiderābād to think of the problem and propose a comprehensive and scientific solution, both simple and in harmony with the existing system. The quarterly "Islamic Culture" (of Haiderabad) of 1940 has spoken of it at length; and the system has been successfully used, among others, in the Urdu translation of Nys's "Origines du droit international", not only for European proper names but also for transcribing words, names of books, etc. in over half a dozen European languages. Teaching experience of fifteen years in the 'Osmania University has also shown, that students assimilated it easily and eagerly. (Briefly it is thus: ◌̀ ◌́ ◌̓; the old signs are inverted to sound the English a, and the general e and o. I will not go into details here for the nasal sound as in French final n, or ẽ, õ, the German ü etc., all of which, together with particular consonants such as v, German ch and sch etc., have been dealt with in that system.) It could as well be adopted by other languages using Arabic alphabet, with profit.

Schools

The chequered history of Islam in India is responsible for the fact that continuity is lacking in the history of institutions. There is none to compare with *Azhar*, *Qarawīyīn* or *Zaitūnah* in point of age. In the time of Muḥammad Tughlaq (14th century), one thousand schools are mentioned for the capital, Delhi. A little later Maḥmūd Gāwān, minister of the Bahmanids, constructed at his private

expenses a magnificent college building at Bīdar (near Haiderābād). It remained in use for about three hundred years, until part of it was destroyed by a thunderbolt in March 1696. The rest is still preserved by the archaeological department of Haiderābād, and is a fine monument of old educational architecture. The 18th century English traveller Hamilton saw in Thatta (near Karachi) 400 colleges of all sorts. Abū'l-Ḥasanāt has written in Urdu a useful history of the old Muslim schools in India. The oldest existing Islamic schools are perhaps those founded and maintained by the Britishers, in Calcutta for instance. The *Fakhrīyah* in Haiderābād, founded by a minister and maintained by his family is a little more than hundred years old, though with no particular value. *Dār ul-'Ulūm* was established in 1856, in Haiderābād; its school section still bears that name, but the college section was later developed into a university and named after the renovator "*'Osmania University*", in 1919. Its Faculty of Muslim Theology has particular interest for us. It gave a new orientation to Islamic studies in the country, and was later followed also elsewhere. The innovation consisted firstly in the compulsory teaching of the English language — of the same standard as in the faculty of humanistics (called Arts) to general students — and secondly in a bias for comparative studies: *Kalām* or Muslim scholastics with modern philosophy, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* with modern jurisprudence, history of the compilation of the Qur'ān with that of the other religious scriptures such as Vedas, Bible etc. After thirty years of useful existence — in which research was done in Islamic international law, economics, law of torts, etc. — the new masters have decided to abolish it, as the newspapers of mid-1953 have reported.

Dār ul-Ḥadīth of Deoband was founded in 1870, and it has ever since continued to produce hundreds of *'ulemā'* every year. It is in fact the *Azhar* of India. In its old-boys one sees students from all parts of the East, from Turkistan to Malaya. It has also a magnificent library, of thousands of MSS., although a catalogue, to my knowledge, has never been published. Before the partition of British India in 1947, it had on its rolls every year several thousand students, all specialising in Islamic studies.

A contemporary of its, of an entirely different order, is 'Alīgarh. First founded as Anglo-Mohammedan School, it developed soon

into Mohammadan College, and later into Muslim University. It had nothing particularly Islamic; it was a modern institution of English model; even students or professors were not exclusively Muslim. However it was run by Muslims, though under government supervision; Muslim students received some instruction in Islamistics; in the university campus there was a mosque; Muslim students were preferred to non-Muslim ones when there was overcrowding of candidates. It has played a great role in the Indian history of Muslim education, and consequently politics, many of the front rank leaders being ex-alumni of 'Alīgarh.

Purely Islamistics institutions, on the model of *Azhar*, are numerous all over the country: *Niẓāmīyah* in Haiderābād, *Maẓāhir ul-'ulūm* in Sahāranpūr, *Frangīmaḥal* and *Nadwah* in Lucknow, *Qāsim ul-'ulūm* in Murādābād, and a host of others. Even government had to take note of the increasing demand of the Muslim population. First chairs were instituted everywhere for Arabic and Persian languages; later in Muslim-majority provinces, like Bengal and the Panjāb, even colleges or faculties were founded for Islamic studies in a secular manner; in Madrās examinations were held by the university, although without providing teaching facilities by the Government. The *Afḍal ul-'ulamā'* diploma of Madrās was practically as purelly Islamistic as the one given to the students at Deoband.

The schools founded and run by different Christian missions attracted Muslims less in the beginning; later prejudices decreased, and the experience of generations shows that the evangelization of Muslim young boys and girls in these mission-schools is practically non-existant. In my native city of Haiderābād, Muslims of richer classes sometimes preferred these mission-schools to government ones for the simple reason that the former had usually Englishmen as teachers and this was thought useful for learning better English pronunciation!

Sects

Apart from the ubiquitous Sunnis and Shī'ahs, religion of the Indian Muslims has two particular aspects to relate: customs of Indian origin and sects born in India. Local customs, particularly in the law of inheritance, are available in different parts of the country,

yet neither uniform nor all-pervading. In certain groups of the Muslims of Malābār, for instance, matriarchal system is observed, according to which the son does not inherit, but the sister's son. In certain classes of the Panjāb, women are excluded from inheritance, be they sisters or daughters; even widows get only some maintenance and no share. In certain categories of Bombay Muslims, joint-family system is in vogue, according to which the property of the deceased is never distributed, but remains the joint-property of all his dependents, who in their turn add to it. In other places, such particularities refer only to certain categories of property, such as agricultural land, and not to movables. These peculiarities had a trend to vanish, and at the demand of Muslims themselves, the central legislature of British India had passed the so-called "Sharī'at Application Act", of 1937, to prevent the application of local non-Islamic customs in matters of personal law to the detriment of the laws of Islam [1].

India has also received its quota in different movements born among Muslims elsewhere, such as the Ismā'īlism, Bahāism, Puritanism (Wahhābism), etc., not to speak of the Sufi orders, Qādiriah, Chishtiah, Naqshbandiah, Suhrawardiah and the like. Purely Indian movements are also not wanting:

A contemporary of Shaikh Aḥmad Mujaddid was Sayid Muḥammad of Jaunpūr, a pious ascetic, who claimed to be the *Mahdi* (a sort of Islamic Messiah). Chased from country to country, he travelled all over the then-Muslim world, and died in Farah (Afghanistan). His followers do not ordinarily mingle with other Muslims in prayers, matrimonial relations, and go even so far as to declare other sects of Muslims as *Kāfir*.

More schismatic is Aḥmadism of Qādiyān, dating from the present century itself. It is already divided into several sub-sects; the extremist say that the founder of their sect, Ghulām Aḥmad, was a prophet, the promised Messiah, even the incarnation of God; the moderate group contents to believe him only as a *mujaddid* (renovator of the pure Islam). They do not believe in *jihād*, in which they resemble very much with the Bahāis. It is however noteworthy, that Aḥmadis have been the first in modern times to

[1] See Asaf A. A. Fyzee, Outlines of Muhammadan Law, London, 1949. (G. J.)

organize Islamic missions abroad, and they have had considerable success both in Europe and America. The monthly "Islamic Review" of Woking (England) is publishing continuously for the last 41 years. There are other organs in America; they have had in Germany also. Herr Hobohm, *Imām* of the Berlin mosque, had told me only last year that since the war several hundred Germans, in Berlin, Hamburg and elsewhere, have embraced Islam.

Apart from these factions, the bulk of the hundred million Muslims of the Sub-continent is Sunni, roughly 80% are Hanafites, 10% Shāfiʿites, and as much Shīʿites.

Publishers

As usual, there are general publishers, in different languages, who bring out editions of Islamic interest from time to time, and there are concerns specializing in this kind of literature.

Of this latter kind, the place of honour should go to the world-famous *Dāʾirat ul-maʿārif* of Haiderābād, which edits only classical Arabic MSS. In the sixty years of its existence, it has several hundreds of works to its credit, in all kinds of subjects: Qur'ān, Hadīth, Fiqh, dogmatics, history, philosophy natural sciences etc. The latest, (at the time of writing these lines in October 1953) are *Ṣuwar al-Kawākib* by aṣ-Ṣūfī, first volume of the *Qānūn Masʿūdī* of Bērūnī and *al-Jarḥ wʾat-Taʿdīl* by Abū-Ḥātim as-Sijistānī.

Haiderābād has also a very old institution, *Ishāʿat ul-ʿulūm*, among whose Arabic publications I may cite *Nathr ul-Marjān fī rasm khaṭṭ al-qurʾān*, by an old Indian scholar Muhammad Ghauth, in four (or perhaps six) bulky volumes. The Translation and Compilation Bureau founded by the Government of Haiderābād, and reorganized with the establishment of the ʿOsmania University, has published work only in Urdu, many of which on Islamic subjects. Of the original compilations, several works of the famous historian Shibli belong to the first phase of this institution, now abolished under the new régime. There was also a *Majlis Makhṭūṭāt Fārsī*, which has edited several important works in Persian language.

In Urdu again, we have the famous *Dār ul-muṣannifīn* of Aʿẓamgarh, and the comparatively younger *Nadwat ul-muṣannifīn* of Delhi, who both specialize in Islamic literature of high order.

In Lahore we have the Oriental College series, which has several important Arabic editions to its credit. The "Muhammad Ashraf Publishers" have specialized in English, and have done valuable service in the field. The Asiatic Society of Bengal, too, has several works of our interest. Finally I may refer to the Islamic Research Institute of Bombay, which has also several important publications on Ismā'īlī literature, mostly in English; and a history of Arab navigation, in Urdu (which has been translated into English also).

Periodicals

Apart from the old yet mixed journals of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta and Bombay, which have become classic, there are also specialized periodicals in the country. The "Islamic Culture", an English quarterly, was founded by the late Marmaduke Muhammad Pickthal, and is publishing for the last quarter of a century and more. The "Islamic Literature", a monthly of Lahore, "Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society", a quarterly of Karachi, and others are new in the field.

There were formerly also Arabic journals, but could not survive long. In Urdu, there is *Ma'ārif*, a monthly, publishing for the last 36 years, and in fact continuing another monthly of a different name of still further back. It can compare very well, as regards the standard of erudition, any Western periodical.

There are numberless dailies, weeklies, monthlies, quarterlies and other periodicals, in different languages, belonging to the Muslims, the details of which cannot be given here.

Fine Arts

The contribution to fine arts is not less remarkable, but it requires a specialist to deal. The Tāj of Agra is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. The Bōl-Gunbad of Bījāpūr, also now commemorated by a postage stamp of current use in Bhārat, is recognized as the most perfected whispering gallery in the World. The Shālimār gardens of the Mughal period, in Lāhore, in Srinagar, in Kābul, are another contribution: in landscape gardens with waterfalls.

Hydraulic works are another branch that owes much to the genius of Indian Muslims, many of which are still in use since several

centuries, such as the subterranean canals in Awrangābād (Haiderābād) etc.

Muslims have contributed much to gardening and to ameliorating fruit varieties. Mango may be cited in this connection. Comparing the description of this Indian fruit in the botanical or travel works of early Muslim centuries with those of the late Mughal period, shows how great has been the development, owing chiefly to grafting. Among flowers, rose is reputed to have been introduced in India by Muslims. Perfumery has always attracted them, and their products were cherished all over the world. Culinary art could only be developed in India by Muslims, where other communities are either vegetarian, using no meat, or have caste obsessions.

Carpet works are also stamped with their qualities. In weaving, muslins of Dacca have become legendary. It is said that once a Mughal princess was reprimanded in the Court by her sovereign father for wearing too thin and transparent a dress, and she had replied: "Your Majesty, I have not one but seven gowns one over the other at this moment, their thinness and transparence is a wonder of workmanship". Painting and music require specialists to deal; Indian Muslims loved them, and have contributed enough to their development.

Co-operative Societies

I may conclude with a contribution of considerable importance to economics. It is well-known that Islam forbids all transaction of lending or borrowing money with interest. It is also known that according to the Qur'ān, it is the duty of the Muslim government to ear-mark funds every year in the state budget to aid the well-to-do in need of money, and how this institution worked, for instance, in the time of the caliph ʿUmar I. In the absence of state-arrangements for interest-free lending, both for private individuals and joint stock companies, and in the presence of unavoidable need to have recourse to borrowing, the dilemma is great for a pious Muslim. Indian Muslims have solved this, since at least a hundred years, by self-help:

Several persons join co-operative societies, subscribe to one or more shares, and deposit their surplus money with them. If the share is, say, of Rp. 120, they pay it up in ten years with one rupee

every month. Supposing only ten members found a society, all poor, they have ten rupees in the first month, which they lend to one of them, who repays it in twenty monthly instalments; in the second month the subscription of ten ruples is a little enhanced by the instalment of the repayment of the debt; and the funds available increase every month. Deposits also help to lend those in need, on providing necessary security of regular repayment. A very small amount is charged on members for expenses of the establishment. I have known societies with a thousand members, with yearly transactions going in six figures. In commercial companies of this nature, members share both the risk and the advantage; money is not lent on fixed interest, but the debentures bring the dividends worth their value. Every thing is based on mutuality and self-help. Thus interest-free co-operative societies for lending money are, to my knowledge, a contribution of Indian Muslims, and are slowly attracting their brethren abroad.

P.S.

In connection with the early Arabists of Indian origin, I must not forget the name of Ibn al-Aʿrābī Muḥammad ibn Ziyād (150-231 H./767-844), whose authority as a philologist is inferior to none. Born of a slave father hailing from Sindh, he has left about a dozen works (see Brockelmann, GAL, Suppl. I, 179-180) of the highest importance, six of which are still extant, some even new edited.