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The Fragrance of East

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CONTENTS

1- Proclamation of Human Dignity	<i>S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi</i>	7
2- The Rights of the Poor	<i>S. Sulaiman Nadwi</i>	15
3- A Survey Of The Sirah Literature Of Egypt In The Twentieth Century	<i>Taiyaba Nasrin</i>	17
4- The Crisis of Human Spirit	<i>Obaidur Rahman Nadwi</i>	25
5- Health Care in the Light of The Qur'an and Science	<i>Barkat Ullah Nadvi Mohammad Saleem</i>	27
6- Synthesis as the Leitmotif of Iqbal's Epistemology	<i>Muhammad Nafih Wafy</i>	33
7- Repairing Azad's Vision	<i>A.I. Saiyed</i>	36
8- Nanavati or not, the state apparatus in Gujarat cannot be absolved	<i>V. N. Khare</i>	38

Wisdom of Qur'an

Do they not see that all things that Allah has created, how their shadows incline towards right and left, in prostration to Allah, and they are humbly submitted?

(Surah al-Nahal-48)

Commentary:

Asad clarifies, "In view of the separate mention, in the next verse, of animals and angels, the things referred to here apparently denote inanimate objects and perhaps also living organisms like plants."

The textual word is in plural (lit., "lefts"). Ibn Jarir quotes some poetical pieces to show that usage of this kind was not uncommon in olden times. In fact, Shawkani says, it is right there in the Qur'an also, which said (Al-Baqarah, 7), i.e., "Allah has sealed their hearts, and their hearing" where "hearts" in the original is in plural, but "hearing" in singular. Imam Razi quotes other examples from the Qur'an, for e.g. (54:45)

i.e., "They will show their back" (instead of backs).

The accepted meaning is that the shadows of all things prostrate themselves to Allah (swt), and their prostration is manifested by their movement from left to right as the sun rises, and then it begins to set casting shadow of everything from one extreme (left) to another extreme (right) – Ibn Jarir. In other words, add Zamakhshari and Razi, "yesjudu" of the text implies submission. In Asad's words, "... is obviously a symbolism expressing the intrinsic subjection of all created beings and things to God's will."

And to Allah prostrate whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth of the moving creatures, and (so do) the angels- and they are humble.

(Surah-Al-Nahal -49)

Commentary:

The textual word "dabbah" draws the following comment from Asad, "The term dabbah denotes any sentient, corporeal being capable of spontaneous movement, and is contrasted here with the non-corporeal, spiritual beings designated as angels."

Pearls From the Prophet Muhammad (S)

Zakat and the family of the Prophet (SAW)

It is related on the authority of Abdul Muttalib bin Rabiah that the Apostle of God said: "The alms are the dirt and scum of the people and are not permitted to Muhammad and his descendants."

-Muslim

Commentary:

In it Zakat and the alms have been described as "dirt and scum" because just as a cloth becomes clean when the dirt is removed from it, in the same way the rest of the wealth becomes pure, in the judgment of God, after Zakat has been paid on it. It, also, shows that, as far as possible, one should refrain from making use of the goods of Zakat. On this ground, the Prophet has declared Zakat as forbidden to himself and his family, i.e., the children of Hashim, till the end of time.

Anas narrates that (once) the Apostle of God was going somewhere when he saw a date lying in the way. On seeing it, he remarked: "if I did not fear that it might be of Zakat, I would have picked it up and eaten it."

-Bukhari and Muslim

Commentary:

The Prophet's remark was, in fact, intended to impress upon the people that however insignificant God's provision or anything out of His bounty may be, if it is found lying unclaimed or thrown off carelessly anywhere, due reverence should be shown to it and it should be put to the use for which it was meant. The Prophet, at the same time, added that he could not eat the date for the fear that it might have fallen down from among the dates of Zakat. He, thus, also, imparted the lesson of abstention from the use of doubtful things to men of piety and devoutness.

Editor's Note:

Cultural Nationalism

Much water has flown down the Gomti since we wrote about the biased role of media in this column of our last issue. How innocent Muslim youths are being picked up on the charge of waging war against the state and because of their alleged involvement in terrorist activities. Their branding as the activist of 'Islamic Terrorism' has become a slogan and a 'hot news' to media. We had questioned the media, both print and electronic, for their parroting the language of those who claim themselves to be the harbinger of "Cultural Nationalism" in the country and accusing non-Hindus particularly Muslims as a strong road-block in their so called progressive ideology. It is satisfying to note that the recent unearthing of the sinister designs of some misguided persons who are alleged to have planted bombs/explosives in Malegaon and at other places of Muslim gatherings has been prominently highlighted by the media, of course with the exception of a few newspapers and TV Channels which are the pocketborough of Sangh Parivar. The arrest of Sadhavi Pragya Thakur and some of her associates, a few of them with Army background, on their alleged involvement in terrorist activities aiming to kill Muslims, is an impressive achievement of the Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) of Maharashtra police. Whatsoever, may be the outcome of their investigation and prosecution efforts ATS has atleast shown the mirror to those who declared every "blast" to be the act of Islamic Terrorism. Now a former BJP President Venkiah Naidu and the present incumbent President Rajnath Singh when confronted with the involvement of persons of their clan and branded as the protagonists of Hindu Terrorism say that no religion can be linked with terrorism. At last wisdom has dawned upon them. Now they say that all religions stand for peace and tranquility and abhor destruction and vandalism. Ever since the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi the country is experiencing the manifestation of violent behaviour against minorities, they may be Sikhs, Muslims or Christians. Massacre of Sikhs in 1984,

Killings of Muslims in Post Babri mosque demolition riots in 1992-93, Gujrat genocide in 2002 and attacks on Christians and their places of worship in 2008 are a few instance which reflect the ugly face of "Cultural Nationalism". Now regionalism in its ugly form has raised its head. The way Maharashtra Navnirman Sena has waged terror against non-Maharashtrians in Mumbai and neighbouring districts is devastating. Such movements are bound to destroy the unity of the nation. It may be recalled that in 18th and 19th century Muslim rulers of India played a very constructive role in bringing people of different regions together and building up of a great country-called India. If by destroying the syncretic texture, built in the country over hundred of years with the sacrifices and preachings of Saints and Sufis." Cultural Nationalism replaces the well built Indian Nationalism then it will be the end of Humanity. Time has come when each and every Indian irrespective of his community, caste and region should sit together and ponder over the causes of such criminal and devastating acts. All out efforts should be made to eradicate this menace and restore peace and brotherhood.

S A

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Proclamation of Human Dignity

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The third universal gift of Islam is its declaration that man has been endowed with the highest rank and dignity in the entire scheme of God's creation. Before the prophethood of Muhammad, on whom be peace and blessings of God, man had degraded himself to the position of the most inconsequential being on earth. Numerous beasts and trees connected with mythological traditions and pagan beliefs were held as holy and cared for more than man himself. They had to be protected even at the cost of innocent lives; sometimes human beings were sacrifice at the alter of these holy objects. We still come across such glory incidents even in such civilized countries as India.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) restored the dignity of man by declaring that man is the most respectable and prized being in the whole Universe and nothing has a greater claim to honour and love and protection than he. The holy Prophet raised man to the highest conceivable level, that is, the position of the vicegerent of God on earth. It was for man that the world was created. Says the Qur'an:

"It is He who created for you all that is"

The Qur'an described man as the paramount and best of creations in the whole Universe.

"We have honoured the children of Adam and guided them by land and sea,

And provided them with good things and exalted them above many of Our creations."

What can affirm human eminence and honour better than this observation by the Prophet of Islam.

"The entire creation constitutes the family of God and he is dearest to Him who is the best in his dealings with God's family."

Another Hadith related by Abu Huraira from the holy Prophet, throws light on the nobility of human existence and also alludes to man's ability to achieve divine propinquity through service to mankind by a meaningful allegory:

“Allah will ask on the Day of Judgement: ‘O Children of Adam, I fell ill but you did not come to see Me?’ Man will say in reply, ‘Allah! Thou wert the Lord of the worlds! How could have I attended Thee?’ God will then say, Did you not know one of my servants had fallen ill, but you did not come to attend him. Did you not know that if you had attended him, you would have found Me by his side?”

‘O Children of Adam, I asked for food from you, but you did not give it to Me, God will ask. Man will answer, ‘Allah! Thou wert the sustainer of the worlds! How could have I fed Thee?’ God will then say; ‘One of my servants asked you for food, but you refused it to him. Had you fed him, you would have found Me near him.”

‘O Children of Adam, I asked for water from you, but you refused it to Me,’ God will ask. Man will again say in reply, ‘Thou wert the Lord of the worlds, how could have I quenched Thy thirst?’ God will answer, ‘One of My servants demanded water from you but you refused. Had you given him water you would have found Me near him!”

Can there be a better concept of human dignity and nobility? Has man ever been granted this honour under any religion or social philosophy?

The Prophet of Islam has made divine mercy contingent on being kind to man.

“The Most Merciful is compassionate to the softhearted. Show mercy to those on the earth and the Owner of Heavens will be merciful to you.”

All those who know about the social and political condition of the world prior to the advent of Islam can easily appreciate the determined effort holy Prophet had to make in order to drive home the concept of wroth and dignity of man.

Lives of innumerable human beings depended on the whims of a single individual before the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him). Any tyrant could wade in blood across countries and continents for a gaining political ascendancy or just for satisfying his whims.

Alexander the Great (356-324 B.C.) rose like a tempest, subdued Syria and Egypt, and crossing the Babylonia and Turkistan reached India. He swept the older civilizations before him. Julius Caesar (102-44 B.C.) and several other conquerors like Hannibal (247-182 B.C.) exterminated large populations remorselessly as if those were not human beings but beasts of prey.

These pitiless massacres continued all over the world even after the advent of Jesus Christ. The Roman Emperor Nero (A.D. 54-68) murdered his own

wife and mother, persecuted his own contrymen and played with the fiddle while the Rome burnt, for which he was probably himself responsible. Barbarians like Goths and Vandals were busy destroying civilization in Europe and Africa only a hundred years before the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Little regard for human life among the Arabs had made fights and forays a pastime for them and even the most trivial matter could lead them to the battlefield. Bakr and Taghlab, the two tribes of Bani Wa'il, continued to fight for forty years during which they fought many a sanguinary battle although it all started by the shooting of an arrow at the udder of a camel which mixed the milk with blood. Jassas b. Marrah killed Kalayb and then Bakr and Taghlab started fighting about which Kalayb's brother Al-Muhalhil remarked; "Men have died, mothers have become childless, children have become orphans; tears stream from the eyes and the dead are lying shroudless."

Similarly the battle of Dahis-o-Ghabra was sparked off simply because Dahis, the horse of Qays b. Zuhari, had overtaken that of Hudaiqa b. Badr. A man of Asad slapped Qays at the instance of Hudaiqa which made his horse lose the race. Thereafter the war of attrition started in which a large number of people lost their lives and many had to leave their hearths and homes.

The number of battles fought by the holy Prophet was twenty-seven or twenty-eight while he is reported to have sent out sixty forays and expeditions. In all these battles and expeditions only 1018 persons. Muslims as well non-Muslims, lost their lives.

The purpose of these fightings was to restore law and order and protect human life and property from its senseless destruction. A civilized code of conduct was prescribed for the warfare which changed the character of war from persecution to disciplinary action.

The moral teachings of Islam create such a strong sense of human dignity that one never treats another man as a sub-human being. He never treats another man as a chattel or slave nor discriminates between himself and others which is very often the cause of degrading others. An incident preserved by history amply illustrates the sense of human dignity embedded by Islam. Anas relates that he was with Umar, the second Caliph, when an Egyptian Copt complained to the Caliph that his horse had beaten that of Muhammad son of Amr b. al-As, the Governor of Egypt, which was witnessed by a number of persons. When he claimed that he had won the race, Muhammad got enraged and lashed him with a whip. Caliph Umar asked

him to wait and wrote to Amr b. al-As asking him and his son to present themselves before him. Amr b. al-As sent for his son and enquired about the matter who denied having committed any crime. Then both Amr b. al-As and his son repaired to Madina. Caliph Umar sent for the Copt and giving him a whip asked him to bet the son of Amr b. al-As. After the Copt had exacted retribution, Caliph Umar ordered the Copt to move the whip over the head of Amr b. al-As for it was because of him that he had been flogged. The Copt refused saying that he had already had his revenge. Thereupon Umar remarked: "Had you beaten him I would not have intervened." Then, turning to Amr b. al-As he said, Whence did you make them slaves who had been born free? Thereafter turning to the Copt, Umar said, God back and have no fear. If anything happens, inform me. ●

Exhortation to charity

It is related by Abu Hurairah that the Apostle of God said: "It is the message of God to every bondsman: O son of Adam! Go on spending the wealth I have given thee (on the poor, the needy and the destitute). I shall give thee more from My treasure."

-Bukhari and Muslim

The Rights of the Poor

S. Sulaiman Nadwi

Sometimes even the rich and the affluent person has to suffer a reverse in his business or is afflicted with such catastrophe that he has to stretch his hand and seek the help of others. So it is the moral obligation of every member of his society to help his afflicted brother and the wealth of the rich should not make him so haughty and proud that he becomes indifferent to his less fortunate brother. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an.

And in whose wealth there is a right acknowledged. For the beggar and the destitute. (70:24,25)

Begging which implies asking for one's assistance in genuine need is allowed. One should not suffer much to preserve false prestige and explain one's hardships to whom he deems fit for alleviating him; but the receipt of charity which whets one's appetite for worldly riches and increases his greed is strictly forbidden in Islam and is a highly condemnable act. The word beggar in its wide sense implies one who needs your help or assistance of any kind, physical, mental, financial etc., for instance, if any lame or crippled person needs the prop of your shoulder you shouldn't turn him away with harsh words but if possible, fulfil his need and if you cannot do so, beg pardon of him in a polite and gentle way or request someone else to give him help and support.

Abu Musa reported that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then clasped his hands with the fingers interlaced. (At that time) the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was sitting and a man came and begged or asked for something. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) faced us and said: Help and recommend him and you will receive the reward for it; and Allah will bring about what he will through his Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tongue.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Every act of goodness is sadaqah. He said! If you cannot do anything else, then help the poor and the needy. He further said: to guide the stray traveller and to put the

blind on the right path is a sadaqa. And he (the Holy Prophet) said: Allah will grant pardon to a person who removes the troublesome things from the path.

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Begging is not permissible but for one of the three (classes) of persons; one who has incurred debt, for him begging is permissible till he pays that off, after which he must stop it; a man whose property has been destroyed by a calamity which has smitten it, for him begging is permissible till he gets what will support life, or will provide him reasonable subsistence; and a person who is smutted by poverty, the genuineness of which is confirmed by three intelligent members of the people, for him begging is permissible till he gets what will support him, or will provide him subsistence.

Sa'd b. Waqqas (may Allah be pleased with him) was by nature superiority conscious. He considered himself superior to the poor. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to him: Your success and whatever you possess is due to the poor.. ●

Six Fasts after Ramazan

It is related by Abu Ayub Ansari that the Apostle of God said: "Whoever observed the fasts of Ramazan, and, after it, observed six supererogatory fasts in the month of Shawwal, it will be equal to fasting forever (i.e., throughout the year)."

-Muslim

A Survey Of The Sirah Literature Of Egypt In The Twentieth Century

Taiyaba Nasrin*

Writing of the life of the prophet Muhammad known as Sirah, became extremely popular among the Egyptian writers during the twentieth century. This trend was popular among scholars, historians, theologians and men of letters alike. Because of this a large number of works were produced in Egypt in the twentieth century. Some of these works are traditional Sirah written in old-fashioned narration of the life of the Prophet Muhammad. But a lot of other works are thematic studies written with a particular purpose highlighting one or the other aspect of the Prophet's life. These works seem to have two general objectives: one, to present the Prophet Muhammad as a perfect and ideal human being and two, to defend his life and character from biased and unbiased allegations to European Christian scholars. In the following a survey of the Sirah literature produced in Egypt in the twentieth century is given.

The development of Sirah literature in the twentieth century Egypt can broadly be divided into three historical periods. The first period that extends up to 1930 from the beginning of the century witnessed a fewer number of Sirah works which were quite traditional and in a way unacademic pursuits.

The second period that extends from 1930 to 1952 saw the emergence of the modernist and scientifically argumentative group of writers while the third period began in 1952 and continues to date. The last period is very remarkable from both the quality and quantity angles. The following pages attempt to present salient features of all the three periods in a systematic manner.

The first Phase:

Not much work was produced on the Sirah in the period ranging between 1900 and 1930. Probably the first Sirah work of this century appeared in 1906 and it was written by Atiya b. Muhammad al-bashshar under the title *Khulasah-a-Sirah al Muhammadiyah*. Nur al-Yaqin fi Sayyid al-Mursalin of Khudari Bek published in 1915 is one of the few complete Sirah works of this period.

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Although it is purely a traditional presentation, it heralded in a way the most productive period of the Sirah literature of Egypt. Both these works are complete biographies, though of different length, the first being a short account and the latter being a complete biography. Several other works dealing with Islamic history or some aspect of the prophet's life were also produced in this period but they can not be included in the category of biographies of the Prophet such as Isra'il Welfenson's *Tarikh al-yahud fi Bilad al-Arab fi al-Jahiliyah wa Sadr al-Islam*. Welfenson was a Lebanese Christian who studied in Cairo University. His book published in 1927 was in fact the dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy under the supervision of Taha Husayn in the University of Cairo. The book, however could become publicly available only after 1953 when Haykal discussed it in his book *Hayat-i-Muhammad*.

The second phase:

The publication of books on the subject of the Sirah in Egypt considerably increased after the year 1930. During the first six years of the decade at least four important works on the Sirah were penned down by well known authors: *Ala Hamish al-Sira* by Taha Husayn appeared in 1933, while *Muhammad Rasul Allah* by M.Afandi Rida came in 1934. *Hayat-i-Muhammad* by Haykal and *Muhammad* by Tawfiq al-Hakim, appeared in 1935 and 1936 especially.

These works became extremely popular among the people, especially Haykal's *Hayat-i-Muhammad* became best seller as it broke all records of publication in Egypt. Significantly enough all these works were warmly welcomed by the whole Muslim world in general. *Hayat-i-Muhammad* became a landmark of the Egyptian Sirah writings. It is a fact that every work written on the sirah after 1935 has had direct or indirect influence of *Hyat-i-Muhammad*, on matter whether their authors acknowledge it or not.

The publication of *Hyat-i-Muhammad* gave the greatest fillip to Sirah-writing in Egypt and large number of works were produced in a short span of time. During all these years there appeared a kind of competition between the modern writers and traditional revivalists to revisit the subject and to present the Prophet as a great human being, an unmatched reformer or born leader of freedom etc. While the revivalists believed and advocated that despite being a human, he was essentially a Prophet, and all his works should be studied in his Prophetic perspective.

Apart from the above works, several other books were published in his decade. The most important are : *Al-Mu ahidat wa al-Muhalqat fi* and *al-Rasul*

by Hasan Khattab al-Wakil (1930): Muhammad al-Mathal al-kamil, by Jad al-Mawla (1932) : Ayy am al-Nabi al Karim by Musa Jar Allah (1935): Khulasah al-sirah al-Muhammadiyah wa Haqiqah al-da'wah al-Islamiyah, by Muhammad Rashid Rida (1936) : Sirah al-Nabawiyah, by Muhammad Ghanim al-Misri (1938): Sirah Rasul Allah by Nasral Din Taha (1938); Al-Isra'Mu'jza kubra'wa al-Gharaniq Ifk Muftara by Muhammad Khalil Hijazi(1939).

Jad al-Mawla's work was well received by the religious circles and became popular mainly among the reformists. It was highly praised by the Muslim Brotherhood (al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin). Hasan al-Banna, the founder-ideologue of Muslim Brotherhood, preferred it to Haykal's Hayat-i-Muhammad. The book is written in a very simple and lucid language. Its literary value is greatly appreciated by Arabic scholars. As the title of the book itself suggests Jad al-Mawla has made an effort to portray the Prophet as an ideal man. i.e. a perfect example (Math al-kamil) for all human beings to imitate and follow. The book has little critical value for it is written for the specific purpose of training the volunteers and followers of the Muslim Brotherhood. It may be classified as a manual of religious training (da'wah), as it presents the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet in that perspective rather than the historical perspective.

During the following decade too, as in the 1930s, the modernist writers continued their work side by side the traditionalists. The trend of portraying the Prophet's life in a human perspective continued as the interest of modernist scholars and intellectuals was mainly confined to this field; they consciously tried to side track the supernatural and prophetic aspect (risalah) of the Prophet, simply because their rational thinking could not find a way to compromise both aspects of the Holy Prophet.

Most of the modernists were specialised men of letters. Apart from their rationalistic thinking which was an outcome of their obsession of the western training and education, their methodology also favoured the humanistic approach. Therefore, in most cases we see that the overwhelming majority of the modernist sirah-writers belonged to the class of littaurates i.e. Linguistic, fiction writers, dramatist and several other types of literature. Essentially and professionally they were not historians and history-teachers. This methodological preference of the modernists also determined their approach to sirah writing. For example, Tawfiq al-Hakim who was a play writer composed the sirah in the form of a drama. Taha Husayn who was a master of Arabic literature and an authority on Arabic literature, especially poetry and legends utilized most of the sirah materials in his book, Ala Hamish al-Sirah as a fictional

work. Several other works of this type were produced by Egyptian men of letters in different phases like Fathi Ridwan, Muhammad Sabih, Abd al-Rahman al-Sharqawi, Mahamud Shalbi, Khalid Muhammad Kalid, Ahmad Husayn and Muhammad Shalbi etc.

Another trend which emerged during this period was to highlight some characteristic features of the life the Prophet. This gave rise to a new form of sirah writing i.e. anecdotal or thematic studies. Most of the work of this type was produced by modern Egyptian litterateurs while the rest were written by those who were influenced by western ideas of humanism and secularism. Of this kind probably the earliest book was 'Abqariyah Muhammad of' Aqqad published in 1946. 'Aqqad was well known literary figure of Egypt, who wrote his book as a portrayal of the personal qualities of the great leader who changed the course of events not only during his lifetime but exercised an abiding influence on the posterity as well. That is why; he wrote a series on the Arab genius ('abqariyah) whose great figure was the Holy Prophet.

This form of the sirah writing has been the most favourite method of the traditionalists as well as the theologians, as it largely suited their purpose. For example, Rashid Rida, a great theologian and religious scholar wrote a book on the same lines. The fourth decade witnessed the compilation and publication of the following works: Al Kawakib al-Nuraniyah fi Hijrah Khayor al-Bariah by Ahmed Sa'd al-Aqqad (1945): Muhammad al-Qa'id by Muhammad 'Abd al-Fattah Ibrahim (1945): Sham'il al-Rasul wa Shakhsiyah al-Insaniyah by Anwar al-Jundi (1948): Sirah al-Rasul by Muhammad Izat Daruza (1949): Ash'at Min Shams al Nabawiyah by Mustafa Ahmad al-Rafai al-Lubban (1949).

A content analysis of the above mentioned works shows that the Sirah writing of this decade was multifaceted, as some were of anecdotal nature, some others dealt with a particular aspect of the Prophet, while others attempted a chronological study of his life.

Third Phase:

Compilation of the works on Sirah picked up greater momentum in 1950s onward. In addition to earlier trends, new dimensions were added to this branch of knowledge. Of them the most conspicuous and important was the study of a particular aspect of the life of the Prophet such as his generalship, his personal life relating to his wives and daughters, his policy towards the Jews, his miracles and his migration from Makkah to Madinah. Those who wrote on the battles of the Prophet tried to enumerate and evaluate his achievements as a military

leader. On the one hand they tried to show him as a perfect and ideal military commander, his ability to inspire and to transform the unruly Arabs into a well-knit and organized army, and lead the Muslim army, while, on the other hand highlighted the ideals, principles and examples set by him in war ethics. Several of these writers were themselves army commanders. Comparisons were also made between the military leadership of the Prophet and his expeditions and the military genius of the medieval or modern field-m Marshals and their achievements. Interestingly, all the Muslim writers, of this type of Sirah literature tend to put the Prophet hand and shoulder above the secular commanders for obvious reasons. Some of the important works of this nature are as follows: Ghazwah Badr by Abd al-Rahman al-Banna (1952): Muhammad al-Qa'id al-A'la by Abad al-Majid al-Hawidi (1956): Muhammad al-Muharib by Muhammad Farij (1951): Al-Abqariyah al-Askariyah fi Ghazwah al-Rasul (1958) and Fath Makkah by Abd al-Mun'am Shamis (1962): Ghazwah Badr by Muhammad Jamalal-din Mahfuz (1963): Ghazwah Uhud by Ahmad Yasri (1965): Risalah ala al-'Arabi by Sayyid Faraji (1967): Al-Qayyim al-Khulqiyah al-Ruhiyah fi al-Ghazwah by Hasan Fath Allah (1971): Tarikh al-'Arab al-'Askariyah: Harub Muhammad by Mahmud al-Dar (n.d.): and Ghazwah Hunayn wa al-Tai'fwa Sariyah Awtas by Ahmad Aby al-Wafa al-Husayni.

It may be mentioned that this trend was heralded by Abdul Fattah Ibrahim who wrote his Muhammad al-Qa'id in 1945. A large number of Arabic Scholars were also captivated by this trend and Mahmud Khattab Mustafa Tallas and Muhammad Ahmad Bashamil also produced several works. The latter particularly devaloted his energy in writing about the expeditions of the Prophet and produced so far separate works on Badr, Uhd, Ahzab, Hudaibiyah, Hunayn, Khaybar, Mutah and Fath Makkah.

Then there is a set of Sirah writers who studied personal domestic life of the Prophet with reference to his wives and daughters. They could be divided in two groups: one group discussed the numerous marriages of the Prophet, their reasons and implications with full reference to the biographies of the wives. Since this study had greatly attracted the orientalist and the modernists who generally produced malicious studies, attacking the personality of the Prophet and the Islamic institution of polygamy on various counts. Although, the general Sirah writers also dealt at some length on this aspect of the Prophet's life. These scholars took up the subject with greater details and deeper insight. In fact, these are specialized studies that discuss a very important aspect of the Islamic society. The other group wrote about the daughters of the Prophet separately. Both these

groups made group studies as well as individual studies i.e. biographies of all the wives or daughters in one volume or separate biographies for each of them. Important works on the wives of the Prophet are as follows: *Nisa'al-sayyidah Zaynab* by Sa'id b. Muhammad Ayas (1950): *Nisa al-Nabi ba al-Sayyidah Zaynab* by Sa'id b. Muhammad Ayas (1950): *Nisal al-Nabi* by A'ishah Abd al-Rahman Bint al-Shati (1973): *Ma'al-Mufasadin wa al-Mustashriqin fi Zawaj al-Nabi ba Zaynab b. Jahsh* by Zahir Awazal-Magha (1976): *Ummahat al-Mu'minin wa Banat al-Rasul* by Waddad Sakakini, (1969): *Banat al-Nabi* (1956) and *Aminah b. Wahab*, (1953) by Aisha Abd al-Rahman Bint al-Shati.

The miracles and the miraculous events associated with the Prophet's life have also been one of the most fascinating subject for all Sirah-writers, Muslim and non-Muslim alike; and the Egyptian writers, were no exception. A number of them have discussed in the miracles in the traditional way presenting the oft-beaten point of view. But there are several others who have discussed them in historical perspective and scholarly manner. Of this kind of the sirah-literature produced in Egypt the most important titles are as follows: *Tashwiq al-Muslimin bi Mu'Jazat al Nabi al-Matin* by Ahmad al-Khatib (1954): *Dala'il al-Nabuwah wa Mu'jizat al-Rasul* by Abd al-Halim Mahmud (1974): *Al-Isra'wa al-Miraj* by Muhammad Mutawwali al-Shi'rawi (1975): *Khafaya al-Isra'wa al-Mi'raj* by Salah al Din Abd al-Hamid al Abdi (1978): *Al-Wahy ila Raul Allah* by Abd al-Latif al-Subki (n.d.): *Al-Mu'jazah al-Kubra: al-Quran Nuzul, Kitabah Jama'...* by Muhammad Abu Zuhrah (n.d.): *Al-Bushra bi Akhbar al-Mi'raj wa al-Isra'* by Ja'far b. Isma'il al-Muhammad b. Khalil al-Hajari (1314 A.H.): *Matla'al-Ibraj fi ma'Yata'allaqu bi al-Isra'wa al-Mi'raj* by Suwaydan b. Sulayman al-Maghrabi (1312 A.H.): *Safwah al-Bashar fi al-Isra'* by Shahab al-din Ahmad al-Halwami al-Khaliji (1308 A. H.).

Apart from the general and complete works on the Sirah, special works were devoted by the Arab scholars, especially Egyptians, to the traditional, critical, scientific and, apologetical discussion on the miracles of the Prophet, as the above titles suggest. A cursory classification of these specialized works show that they can be divided into several groups and categories. These are some works that include a general discussion of all the miracles at one place followed by piecemeal appraisal of the most important ones. The greatest attention has been paid by these scholars to the twin miracles of the *isra* and the *mi'raj*; in fact, these two miracles captivated all the scholars, Muslims and non-Muslims alike for different reasons; the former are generally moved by the Quranic verses and the *ahadith* of the Prophet and regard them as undeniable proofs of the

prophethood of the Holy Prophet, while the non-Muslims discuss them as a rare metaphysical and religious experiences which baffle the human mind and intellect; some of them study them for the sake of criticism and malicious rendering for they fail to apprehend the true nature of these religious experiences which were exclusively bestowed upon our Holy Prophet.

The Prophethood of Muhammad and furnishing proofs for the same is one of the most fascinating subject for the Muslim scholars, for they consider their duty to define and prove the genuineness of the message and position of the Holy Prophet. Therefore, they study the miracles in the light of traditional accounts as well as rational argumentation. Naturally a section of these works is devoted to the miracles of the Prophet, especially the night journey to Jerusalem and the heavenly ascent of the Prophet.

Another classification deals with the revelation (wahy) which is in fact the greatest miracle of the Prophet for the whole edifice of Islam and genuineness of the Holy Prophet rests up on the acceptance of this miracle. All the Muslim scholars in the East and the West especially Egyptian scholars and sirah-writers have dealt at length on the subject in their general and specialized work. Apart from the exclusive works on the revelation and the Holy Qur'an, these two aspects of the message of the Prophet have also been studied from the sirah angle and large number of works have been produced on the wahy and the Qur'an as the greatest miracle of the Prophet.

The hijrah or the migration of the Prophet from Makkah to Madinah was a turning point in his life as well in the history of Islam. Therefore, it also attracted the attention of the Egyptian scholars and several exclusive works were produced in the subject in this period such as: *Al-Hijrah al-Nabawiyah Bayna Asbabih* was Nata'ijih by Abd al-Latif al-Subki (1961); *Al-Hijrah fi al-Qur'an al-Karim* by Muhammad al-Dasuqi (1971); *Al-Hijrah: Nusrah wa-Ta'id* by Abd al-Latif al-Shirawi (1971); *Al-Daw ala-al-Hijrah* by tawfiq Muhammad Sabi (1973); *Hijrah al-Rasul ila Rabb al Ansar* by Abd al-Dayim Abu al-'Ata al-Baqari al-Ansari (n.d.); *Tarikh al-Hijra al Nabawiyah wa Bada' al-Islam* by Muhammad Ali al-Bilawi (n.d.); *Hijrah al-Rasul, Kitab al Jamhur al-Dini* by Muhammad Fahham Muhammad (n.d.); *Zikra al-Hijrah al-Nabawiyah* by Hifni Yasir (n.d.).

Writers on the Prophet's hijrah generally begin with its meaning and importance in the annals of Islam as well as in the history of earlier Prophet and peoples with reference to the Qur'anic verses, the ahadith of the Prophet and the historical reports. It is commonly followed by the traditional account of the journey of the hijrah, narrating the conspiracy of the Quraysh against the

Prophet, the latter's leaving his house and arriving at Abu Bakr's residence, the start of the journey and their stay in the cave of Thaur, march towards Madinah, pursuit of Suraqah and his eventual failure, meeting of the Prophet with several tribes and their conversion, various stages of the route, arrival at Qaba, and its stay arrival at Madinah and other related subjects. There are some critical and analytical accounts of the hijrah that discuss the subject in broader perspective dealing with various factors responsible for the hijrah, issues and problems involved in it, its philosophy and importance ending up with events of the hijrah and its impact. These studies are very important as they provide greater insights into a very important aspect of the Prophet's life and an eventful chapter of the history of Islam.

The most important trend of 1950s was exhibited by the works which were written from sociological and ethical angles, apart from those which were written with a view to present him as purely and entirely a human being. Most of these writers were essentially inspired by the revolution of 1952 which promoted socialist ideas. Such works began to appear soon after the revolution of 1952 and continued upto 1962, particularly when Jamal Abd al-Nasir, the leader of the revolution, called upon the intellectuals to write about socialism of the Prophet. In fact, these writers try to discover the ideal of the Arab socialist in the person of the Prophet and his teachings obviously because they wishes to provide a doctrinal or religious base to the current ideology of Arab socialism. Of the sirah literature produced along these lines the following books are very important: Muhammad al-Athair al-A'zam by Fathi Ridwan (1957): Muhammad by Muhammad Shabih (1957): Muhammad Rasul al-Hurriyah by Abd al-Rahman al Sharqawi (1952): Insaniyah Muhammad by Khalid Muhammad Khalid (1971): Nabi al-Insaniyah by Ahmad Husayn (n.d.): Shakhsiyah Muhammad by Muhammad Shalbi (n.d.).

Just as the socialist writers were eager to portray the Prophet as 'socialist par excellence another group tried to highlight his political achievements and building of an exclusively Islamic policy. The latter were largely influenced by the revialist trends of that period. They basically wrote on the political system evoloved by the Prophet. They tried to investigate and bring home the concept of state and government and organizational structure of Islam. The following titles belong to this particular aspect of the life and teachings of the Prophet: Hukumah al-Rasul al-Madinah al-Munawwarah by Jamal al-Din Ayyah (1950): Dawalah al-Qur'an by Taha Abd al-Baqi Surur (1961): Qiyam al-Dawlah al-Arabiyah fi Hayat Muhammad by Muhammad Jamal al-din Surur (1964): Al-

Rasul fi al-Madinah by Ali Hasni al-Kharbutali (1966): Al-Siyasah al-Shariah wa Nizam al-Dawlah al-Islamiyah fi al-Shu'un al-Dasturiyah wa al-Maliyah by Abd al-Wahhab Khallaf (1977): Al-Siyasah al-Ummiyah fi Ahd al-Nubuwwah by Abd al-Muta'al Sai'd (n.d.): Dawlah al-Fikr allati A' qamaha al-Rasul by Fathi Uthman (n.d.).

These books mainly discussed those events, commands and suggestions of the Prophet which took place immediately after the migration. For example, mu'akhah (brotherhood) and treaties with Jews and other non-Muslim tribes of Madinah were largely discussed by the Egyptian authors. They had keen interest in the mu'akhah in particular, as it paved the way for the gradual but steady evolution of the Islamic society and the ummah. They also regarded it as the primary step of the Islamic state which sprang out of the tribal system of pre-Islamic Arabia. The tribal system of government was essentially based on the blood relationship and tribal affiliations. While the state of Madinah introduced a centralized system of administration drawn from and based on the Quranic injunctions and the Prophet's insight. In this respect Egyptian authors regarded it as the dawlah al-Quran or hukumah al-Rasul, and it is the foremost perspective of their discussion on the Islamic administration of the Prophet. In this regard they exhibit their appreciation and appraisal in the civil administration of the Prophet, dealing with various branches of governance and the multifarious functionaries of the state.

Although the works on the Sirah continued to be published in the following decades, the most important development that took place after 1962 was that the modernist and the intellectuals lost interest in this subject. Their sirah-writings became less and less compared to the earlier decades. The trend of traditional sirah-writing again flourished. Another significant development of this period was the emergence of voluminous and detailed biographies running into more than one volume.

Not only the trend of the sirah writings got a bigger momentum but another aspects of the life of the Prophet i.e. Maghazi attracted much more attention of the Egyptian scholars. In previous years most of the maghazi books were usually produced by the Egyptian army officers, but in this decade they were largely written by the religious scholars in their own traditional manner, rather than historical or scholarly way.

The most important classification of the Sirah literature produced in Egypt in this period relates to the complete biographies; many are short, incomprehensive and lacking a coherent account, but most of them are big

volumes covering the whole account of the life and achievements of the Holy Prophet. A general survey of these important studies are as follows Ustaz al-Hayat by Muhammad Abd Allah al-Samman (1952): sirah Khayr al-Ibad wa Shafi Yawm al-Ma'ad by Salih b. Ahmad (1953): Al-Nabi Muhammad by Muhammad Husayn al-Zuhri (1954): Khatim al-Nabiyin by Khalid Muhammad Khalid (1955): Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah by Muhammad Fakhr al-Din (1955): Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah by Muhammad Fakhr al-Din (1956): Sirah al-Nabawiyah by Ahmad Zayni Dahlan (1962) in three volumes; Hayate Muhammad al-Ruhiyah by Ali Abd al-Jalil Radi (1964): Qissah Kabir fi Tarikh al-Sirah by Ali Abd al-Jalil Radi (1964): Qissah Kabir fi Tarikh al-Sirah by Muhammad Murid Amir (1967): Muhammad Rasul Allah: Siratuhu wa Atharuhu fi al-Hadarah by Jalal Mazhari (1970): Sirah Sayyid al-Mursalin by Mahmud Abu al-Fayd al-Manufi (1971) in two volumes: Khatim al-Nabyin by Muhammad Abu Zuhrah (1972, 1977 and 1979) in three volumes; sirah al-Rasul by Muhammad Isma'il Ibrahim (1972): Al-sirah al-Nabawiyah by Muhammad Ridaat Hasani (n.d.) in two volumes; al-sirah al-Nabawiyah by Muhammad Abd al-Mun'im Qism al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah by Mustafa Mahmud (n.d.): Usul al-sirah al-Nabawiyah by Abd al-Aziz Rashid al-Bukhari.

All the above mentioned works are supposed or claimed to be complete biographies but in fact they are not so, excepting a few, which are voluminous and covered almost all important events of the Prophet's life in detail, most of them have only short descriptions. These are extremely selective, rather partial. Their authors select events of their liking especially those events on which material is readily available. For example, al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah by Muhammad Rida al-Hasani: al-sirah al-Nabawiyah by Abd al-Majid al-Lubban, and Sirah al-Rasul by Muhammad Isma'il Ibrahim, are generally based on events of historical significance. Other works, however fewer in number, take into their account only those events which are related to spiritual aspects of the Prophet's life such as Hayat Muhammad al-Ruhiyah by Ali Abd al-Jalili Radi. Some others aim at highlighting the supernatural qualities of the Prophet. The most prominent example of this kind is the sirah Khayr al-Ibad wa Shafi Yawm al-Ma'dad by Salih b. Ahmad. Their religious or doctrinal importance apart, they possess a lesser degree of historical value and relevance compared to complete biographies.

Analytical studies, which are significant for their theoretical and philosophical, discussions, form the second most important category of the Sirah of the Prophet after the complete biographies of the Prophet. Most important

among them are: *Min Hayat Muhammad: dirasat Tahiliyah* by Abd al-Halim Mahmud Hamuda (1955): *Dirasat fi al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah wa al-Nishat al-Islamiyah* by Jad Muhammad Ridwan (1973): *Min Ahwal al-Mustafa* by Jalal Katak (1977): *Dirasat Tarikhiyah fi sirah al-Nabawiyah* by Muhammad Mustafa al-Najjar (1979). In all these works their authors select a few incidents from the life of the Prophet and discuss them in the light of the message drawn from them. They analyse the implications and consequences of the incidents or messages of the Prophet's life for the mundane and spiritual welfare of the believer. In most cases they want to substantiate certain ideas and ideologies of their own by drawing upon or explaining and interpreting some incidents from the Prophet's life, as we find in the case of Muhammad Ridwan who by describing certain events of the Prophets' life wanted to prove that he was the pioneer of a revolution in the Arab society.

A very significant and interesting trend during this period was to gather and discuss the prophecies about the appearance of the Prophet in earlier divine and religious scriptures like the Torah and Injil as well as to compare the life and deeds of the Prophet with those of previous prophets: The following books are important in this category: *Muhammad Rasul Allah al-Mustafa fi al-Tawrah wa al-Injil wa al-Qur'an* by Ibrahim Khalid Ahmad (1964) *Muhammad wa Banu Isra'il* by Mustafa Kamil Wasfi (1970): *Muhammad: Nabi al-Islam fi al-Tawrah wa al-Injil wa al Qur'an* by Muhammad Izzat al-Tahtawi (1972): *Muhammad Rasul Allah: Hakaza Basharat Bihi al Anajil* by Bushra Zakhari Mikha'il (1972).

What basically these writers intended to present in their work is to find out the accounts of the Prophet Muhammad preserved in earlier divine scriptures. All these studies were based on the belief that which is clearly supported by the Quran and many historical about the emergence of a universal Prophet commissioned by Allah for the whole mankind was foretold in the earlier scriptures. Therefore, the content material of these works generally deal with the verses and references of the Torah and the Injil which explicitly or implicitly tell anything about the Prophet Muhammad along with the verses of the Qur'an and the Hadith as the proof or explanatory notes establishing their beliefs and contentions.

However, it appears that the selection of the material from the Torah and the Injil, all these biographers of the Prophet take a lot help from classical Islamic sources. This presumption is supported by the fact that not much new material is presented or discovered by these writers, apart from that already found in early

classical Islamic sources of which the most representative is the Sirah of Ibn Hisham.

Another significant trend among the Egyptian scholars was to present and describe the biography of the Prophet on the basis of the verses of the Qur'an. The following titles are most important in this group: Al Rasul fi al-Qur'an by Muhammad b. Shafi (1967): Al-Qur'an wa al-Nabi by Abd al-Halim Mahmud (1968): Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah fi Daw' a-Qur'an wa Sunnah, by Muhammad abu Shuhba Muhammad (1973): Sirah al-Rasul: Suwar Muqtabasah min al-Quran al-Karim by Muhammad Hamzah.

Notes and References:

1. In fact it is a good presentation of the Prophet Muhammad's policy towards the Jews and reflects by large positive attitude towards the subject. Any Muslim scholar could be jealous the manner in which the Prophet's Jewish policy been defended. In fact the author himself has pointed out and hoped why a Muslim scholar had not taken up this subject and answer the allegation and misrepresentation of the Prophet's Jewish policy See, Israil Welfenson, Tarikh al Yahud fi Bilad al-Arab fi Jahiliya wa Sadr al-Islam, Cairo, 1927, Preface, vii.
2. See Muhammad Husayn Haykal, The life of Muhammad, Eng. Trans. By Ismail Ragi al Aruqi, Aligarh, 1976, pp. 199 ff.
3. The book was earlier serialized in journal "al Siyasiya al usbu'iyah" of which the author himself was the editor.
4. For example and surely one of the best studies by a Sirah writer on Wahy in India has been made by Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi. See Shibli Nomani and Sayyid Sulaiman Nadwi, Sirat al-Nabi, Azamgarh, 1974, III, pp.s 18 and pp. 340 ff, vi pp. 78 ff. ●

Auspiciousness of charity

It is related by Anas that the Apostle of God said: "Charity cools down the fire of Allah's wrath and wards off an evil death."

-Tirmizi

The Crisis of Human Spirit

Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Both police and the media, print as well as electronic, can play an important role in maintaining peace and enforcing law and order in the society. It would be no exaggeration to say that in a large measure country's progress, prosperity and reputation rest on them. Hence it is imperative that their role must be fair and unbiased. If they exhibit parochialism and take side, their image is spoiled.

Presently in the country both police and media have been badly affected by the vicious surroundings in which they work. Politicization of police and patronizing of media by political parties have deprived them of their independence and impartial functioning.

It is regrettable that just to cover up their incompetency in working out the incidents of crime police more often catch hold of innocent persons, torture them and force them to make confession. To gain cheap publicity they feed media that story which suits their action. Here they add pepper and salt and build up the story. One has rightly said: "Whenever bomb blasts take place anywhere, police pick up some innocent Muslims youths accuse them of being members of SIMI, HUJI, Laskhare Taiba or such organizations and stain the alleged criminals with one of it. Our national press and electronic channels blindly take up concocted stories of police like running commentary of the cricket matches. On the basis of cock and bull stories of police our governments claim that masterminds in such cases have been arrested and terrorism would now be wiped out but even then bomb blasts do take place and many innocent people are killed and injured." No doubt such acts have been their second nature. In a democratic country like India, such odds should not take place.

In this context we may recall the recent Nanavati Report on Godhra train burning incident. Justice Nanavati, a retired Supreme court Judge in his interim report submitted to the state government, has reported that the Godhra train burning incident was the result of a pre-planned conspiracy in which 140 liters of petrol was used to set sleeper coach S-6 on fire resulting in the death of 59 Karsewaks. On February 27, 2002, the terrible incident of fire in the train at Godhra took place. On the 28th the VHP gave call of a Bandh against the incident, and on March-1 riots began. Justice Nanavati thus exonerated the police and administration and tried to prove that Godhra train burning was a deliberate conspiracy. In this context in his report another retired judge of the Supreme Court Justice Banerji, submitted earlier, described the fire accidental and blamed the police and administration of their inaction and taking side of the rioters. On the basis of fabricated reports and false accusation Gujarat police started prosecution of innocent

Muslims. When the role of Gujarat police was brought to the notice of the then chief Justice of the Supreme Court Justice Khare that trial in hundreds of cases on the basis of false evidence were about to begin in Gujarat he stayed the trials. He observed that the Best Bakery case in Baroda was one such case: at night between 8.30 to 10 pm, the Bakery was set on fire, with about 20-22 people inside it. Hundreds, perhaps thousands gathered outside. The police station was very close, about 2-3 kms away. PCR parked there, and did nothing... Forget about fire extinguishers, the fire continued to rage all night, till it went out, by itself, at 11.30 am or so the next morning (March 2). Moreover, there were 16 people burnt alive, no effort made to rescue them or take them out, when the police station was so close. Is this the state fulfilling its duty to protect lives?

We further know about biased and prejudicial attitude of police and administration in general spotlighted by a prominent columnist Vidya Subrahmaniam. "This is necessary as much to protect the innocent as to establish the reliability and credibility of the police. The case of Australian resident Mohammad Haneef, described by the police and the Indian Media as the mastermind of the 2007 Glasgow blasts, is a lesson worth remembering. Thanks to transparent investigation by the Australian police and relentless scrutiny by the Australian media, Haneef was shown to be completely innocent".

The release of Aftab Ansari of Kolkata after full 20 days of detention in Uttar Pradesh was also a sinister part of theirs to tarnish the image of Islam. The recent Batla house encounter further creates doubt in its being genuine.

Moreover they have created an atmosphere of apprehension and panic by spreading misinformation and misgivings about Islam. It seems all Muslims are terrorists. No doubt main motive of such strategy is nothing but subjugate Islam and thwart it from its uprising and development. It is unfortunate that they do not seem to be inclined to get to national events relating to communal harmony and national integration instead of highlighting religious frenzy, violence, chaos and dissension among different sections and communities. They must recall the statement of late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: "In the multitude of crisis, political and economic, that face us, perhaps the greatest crisis of all is that of the human spirit. Till this crisis of the spirits is resolved it will be difficult to find a solution for other crisis that afflicts us. Even so, there is something else which is greater importance. And that is peace. Without peace, all our dreams vanish and are reduced to ashes." (India's Foreign Policy)

In fact, it is the moral and bonafide duty of the police and the media to create a climate of brotherhood and peace and avoid issues which tend to add to the chaos. The truth of the matter is that savageness begets savageness, and gentleness begets gentleness. ●

Health Care in the Light of The Qur'an and Science

Barkat Ullah Nadvi*
Mohammad Saleem**

Islam and health care

Islam is not only an organized religion, but it also encompasses each and every aspect of life including the most vital problems regarding health. It will, certainly, be far from the truth to say that it is confined to soul-purification or spiritual enlightenment. Nevertheless, the Qur'an emphasizes physical health together with spiritual requirements for the obvious reason that good health and physical well-being is conducive to spiritual pursuits, and certainly it ensures spiritual health. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) declares:

"A healthy believer is better than a weak and sick one." ¹

Clearly, he teaches the importance of being in good shape. Thus, health care is not only desirable but also an incumbent duty; and Islam is the proper place that it warrants. The contemporary researches in the field of medical sciences verify the Qur'anic guidelines regarding health care; and close parallels between science and scriptural teachings, much to our amazement, further encourages us to rediscover the meaning that its subtext contains. Allah, the Exalted, admires and bestows His love for those who attain purity. He announces,

"Truly, Allah loves those who turn unto him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves."²

Here purity does mean both the piety of soul and exterior cleanliness. While purity of the inner conscience is the means of soul purification, and brings Almighty's bounties, physical cleanliness is certainly a preventive measure against numerous diseases such as allergic skin disorders, freckles, dermatitis, bacterial and fungal infections, etc.

The Qur'an and Medical Science

The Qur'an as we know is not a book on medical science that it should cater detailed description of various diseases and their treatment. On the contrary, its main aim is to show and guide us along the right path (*sirata'l mustaqeem*)³. Man is Allah's

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Creature on earth⁴, and he has to accomplish tasks assigned to him by the Almighty. Since his existence is a union of body and soul, he has to look after both so that he may meet his physical and spiritual responsibilities, and for this, the Qur'an enlightens him. Man is supposed to consume only what suits his physiological requirements and avoid harmful elements. The Qur'an commands him only to have pure and sacred food.

"O mankind! Eat of that which is lawful and good on earth."⁵

In the same way, drinking of blood and eating of pork are forbidden. From the time immemorial man has been in the habit of drinking intoxicating beverages but as His Omniscience knows better, even a little quantity of wine is strictly prohibited. Allah, the Exalted, commands,

"They ask you (O Mohammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: 'In them is a great sin and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them greater than their benefit."⁷

Likewise, the evil effects that wine has on social conduct are also mentioned.

"O ye who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, Al-Ansab, and Al-Azlan (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful."⁸

The Qur'an, by prohibiting the consumption of liquor, has warned against social degeneration. Besides, the evil effects that it has on health have been elaborated by medical researches. It badly affects liver and kidney, and causes liver cancer.⁹

The Qur'an and preventive measures

The Qur'an makes it obligatory to perform *wudhu* i.e. ablution before *salah* (prayer)¹⁰ and bath after seminal ejaculation. This gives a sense of cleansing. The Qur'an warns against adultery and urges the believers to abstain from it. ¹² Thus, it keeps one away from infectious diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhoea, AIDS, etc. together with refining morals and curbing social degeneration. Sodomy, one of the chief causes behind the spread of HIV giving birth to the incurable curse of AIDS, earlier known as GRID (Gay Related Immuno Deficiency), is condemned in the strongest terms.

"And (remember) Lot (Lot), when he said to his people: 'do you commit the worst sin such as none preceding you has committed in the *Alamin* (mankind and jinns)? Verily, you practice your lusts on men instead of women. Nay, but you are a people transgressing beyond bounds (by committing great sins)'.¹³

The Qur'an also prohibits copulation during menstruation. ¹⁴ Thus, it can be said that the Qur'anic guidelines save us from various chronic and fatal diseases. This and many other Qur'anic verses testify that the commandments revealed fifteen centuries ago, when man was ignorant of the discoveries that science made only in the 19th and 20th centuries, are not man-designed but words from Allah, the Omniscient and Almighty. The book, revealed unto His last messenger Muhammad, (peace be on him), includes

such guidelines through which man has been enlightened with the fundamentals of health-care. Thus, if the Qur'anic ideas are assimilated into life, it, certainly, provides a protective shield against the attack of diseases. Allama Ibn-e-Qayyam Al-Jauziya has mentioned three basic principles of Tib. First, health care; secondly, abstinence from harmful things, and lastly, safety from detrimental effects.¹⁵ In fact, these three things safeguard and keep up our health and obviate health problems. The Qur'an prescribes this for believers. Regarding fast, it has been said that travelers and those who are ill should compensate their fast later. This flexibility enables a believer to overcome the disease or have freedom from inconvenience. The sick are allowed to give up fast during the month of Ramadhan.¹⁶ Likewise, regarding the pilgrimage to the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina, those who are sick are at liberty to either fast, give food to the needy or offer sacrifice,¹⁷ instead of going to Haj. Prevention is given due importance. The Qur'an says, if you are sick, or in journey, or have replied to the call of nature, or have slept with your wives, and you don't have any water, you should get clean sand or earth and rub your faces and hands.¹⁸ Cleansing or ablution is permitted with sand and earth so that one could be clean even if water is not available or if it may cause trouble in certain conditions.¹⁹ What matters most is not rigidity but cleanliness, safety and prevention.

The above-mentioned verses and commandments throw abundance of light on how much emphasis Islam lays on health care and preventive measures. Its objective being *hidayah* (guidance) and *islah* (reformation), it should not be forgotten that the Qur'an delivers celestial light from His Providence, and, as everyone knows, is not a book on science or, for that matter, anything else. But it is itself a miracle that it does not confine itself to the domain of transcendental life or the world hereafter. On the contrary, it deals very much with the world we live in and belong to, though only in order to facilitate that greater spiritual voyage. It is true that it does not make this very life its sole objective. In this way, the Qur'an draws our attention towards the basic principles of health care, and dictates complete abstinence from what may cause harm or prolong one's illness.

The following verses illustrate that the Qur'an lays more emphasis on prevention than cure, and presents a framework. Allah, the Exalted, says:

"Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maitah (the dead animals-cattle-beast not slaughtered), blood, the flesh or swine..."²⁰

The prohibition of animal flesh of certain kinds in this verse reveals the Providence of the Omniscient behind it. The blood of a dead animal remains congealed within its body because of which bacteria that cause several metabolic disorders soon infect the flesh. Blood is decreed as *haram*, or unfit to consume, because of its just mentioned property. Moreover, it is not digested in human alimentary canal, and as a result, badly affects the digestive system. Pork contains tapeworm, which is very harmful parasite, and its host is not easily cured.²¹ Tapeworm is of several types. That which lives on swine is *tinea solium*. Modern researches have further revealed that it badly

affects the host's health.²² It causes several diseases such as epilepsy which, at times, proves fatal.²³ Besides, digestive disorders, weakness and anaemia are other diseases that one may suffer from.²⁴

The Qur'an also prevents indulging in sexual relationship during menstruation. Women are exempted from duties like *salah* and *saum* (prayer and fasting). Jews regarded it unlawful to live and eat with their wives during this period. On the other hand, Christians did not abstain even from sexual intercourse. Prophet Mohammad, be peace on him, was asked about it, and the following verse was revealed.

"They ask you concerning menstruation. Say: that is an Adha (a harmful thing for a husband to have a sexual intercourse with his wife while she is having her menses), therefore keep away from women during menses, go not unto them till they are purified from and have taken a bath)."²⁵

Shariah declares it undesirable to have sex, but living with them, eating together or anything else is allowed. In this way, the path of golden mean has been prescribed, and any type of rigidity or extremism avoided. The menstrual discharge is a mixture of blood, mucus, desquamated epithelial cells, bacteria and granular debris.²⁶ It is a precursor of several diseases such as urinary tract infection, burning micturation, proctitis, and dysurea, etc.

Hakim Mohammad Tariq Mahmood Chughtai mentions a clinical case. 'A patient needed a catheter, as he could not pass urine on his own. From his case history, I came to know that he used to have sex during menstruation, and as a result he caught this trouble.'²⁷

This is how Allah, the Exalted, has told man such guiding principles that by following His commandments, he can be successful in everything he does or has to do. The Qur'an lightens the way to sustain our physical being, take care of our health and get rid of many diseases.

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AIMPLB plea to 'save' future generation

On the second and concluding day of the two-day conference on Friday, (24-10-2008) the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board's reforms committee urged people to save the character of the future generation of the country irrespective of caste, creed or religion.

Earlier, in the forenoon, representatives of the prominent educational institutions and madaras held discussions with members of the reforms committee over a wide range of issues in connection with education in the fast-changing world.

In the evening session, the meeting was presided by AIMPLB secretary Wali Rehmani of Bihar.

During the discussion, it was felt that corruption was so rampant in society that it has become biggest obstacle before any reforms could be introduced. Speakers were of the view that media, films, advertisements world and other mediums were fast changing the minds of the youth and later when they grow up they indulge in corrupt practices. The discussions were not focused on Muslims only but for all the people of country. The speakers were unanimous that the future generations have to be saved from downgrading of the moral character.

The prominent persons who spoke on the occasion included the Nayab Imam of Eidgah and AIMPLB member Maulana Khalid Rasheed Firangimahli and Maulana Khalid Gazipuri Nadvi. Wali Rehmani presided over the conference.

The conference concluded with the rector of the Darul-Uloom Nadwatul and Chairman of the AIMPLB Maulana Rabey Hasani Nadwi who offered his blessings.

The Pioneer 25-10-2008

Hindu group behind Malegaon, Modasa Ramzan blasts: cops

SMITA NAIR

The Maharashtra police are said to have cracked the September 29 bomb blasts in Malegaon and Modasa town in neighbouring Gujarat saying these were allegedly carried out by the Hindu Jagran Manch, an Indore-based Hindu extremist group known to have links to the BJP's student wing, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). The key suspects are being questioned, top Maharashtra Police sources have told The Indian Express.

Five Muslims were killed in a powerful blast in the communally sensitive textile town of Malegaon in Maharashtra and one Muslim boy was killed in the explosion in Modasa in Sabarkantha district.

Both bombs were placed on motorcycles parked in crowded areas days before Eid and set off after Muslims had broken their Ramzan fast on a Monday evening.

The BJP had condemned both the blasts. Investigators initially suspected Islamist groups such as SIMI or the Indian Mujahideen to be behind the near-simultaneous attack- the first blast was at Modasa at 9.26pm, the second minutes later in Malegaon- as they came in the aftermath of blasts in Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Delhi.

Besides, the motorcycle in Malegaon was parked below the now-defunct first floor office of SIMI while the one used in Modasa had Islamic stickers on its seat.

However, investigators found that these were apparently attempts by the attackers to mislead them, the sources said.

The breakthrough, they said, came when they traced the origin of the two-wheeler used in Malegaon. The vehicle used was a LML Freedom brand although some of its parts had been cannibalized from other vehicles and the chassis and engine numbers had been erased.

But with this brand out of production, dealer records and help from forensic experts led the probe to Gujarat, the sources said.

The motorcycle was allegedly owned by a man with an "ABVP background" there while the attackers belonged to the Hindu Jagran Manch with its headquarters based out of the office of an NGO in Indore, investigators found.

Top Maharashtra police officials confirmed the breakthrough but refused to go on record due to the sensitivities involved, adding that Central agencies were aware of the development.

The blast in Malegaon had sparked mob violence as angry Muslims targeted the local police and grievously injured the first policemen to arrive at the site, including a probationary IPS officer.

The attack came two years to the month when three bombs had exploded in and around a mosque in the town and killed 37 people, mostly Muslim worshippers. That attack was blamed on SIMI and nine men were arrested but the trial has been stayed by the Supreme Court.

(The Indian Express 23-10-2008)

Synthesis as the Leitmotif of Iqbal's Epistemology

Muhammad Nafih Wafy

Though Iqbal's philosophy of education had deep roots in Islamic epistemology drawn from Qur'an and Hadith, his exposition to, and co-existence with, a long range of philosophers including Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz and above all Bergson, helped him mould a far more cosmopolitan outlook. But he was never allowed to be influenced by the inherent dualism of the Western Philosophy and was never apologetic in exposing its internal conflicts. He defined education as a dynamic process of evolving man and human civilization. It materializes the perfection of the individual and society. For him education is a grand process of 'civilizing' mission capable of imparting an individual and a whole society with knowledge, power and the essentials of sustenance. Knowledge ought to serve the dual purpose of self-affirmation and liberation.

As a poet philosopher, Iqbal gave considerable impetus to the gradual development of human ego-hood through education and upbringing. He believed that the universe is a free creative movement which knows no limit and mankind is on a vicegeral mission to contribute physically and intellectually to the pre-destined course of this movement. He wrote in the *The Secrets of the Self*. "The moral and religious ideal of man is not self-negation, but self affirmation."

A staunch opponent of the pantheistic streams of thoughts both in Islamic and Western world, Iqbal advocated that education should affirm the importance of human self rather than effacing it. The light of knowledge possesses the power to affirm the individuality so as to help the individual discern his faculties. With knowledge, man is, in certain respect, superior even to angels. As he emphatically put it, 'will there remain any luster in the sun, if it grows indifferent to its rays?'

While propounding his theory of education and liberation, Iqbal had to go up against some stereotyped and hackneyed beliefs which had struck deep roots in Islamic and the so-called oriental world. He had to counter two parallel retrograde tendencies that have been in vogue in this part of the world for last five centuries: Celebrating the impermanence of life and blind imitation. He observed how these two tendencies stole the agenda of an inevitable epistemological revivalism in the orient. A civilization faces one of its acutest intellectual calamities when political and cultural despondency starts to corrode its power of survival. Iqbal traces the root of this process of stagnation and

degeneration to a paralled evolution of a society inappropriately educated and bereft of the creative urge and dynamism. This trend assumes ascendancy with each passing generation till the civilization starts to take a complete u-turn of what it was once consisted of and stood for. So education devoid of a genuine goal and proper mission is most likely to rob a society of its priorities and agendas thereby blocking its upward mobility.

He felt sorry for the prevailing tendencies in his part of the world which erroneously described and experienced knowledge as something which forcefully brought life on the surface of earth into a rank standstill rather than discovering it as a means to explore the multiple possibilities of the livability of life.

Imparting relevant knowledge for promoting a relevant cause was the most essential thing for taking an intellectually disoriented, culturally dislocated and politically derailed society back on track. Iqbal has identified schools and colleges as the cultural space for sowing and cultivating seeds of this constructive change. Education ought to create new agendas and pastures of action for the budding generation rather than sticking them to the conventional practice of obsolete agendas. Only a society with productive agendas would repair the world for the better. Iqbal had this in mind when he considered productivity inherent in the process of education and ruled out imitation as an objective of that process.

For these purposes to materialize, the curriculum and syllabi need to be tailored to meet not only the material but also the spiritual requirements of man. Iqbal cautioned that any breach of this synthesis would eventually culminate in an unbalanced movement harmful to the healthy mobility of human civilization. He criticized the ultra materialistic thrusts of the western philosophy which denied the very basis of intuitive knowledge. Though Iqbal discarded the intuitivist concept of knowledge that intellect is an entirely useless entity, he held that intuition stands higher than intellect in all major human discourses. Instuition and intellect are in need of each other for mutual regeneration, he believed.

How on earth could a philosopher of Iqbal's stature feel at home with the theories of intellect-centred materialist Philosophy, which regards matter as the only existent in the universe and the basis of every being? Iqbal could never come to terms with the conception that matter will neither perish nor could be subjected to alteration but will only undergo some metamorphoses. Iqbal's historical observations and critiques regarding how dualism assumes currency in

Europe are related to this disagreement. Europe had to dissociate with, if not totally discard, its traditional religio-feudalist anchorages in order to prepare itself as a fertile cradle for scientific temper and humanitarian zeal. In a haste to undo damages of a spiritual past, materialism indulged in excesses of far more consequences. The socio-cultural fabric of European society had to undergo this division.

Though the materialistic Philosophy dates back to Democritus and Epicure, its impact was eclipsed by the force of spiritual philosophy for a long time until it was resurrected in eighteenth and nineteenth century after philosophers and writes rose in rebellion against the attitude of medieval Church, theories and practices of which were antagonistic to the exalted scientific temper of the time. By severing its ties with scientific spirit, the Church and the spiritual philosophy it enunciated came a cropper in these two centuries. Thus science, the new dazzling avatar with lots of inventions and discoveries to its credit, has achieved an aura of complacency around it, verging on supernaturalism. An impression was created that it knew every thing and hardly any area of knowledge does remain without science having access to it. Nothing enigmatic is left in the universe without science finding a viable solution! But in the 20th century, the advent of modern physics coupled with the installation of relativity and quantum theories shook the foundations of materialistic philosophy. When modern physics revolutionized the way we used to conceptualize ourselves and the world around us, the vulnerability of material science's gaint pillars was exposed. The absolutism of material philosophy was disputed and put to trial.

Seen in this epistemological backdrop, the middle path of synthesis that Iqbal sought to tread has a lot of significance. He took in to question all dogmatized and compartmentalized notions irrespective of their Western and Eastern origin. He diagnosed the philosophical and civilizational bifurcation of a world, which, sandwiched between a heavenward ethereal inclination and an earthward material defiance, always failed to make its both currents meet. When blind acceptance of so-called liberal and open world and a monolithic educational system is still in the air as the only way of uprooting all differences, Iqbal's pluralistic and all-inclusive perspective on education merits considerable attention.●

(YMD)

Repairing Azad's Vision

A.I. Saiyed*

Few would deny that the bomb blasts that shredded the peace in our towns in recent times are a crime against humanity, and events should compel us to think hard about solutions. While there have been no dearth of debates, remonstrances and pontifications through the media, it is painful that though we have been suggested solutions by the bushel, none have really served to address the roots of the problem. The Muslim community has been insular and has been struggling with hidebound approaches to the problem; the truth is that only they can rescue themselves.

I do not claim that a Muslim identity always helps make things smoother. In 2002, when the riots were searing Gujarat, I was joint director of the Gujarat police academy. A mob of around a thousand people stopped my official car, and someone in the crowd noticed the nameplate on my chest, and shouted. My driver, a Hindu, was quick-witted enough to somehow race the car through roadblocks to safety. At another point, in 1992, I was deputy commissioner of police in Ahmedabad and was told that Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel wanted a Muslim police officer to manage the post-Babri Masjid demolition troubles in Surat. I replied: "When I put on the uniform, I am not a Muslim police officer. I am just an officer, and my caste and creed stay at home." I was not asked again.

Yet, all that cannot obfuscate the real malaise, which is within.

Many years ago, the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had aptly, metaphorically, depicted his agony when he addressed a Friday congregation at the Jama Masjid in Delhi: "Do you remember that when I hailed you, you cut off my tongue; I picked up my pen and you severed my hand; I wanted to move forward and you cut off my legs; I tried to turn over and you injured my back."

That statements cast light on the blurry tunnel vision of Indian Muslims and their aversion to prudent advice. Maulana Azad obviously had a sense of foreboding about the community even in those days, before Partition. Many decades later, Muslim communities are still in rudderless boats, sans a proper leadership or awareness, with no real hopes of surmounting their problems.

* The writer is an IPS officer who retired as an Additional DGP of Gujarat.

The so called "Indian" Mujahideen have accepted the responsibility for the recent heinous acts. But to what defensible extent are they truly Indian, or even truly mujahideen? A single phrase from the Hadith would suffice to explain the actual philosophy of Islam: Hubul Watan, Minal Imaan. It means "Love for your country is part of your imaan." To add to that, there is the concept of ibadaat, which means "servitude" towards that which is not confined to specific times of prayer or ritual, but which spreads over a lifetime and is constant, so that it encompasses each and every action of one's life and good deeds in the world created by the Almighty.

Muslims need to question themselves about their present plight all the more now. Why is this happening to us? A big reason is that we lack true education. We recite the Qur'an but never try to understand it in the true sense -even if that is attempted, the Maulvis often teach a travesty of it.

The words kaffir and jihad have been completely misconstrued. Even if we want to understand our religion, we need a rational and scientific approach. Transformation and change are the inescapable demands of the present. We need to abandon obscurantism, and at least apply common sense- and understand that a person without academic qualities cannot be expected to explain scriptural verses in their true sense.

We need to learn that it is only when we respect others that we get respected. And that no political fomentation or chicanery should be allowed to mislead us.

These, and a lot more open interaction with others, with a positive mindset, could really bring about the change that we desperately need. And none of this is forbidden in Islam.

(The Indian Express, 10-10-2008)

Disgraceful in any case

It is related by Abdullah bin Omar that the Apostle of God, while exhorting the people from the pulpit to abstain from soliciting for charity, said: "The upper hand is better than the lower hand, and the lower hand is the begging hand."

-Bukhari and Muslim

Nanavati or not, the state apparatus in Gujarat cannot be absolved

The former chief justice of India excoriates the state's role in and after the 2002 riots

V. N. Khare*

With the kind of evidence that I saw as Chief Justice of India, I would never have exonerated the government of its responsibility during the 2002 riots, if I was responsible for the Commission.

As CJI, I heard a large number of cases from the riot-stricken of Gujarat in 2002. I don't see a case for absolving the state government or of saying that all responsibilities were fulfilled.

There are three primary responsibilities of the state. The first, is the protection of lives of people, all people, and especially the weaker sections, who may not have the necessary voice and strength to look after themselves. Second comes the duty to prosecute those who violate the law. The third is the duty to provide relief to victims of violence. It is important for governments to educate people, build roads etc. but all of that is predicated on their being able to first protect lives.

On the three crucial aspects, the police and the state in Gujarat during the riots was an utter failure. The state, after being unable to protect lives also carried out shoddy investigations. I got the sense that investigations were done to help the accused, rather than the victims.

On February 27, 2002, the terrible incident of the train at Godhra took place. On the 28th, the VHP gave a call against the incident, and on March 1, the riots began. When it was brought to my notice that trail in hundreds of cases was about to begin in Gujarat on this, I stayed the trial.

The Best Bakery case in Baroda is one such case. Tell me, at night, between 8.30 to 10pm, the Bakery was set on fire, with about 20-22 people inside it. Hundreds, perhaps thousands gathered outside. The police station was very close, about 2-3 kms away. I was told in Court that the PCR stood there, and did nothing. Forget about fire extinguishers, the fire continued to rage all night, till it went out, by itself, at 11.30am or so the next morning (March 2). Moreover, there

* The writer was the Chief Justice of India in 2002, when state-wide communal violence erupted in Gujarat.

were 16 people burnt alive, no effort made to rescue them or take them out, when the police station was so close. Is this the state fulfilling its duty to protect lies? Zahira Sheikh was able to lodge the FIR only by 3.30pm the next day.

As far as prosecuting wrongdoers, under the criminal penal code, it is the duty of the police to investigate, collect all evidence and then present it before the Court to prosecute offenders. I think the three rôles should not be vested in one agency, but as they are, how they perform on that yardstick will be what we will use to judge them.

Then, not just in the Zahira Sheikh matter, but in most of the hundreds of cases, after the first deposition, several eyewitnesses turned hostile! The job of the prosecution in this case is to argue and cross-examine the hostile witnesses, to ensure that fear or greed are not responsible for making them change their minds. Here, as witnesses turned hostile, the prosecution did not even bother to cross-examine. Is this fulfillment of obligations of the state? I actually had to appoint an amicus (Harish Salve) and send out three or four lawyers to report to me on what the status was.

Therefore, the Supreme Court shifted two cases out of the state, as I felt justice could not be done there. The Supreme Court transferred Best Bakery and Bilkees Bano to Maharashtra. When I found no protection for victims, by my judicial order, I directed the state government to provide protection to the victims, relations and their witness, and in case of violations report back to the Supreme Court.

If I was on this Commission, I would say that the police had failed to protect the right of people to their life, as no effort was made to stop rioters. What else should a Commission conclude? ●

(The Indian Express, 14-10-2008)

Place your need before God, not men

Abdullah bin Masud related to us that the Apostle of God said: "Whoever is confronted with a sever need and places it before men (an begs them for help), he will never be relieved of it permanently, and whoever places it before God and beseeches Him (for it), it is confidently hoped that God will put an end to his need either by granting him death before long (if the appointed time of his death has arrived) or by bestowing prosperity upon him after sometime."

-Abu Dawood and Nassai

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