

**'ISLAMIC STUDIES'  
AND THE INTERFAITH  
MOVEMENT**

**SAUDI  
COLLABORATION  
WITH THE  
ORIENTALIST  
KUFFAAR**

By:  
Mujlisul Ulama of SA  
PO Box 3393  
Port Elizabeth  
6056

*(An Extract from the Foreword of Dr. Ahmad Ghorab's  
enlightening book which exposes the satanic WESTERN PLOT  
AGAINST ISLAM)*

"Dr. Ahmad Ghorab is to be commended for his fine book, *Subverting Islam: The Role of Orientalist Centres*. His courage and forthright honesty are an inspiration for concerned Muslims in search of the truth. He has succeeded in identifying an important front in the current Euro-American crusade against the Islamic movement: the formation of an anti-Muslim network of institutions and scholars marching under the banner of 'Islamic Studies'.

*(These are the Departments of 'Islamic Studies' attached to the kuffaar universities—The Majlis)*

In his insider expose of "Islamic Studies", Dr. Ghorab demonstrates how the new school of thought derives legitimacy by employing compliant Muslim scholars (*mercenaries who have sold Islam down the drain for dollars –The Majlis*) and professors, such as Ja'far Sheikh Idris, Yusuf al-Qardawi (*The Ghabi who had recently disgraced himself in South Africa – The Majlis*), Abdullah and Akbar Ahmed, to name just a few. Christian missionaries and professors, such as Bishop Kenneth Cragg, Rev. Montgomery Watt and John Esposito, are, as Dr. Ghorab shows, always close at hand to guide various 'Islamic Studies' programmes, both in the Muslim world and in various European and American academic institutions.

Dr. Ghorab provides a detailed discussion of the Oxford Centre for "Islamic Studies", and also mentions other institutions with similar programmes, such as Hartford Seminary, College of the Holy Cross, or Princeton University. By naming people and places subverting Islam, Dr. Ghorab has done a great service for the Islamic movement. Muslims who are considering attending these institutions or consulting with these scholars should first study Dr. Ghorba's book carefully.

Many additional books can, and should, be written about the numerous "Islamic Studies" programmes proliferating in western academic institutions. This is especially urgent, since some Muslim government-run institutes, such as Malaysia's Institute of Islamic Understanding, manage their programmes almost exclusively by "Islamic scholars" from western universities.

Columbia University in New York City, fits Dr.Ghorab's description of a centre for subverting Islam. While there is no department of Islamic Studies *per se*, Islam is the focus of various components within the Departments of Middle East Languages and Cultures (MELAC), Religion, Music, and Anthropology, as well as the Middle East Institute. Though staffed primarily by Jews and Christians, there are also a few Muslim professors on hand for good measure.....MELAC is especially popular with new or weak Muslims who hope to increase their faith or learn more about their religion and history by taking a few courses in the Department.

The faculty includes Maan Madina, Hamid Dabashi, George Saliba, and Jeanette Wakin.....Madina is an avid collector of Islamic art, and occasionally offers courses in affiliation with the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. To him, Islam is a vestige of the Arab past, to be revisited by western scholars or curated in museums."

Wakin offers courses on Islamic texts. Although teaching at Columbia University for many years, she apparently has no Ph.D; her academic legitimacy comes from being a student of Joseph Schacht, the notorious orientalist who sought to discredit the Shariah on the grounds that it was time-bound and irrelevant to modern society. Wakin ascribes to this belief, as well as to Schacht's other 'great contribution' to 'Islamic Studies', his insistence that the hadith are all fabricated and therefore unreliable as sources! Wakin's courses, also disguised as language

study, are carefully focused attacks on the foundation of Islamic civilization."

*In the current era the plot of the orientalist – the plot to undermine and destroy Islam – has been taken over by the ‘Islamic Studies’ faculties of the various kuffaar universities. Juhala (Ignoramuses) – so-called professors – posing as Muslims, are the most successful accomplishment realized by the western orientalists. Some decades ago, the conspiracy was directly manipulated and given effect by non-Muslim professors. Today, this dirty and destructive work has been handed over to the ‘Muslim’ professors who have been schooled, indoctrinated and brainwashed with kufr by the orientalist enemies of Islam. Dr. Ahmad Ghorab who was a professor at several western universities, the last being the University of Riyadh from where he was expelled when he commenced to expose the elaborate orientalist plot in which Saudi Arabia too is a big cog with its finance, in his book, **SUBVERTING ISLAM – THE ROLE OF THE ORIENTALIST CENTRES**, reveals the bare facts and the names of the actors of these centres of conspiracy. Among the Muslim clerics employed by the plotters to give legitimacy to the Plot, is YUSUF QARDAWI, the Ghabi, who had recently attempted to give Islamic credibility to women’s ‘liberation’ in South Africa by propagating the baatil idea of the permissibility of female influx into the Musaaqid. This article is the third instalment reproduced from his book.*

Many of the students who study languages at Columbia do so either to train for the Israeli Mossad or the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). American students with mediocre grades, but who desire such careers, get scholarships to continue studying in places like the American University in Cairo or Robert College in Turkey. MELAC (Middle East Languages and Cultures) students also include Muslims training to serve

American officialdom. One Jordanian-American Muslim student admitted he was mastering Arabic so he could pass a US State department examination. Politically motivated language study disguised as 'cultural' studies gives this department its legitimacy, and guarantees a continuous line of funding.

MELAC offers more than language courses. Saliba deals with Islamic sciences, ascribing to Hans Kung's school of thought and assigning books like John Burton's *Collection of the*

*Quran* which attacks the validity of the Qur'an as the word of God. Dabashi is a disgruntled Iranian. Like other professors, he teaches Islamic literature and philosophy through the prism of western tradition, as noted by Dr Ghorab: 1) denying the validity of revelation; 2) ignoring the reliability of Islamic sources; 3) refusing to promote Islam as anything other than an object of academic study; 4) avoiding any personal commitment to Islam.

At Columbia (University), political studies of Islam are the task of the Middle East Institute, a part of the University's school of International and Public Affairs, which is a recruiting front for the CIA. The Institute houses orientalist historians like Richard Bulliet, as well as a number of zionists. It has a siege mentality toward the Islamic movement. Its past directors include Linda S Walbridge, an American Baha'i scholar specializing in Muslims of the US, and whose husband, also a scholar of 'Islamic Studies,' is currently editing the encyclopedia of Baha'ism.

One expects to find this in departments whose stated goals are to study Islam and the Middle East. However, other departments at Columbia are also staffed with like-minded people. For example, the Division of Ethnomusicology in the Department of Music is headed by Dieter Christensen, who has a long and questionable history of studying the Islamic world, including work in Iran under the despised Shah. He now has a magic carpet to Oman, invited by Sultan Qaboos annually since 1985. Qaboos hires

western scholars to advise him on Muslim cultural policy, and Christensen runs the Centre for Traditional Music in Muscat.

In his seminars at Columbia, Christensen—who doesn't know a word of Arabic—presents Islam as a hindrance for academic study, often complaining about 'extremist' Omani Muslims who take too many breaks for prayers, or how Ramadhan disrupts his research schedule. At the same time, he gleefully boasts of swilling beer with 'modern' Omanis. He also edits the *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, which Zionist and anti-Muslim scholars use to attack Islam and curate Muslim cultures. Christensen probably has links to American, German and Israeli Intelligence agencies, and has a record of advising graduate students whose research in the Muslim works and elsewhere is linked to missionary activities.

The Muslim Student Association (MSA) at Columbia reflects 'Islamic Studies' in practice. During the early 1990s, its president was a Jewish convert to Islam (who has reportedly now changed his mind). A model 'moderate' Muslim, he was a student in the Department of Religion, which projects Islam as a violent antithesis to Buddhism, the preferred religion for this department's faculty. During his reign as MSA chief, it seemed that the campus rabbi had more power in the MSA than Muslims. For example, when the regular room for Jum'ah was double-booked one Friday - despite advance requests by the MSA—some Muslims suggested praying on the sidewalk in protest, since this had occurred in the past as well whenever another group needed space. After consulting his rabbi, the MSA chief intervened and arranged for Muslims to pray in the dungeon-like basement of the campus church!

Like most other MSA chapters, the one at Columbia also answers to the Saudis. In 1992 when Saudi ambassador Bandar bin Sultan offered to join hands with a group of Zionists to commemorate the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from Spain, MSA-central in Indiana quickly called for implementation of this

plan on its satellite campuses. When some Muslim students at Columbia suggested inviting Dr T B Irving, a Muslim scholar of Islamic Spain, the Jewish students protested, claiming that he was an 'extremist' and an 'anti-Semite,' the latter a Zionist euphemism for anyone who questions Israeli supremacy. The programme was subsequently cancelled, after the Saudis and the Zionists could not secure a 'moderate' speaker.

These and other stories need to be heard and often. Dr Ghorab has correctly identified many of the allegiances and dynamics found within 'Islamic Studies' programmes. In fact, similar 'Islamic Studies' agendas can be found in many different organizations outside academia. Given all this, it seems incumbent upon concerned Muslims who are affiliated with any of these institutions or organizations to take Dr Ghorab's initiative and help expose the programmes in their own areas.

Much work along these lines needs to be done in the US, the base of what Syed Qutb called 'American Islam.' In the US, people like Esposito are revered as Islamic scholars by several Muslim organizations. As Dr Ghorab points out, Esposito was invited by the Saudis as far back as 1983, when he suggested establishing an institute for 'Islamic Studies' in the US. Since then, Shaykh Esposito has had stints on the advisory boards of American Muslim organizations, most recently the American Muslim Council, sharing the latter distinction with other 'Islamic Studies' mainstays, including Hassan Hathout and Ali Mazrui. The ubiquitous Ja'afar Sheikh Idris also appears at AMC functions.

The American Muslim Council (AMC) needs to be investigated for ties to the Saudis and official Islam in places like Egypt, as well as for its connections with US government agencies and corporations. Its debut was in June 1990, only two months after board member Hathout attended a Saudi-sponsored conference in Riyadh, according to Dr Ghorab. The first AMC newsletter came out in the fall of 1990, at a time when the Saudis were building

Muslim support for the murderous American oil war against Iraq. One of the stated policy goals of the AMC is to entangle Muslims with American party politics, which is also a US government policy goal recommended by CIA analysts and the RAND Corporation in a special report prepared for the US department of Defence in 1990. Founding AMC member Robert Crane, whose long history of US government service includes an appointment as ambassador to the United Arab Emirates by US president Reagan, is one of the AMC ideologues. He fits Dr Ghorab's description as someone who is seeking to "revise" expediency. The AMC also appears to be playing a role in dividing Muslims between 'moderates' and 'extremists', fulfilling another agenda item for 'Islamic Studies', as is evidenced by public statements on Steve Emerson's 'zionist jihad' against Muslims or on the rigged 'trial' of Shaikh Omar Abdel Rahman and other Muslims in New York.

Dr Ghorab lays the methodological foundation for systematically identifying and exposing 'Islamic Studies' programmes in western and Muslim institutions. He has linked them to the ongoing western crusade against the Islamic movement, showing that such programmes operate in the service of *taghut*. Concerned Muslims can and should find ways to continue his efforts and help prevent 'American Islam' from gaining any further ground, *Insha'Allah*.

Toronto, August 1, 1996”

“Orientalism or the Western study of Islam began in medieval Europe and has continued into modern times. Whoever knows its long history will recognise in it the influence of the mentality of the Crusades and the rancour of the Jews against Islam. It soon becomes clear that the Orientalists are networks of Christians and Jews who, behind the façade of academic institutions and the pretence of scholarly curiosity and objectivity, have been engaged



in an unrelenting effort to distort Islam in all its aspects – Qur’an, Sunnah, Aqidah (creed), Shariah (law), and the whole culture and civilisation derived from them.

A number of Western scholars, after their conversion to Islam, have willingly exposed the prejudices of the Orientalists, their lack of honesty and objectivity and, therefore, their lack of fitness to study Islam. This alone, however, is not enough to explain its feelings as regards Islam. Here, and here alone, the Western attitude is not one of indifferent dislike as in the case of all other ‘foreign’ religions and cultures; it is one of deep-rooted and almost fanatical aversion; and it is not only intellectual, but bears an intensely emotional tint. Europe may not accept the doctrines of Buddhist or Hindu philosophy, but it will always preserve a balanced, reflective attitude of mind with respect to those systems. As soon, however, it turns towards Islam the balance is disturbed and an emotional bias creeps in. With very few exceptions, even the most eminent European orientalists are guilty of an unscientific partiality in their writings on Islam. In their writings it almost appears as if Islam could not be treated as a mere object of scientific research, but as an accused standing before his judges. All in all, the technique of the deductions and conclusions adopted by most of the European orientalists reminds us of the proceedings of those notorious Courts of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages; that is to say, they hardly ever investigate facts with an open mind, but start, almost in every case, from a forgone conclusion dictated by prejudice. They select the evidence according to the conclusion they *a priori* intend to reach. Where an arbitrary selection of witnesses is impossible, they cut parts of the evidence of the available ones out of the context, or ‘interpret’ their statements in a spirit of unscientific malevolence, without attributing any weight to the presentation of the case by the other party, that is, the Muslims themselves.

The result of such a procedure is the strangely distorted picture

of Islam and things Islamic that faces us in the orientalist literature of the West. This distortion is not confined to one country. It is to be found in England and in Germany, in Russia and in France, in Italy and in Holland – in short wherever European orientalists turn their eyes on Islam.

This wilful Orientalist distortion clearly has two main objectives. Firstly, to create revulsion against Islam in the hearts and minds of non-Muslims. Secondly, to embarrass Muslims themselves about their beliefs, traditions and history, so as to cause them to doubt and, ultimately, to apostasies:

*“Many of the People of the Book want to make you unbelievers after you have believed, through the envy from their own selves, and after the truth has been made clear to them....”*

*(al-Baqarah, 2:109)*

The history of Orientalism shows that it was closely connected with the needs and purposes of colonialism and with Christian missionary ambitions. That connection remains. It has now become a part of the geo-political strategies of Western governments and their intelligence services.

Western study of Islam as a formal discipline has long been established in specialist faculties called ‘Oriental Institutes’, the best known founded as long ago as the early and mid-eighteenth century. They have since spread much further and are now called ‘centres’ for ‘Islamic studies’. The change of name is certainly intended to deceive Muslims who, naturally enough, would distrust the Oriental Institutes. The purposes and prejudices of Orientalism are now offered as ‘Islamic studies’; and the purposes of Christian missions are now presented as ‘Christian-Muslim relations’. In the United Kingdom, examples of the former are centres in Oxford, Exeter and Wales, and of the latter Selly Oak College in Birmingham and in the USA, the Holy Cross College

in New York.

It is no coincidence that such centres should have sprung up in the early or mid-eighties. They are part of the long-term strategy of response to the revival of Islam. Centres for so-called 'Islamic studies' now exist in the prestigious academic settings of the universities of Havard, Princeton, New York, Oxford, Cambridge and Paris. Many of them are, in significant measure, financed, and also directly patronised, sponsored and supported by Arab governments, especially the Saudis. The support from Arab governments includes the appointment to the boards of these centres of '*Ulama as-Sultan* (court scholars) in the role of 'trustees' or 'consultants'. These Muslim names help to legitimise the 'Islamic studies' and so deceive the Muslims further.

In these centres, atheist, Christian and Jewish scholars have at least an equal, usually greater, authority than Muslim scholars in the choice and framing of topics for research in Islamic history and civilisation and in teaching of Islam. The 'court scholars' (among whom are Yusuf Qardawi, Abdullah Naseef, and Abdullah Turki) are rarely, if ever, present in the centres, attending only ceremonial meetings, at most once a year: they do not supervise or monitor or direct or decide anything. Their only job is to provide a façade of legitimacy and to establish the fact of collaboration.

How should we judge this collaboration with Orientalists otherwise than as the Qur'an *commands* us to judge? One of the duties of Muslim scholars is to invite non-Muslims, especially the People of the Book, to Islam, not to work alongside them in denigrating Islam:

*"Say: 'O People of the Book, come to an agreement between us and you – that we shall worship none except Allah, and that we shall associate no partner with Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside Allah.' Then, if they turn away, then*

say: *'Be witness that we are Muslims (those who have surrendered to Allah).'*" – *Aal-e-Imraan, 3:64*

To collaborate with Orientalists is, in practice to *ally* with them, which is the opposite of what the Qur'an commands. But why do we call such collaboration an *alliance*? Because it takes the form of material and moral assistance to the activities of the Orientalists for their purposes. This helps to sustain their attack on Islam and to continue their ridicule of the Qur'an and the Nabi, *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*.

*"Those who choose unbelievers for their allies instead of believers – do they look for power at their hands? Surely, all power belongs to Allah. He has already revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the revelations of Allah rejected and made fun of, you should not sit with them until they are in some other conversation. For surely, if you (did stay with them) you would be like them."* – (*an-Nisaa, 4:139 – 140*)

Alliance with the enemies of Islam is forbidden. Also forbidden is receiving Islam from them. Muslims may not learn Islam from non-Muslims. How should believers receive Islam from those who not only disbelieve in Islam but are hostile to it. How should they receive right guidance from those who are misguided?

Refusing to work with the People of the Book in the study of Islam is, it is argued, an expression of intolerance when, as we all know, Islam requires Muslims to be tolerant. But this argument is quite false and based upon a dishonest confusion between tolerating the People of the Book and being loyal to their purposes.

A Muslim is required to be tolerant of the People of the Book, but he is forbidden to give them loyalty, that is, to help them as allies."

“The Muslim’s way of supporting his Deen and making a reality of its unique order (i.e. the Shariah) cannot be harmonized with the way of the People of the Book (the Yahud and Nasaara). No matter how much friendship a Muslim shows them, he will never get their approval or acceptance for him to remain a Muslim or to make a reality of the Islamic order. He will never prevent them from allying with each other in war and conspiracy against Islam. It is a naïve heedlessness which thinks that they and we are travelling the same road, especially in the face of atheism, because when the battle is against Islam they stand alongside the atheists.

The People of the Book are like the Jews (in Madinah) who used to describe the mushrikin (polytheists) as better guided than the Muslims – And they say so to the unbelievers: “*These (the idolaters) are more rightly guided than the believers.*” (*An-Nisa 4:51*) – and who used to help the Mushrikin against the Muslim community in Madinah and indeed gave them substantial assistance. The People of the Book are those who waged the Crusades against the Muslims for two centuries. It is they who committed the atrocities in al-Andalus (Spain). It is they who, in collaboration with atheist Communists, made the Arab Muslims refugees in Palestine and installed the Jews in their place. Again, it is they who have driven the Muslims from their homes in Abyssinia, Eritria, Somalia, Algeria. And they are also co-operating with atheists in Yugoslavia, China, Turkestan, India and in every place.

Those Muslims who in name of seeking some ‘rapprochement’ between the followers of the revealed religions, have sought to blur the decisive difference between being tolerant with them and being their loyal allies, are in error. They are in error both in their understanding of the meaning of the *deen* and in their understanding of the meaning of tolerance. For the one true revelation is the last namely, Islam, and tolerance is in personal

inter-relations, not in matters of faith (Aqidah) nor in socio-political order. The tolerance of Islam is also expressed in the Muslims' not coercing them to accept Islam (that is, in leaving them to follow their religion).

*“The Deen with Allah is al-Islam. Those who received the scripture (before) differed only after knowledge came to them, through transgression of their own. Whoever disbelieves in the revelations of Allah: He is swift in reckoning!” (Aal-e-Imraan, 3:19)*

The only Deen accepted by Allah is Islam. Whoever accepts a religion other than Islam will not be accepted and he will be lost in the life to come: *“And whoever seeks a religion other than al-Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and he will be a loser in the hereafter”.* (Aal-e-Imraan, 3:85)

## **THE OXFORD CENTRE FOR “ISLAMIC STUDIES”**

**1. The Centre and why it exists:** Since the very beginning of the Islamic revival around the turn of the century, the Orientalists have (without ever changing their objectives) been re-thinking their general approach and adjusting their tactics. One of the new tactics has been to persuade certain of their Muslim students to act as their agents, especially in Islamic countries – men like Taha Hussein and Ali Abdur Razzaq in Egypt. The former denied the truth of the Qur'an when, in his work on pre-Islamic poetry, he denied the truth of the Qur'an's account of the Prophets Ibrahim and Ismail, alaihimas salaam. That particular point (as well as the arguments and purpose that go with it) is one specifically taught by Orientalist scholars like Margoliouth, Hurgronje and others. Ali Abdur Razzaq, in his work on Islam and the principles of governance, argued that Islam is merely a cult and has no political

order at all. The purpose of this familiar and patently absurd thesis was to persuade Muslims, through a nominally Muslim scholar, that they could accept the rule over them by any government, even one hostile to Islam and its Shariah (law).

Having planted such thoughts in the minds of Muslims, the Orientalists then proceed to spread them by praising the work of Muslims who ‘accept’ those thoughts and recommending it to subsequent generations; while, at the same time, not mentioning and not recommending the work of those truly Muslim scholars who totally reject the arguments of Taha Hussein and Ali Abdur Razzaq. Where not mentioning and not recommending could not succeed – for example, with such well-known writers as Sayyid Qutub, the Orientalists were obliged to try and marginalise and vilify their work as ‘extremist’, ‘fanatic’, ‘fundamentalist’, and so on.

Broadly speaking, a twin-track strategy is operated – to give importance to those Muslims who collaborate with the Orientalists; programme, and to attach opprobrium to those who reject it. This means according the authority and prestige of Western scholarship to Muslims who agree with Western purposes, and the neglect or contempt of Western scholarship to those Muslims who refuse Western purposes. Prestige and funds are allowed to the former and denied to the latter.

A more recent extension of this strategy is the establishment in the West of new centres for Orientalist studies and calling them centres for ‘Islamic studies’. The intention is to attract Muslim scholars to co-operate with them in these centres – in order to legitimise their approach and, more important, to gain for them credibility in Muslim eyes as scholars of Islam. But changing the name does not change the substance of what is renamed.

Any genuinely Islamic study of Islam has the following minimal initial conditions – and I stress *minimal* conditions:

intelligently:

- \* to take Islam from its own original and authentic sources (i.e. the Qur'aan and the Sunnah).
- \* To take it as both knowledge and practice; (meaning that the fruits of study are not intended as academic pastime, nor is its immediate purpose the display of work in a library or museum; rather, the aim is to improve and extend consciousness of Allah and to inform submission to His Will.
- \* To take it from qualified Muslim scholars. The qualifications in question are Imaan (faith), Ilm (knowledge) and taqwa (fear of Allah).

There are other conditions, also important, but these are the barest minimum. Even a passing acquaintance with modern (i.e. post-Enlightenment) Western tradition tells us that its minimum conditions for the study of Islam are the exact opposite in every case:

1. Western scholars of Islam must not accept that Islam is a revealed religion. Their work will be condemned as unacademic if they regard the Qur'an as the Word of Allah.
2. They must not take Islam from its own sources. On the contrary, they must specifically look outside those sources in order to get a 'true' picture. Precisely because the Orientalists regard the Qur'an and the Sunnah as the Islamic equivalent of what Christians call 'canonical', these sources must be seen as the *least* reliable, and others must be preferred in cases of conflict.
3. They must not, not under any circumstances, *promote* Islam as a way of life or even of belief. It must be seen as a thing of the past in terms of relevant for the discipline of the inquirer – anthropology, sociology, philology or history or whatever. The



result of study must be works that can be shelved in the libraries of universities, government ministries or Christian missions.

They must not have a personal commitment to Islam. Being Muslim is a serious handicap and would cast grave doubt on their work. While Christian and Jewish accounts of Islam (and also of Christianity and Judaism) are trustworthy; Muslim accounts of Islam (and, of course, of Christianity or Judaism) are suspect. Any Muslims who find themselves working in a Western academic environment must learn to suspend their beliefs while they study Islam.

It is obvious that Orientalists regard the Qur'an not as Divinely revealed, but as a humanly inspired book put out by the Messenger, working alone or with the help of others, whose identity is obscure. They do not regard the Messenger, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, even as a Messenger, let alone as the last. The best they can manage is to say that he was a great leader, or great social reformer or something of this kind – but even then only in relation to his time and place, meaning that his greatness is an academic matter, having no relevance now.

If only for this one reason, the Orientalists' studies of Islam cannot be accepted. But bearing in mind also their historical prejudices, we can only conclude that they are not qualified to teach Islam, nor is anyone else qualified to do so who shares their manners and traditions and their conditions for judging the truth – regardless of whether or not that individual is presented as a believing Muslim.

“....We can now turn to a specific case, the recently set up Oxford Centre for ‘Islamic Studies’, whose new official patron, as proudly announced by the Centre’s own Newsletter, is the future

head of the Church of England, Charles, the Prince of Wales, and whose principal financier is the Saudi royal family. What are the aims of this institution? It must have aims distinct from the long-established and well-staffed ‘Islam’ department of Oxford University’s Oriental Institute. This is how the spokesman of the Centre explained its objectives when questioned about them:

....to produce books and research which can be consulted as published sources, written either from an Islamic point of view or from a moderate non-Islamic point of view. It is therefore natural for the Centre to open the pages of its journal (i.e. the *Journal of Islamic Studies*, published by the Oxford University Press) to whoever wants to write an academic essay or article of high standard, even if that essay or article should be in conflict with the Islamic point of view - ..”

This statement contains a number of very misleading and deceptive propositions:

1. To offer the writings of non-Muslims as written sources to be consulted about Islam goes against the Qur’an and Sunnah and the consensus of Muslim scholars throughout Islamic history.
2. To divide the writings of non-Muslims into ‘moderate’ and ‘non-moderate’ has never been recognized in Islam in a way that would authorise a non-Muslim to teach Islam to Muslims (or indeed non-Muslims), no matter how ‘moderate’.
3. The distinction of moderate and non-moderate is a specious one. What ‘moderate’ actually means is that whatever is cruelly insulting to Muslim belief and sensibilities is expressed in a form that promises to be less cruel, though substance and content remain. For example, in medieval times, it was required as a proof of Christian allegiance to condemn the Prophet Muhammad *sallallahu alaihi wa sallam*, as an impostor and liar who deliberately deceived in order to obtain power over the minds of

his followers. The ‘moderate’ version of this proof of Christian allegiance is exemplified by Reverend Montgomery Watt, whose biographical studies of the Prophet state that he was most probably *not* a liar or an impostor – no, but the revelation he received came from ‘the creative imagination’, a disturbed mental state.

The implication is that he did not deceive others intentionally; he was self-deceived. The consequence for Muslims of either position, the moderate or the non-moderate, is the same: the authenticity of the Qur’an is condemned in terms which are calculated, by Watt, not only to insult the Muslims’ beliefs but also their intelligence. He says explicitly that “not...all the Qur’anic ideas are true and sound”, i.e. the Qur’an contains falsehood. Further, since according to Watt, “the creative imagination” can be for good or evil, he thinks it quite proper to clarify his meaning by this comparison: In Adolph Hitler, the creative imagination was well-developed, and his ideas had wide appeal, but it is usually held that he was neurotic and that those Germans who followed him most devotedly became infected by his neurosis.”

What that comparison means for the readers’ estimate of the Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*, and of his Companions, is as obvious as its intention is evil. But it is best to judge the intention of the Oxford Centre for ‘Islamic Studies’ by its production, and not merely by the words in which those intentions are so ineptly disguised by its spokesman. We shall look briefly at actual writings which the Centre, using the resources of Muslims, has put forward in its first major production, the *Journal of Islamic Studies*, as published work for Muslims to consult about Islam and Islamic history and civilisation.

The first double-volume of the *Journal* is plainly intended to declare the intentions of the Centre, to define the tone, the academic space, which the *Journal* intends to occupy. The

prefatory ‘Editorial’ announces that the *Journal* is open to a range of opinions and to a range of subjects having to do with Islam and Islamic civilisation.....

The reality is that the whole, i.e. the *overall*, character of the *Journal* is Western in its perspectives and its style: it makes no room whatever for articles or authors whose style or content of thought belongs within the Islamic tradition. On the contrary, all of those writers whose names suggest that they are Muslims, by submitting work to the *Journal* have submitted their ‘being Muslim’ to the ethos of modern Western academic attitudes, which dominate the *Journal* absolutely. All work is under a number of constraints which make it conform to a non-Muslim ethos.

The first constraint is that no writer for this publication, not even a believing Muslim, may in any way signal his or her belief - therefore it is *forbidden* to begin any article with *Bismillaah*. It is likewise *forbidden* to write, after mention of the Prophet, *sallallahu alaihi wasallam*. To admit these formulas would betray the first purpose of the *Journal*, which is to train Muslim authors to affect the distance and neutrality which Western academics, quite falsely, claim for themselves when writing about Islam. Implicit in this constraint is the acceptance that any work submitted by Muslim authors must fit in with Western academic manners and must not be presented by them as part of their ‘being Muslims’.

The unspoken assumption behind this apparently small matter of manners is that intellectual worth, quality and coherence of information or argument, can only be found in dissociation from the manners proper to a Muslim writing as a Muslim. Any Muslim contributors to the *Journal* begin therefore in a position of inferiority. It also follows that, since all contributions are equal in being non-Muslim in their manners and purpose, the reader has no way of knowing whether the information and argument they

convey are, from a Muslim viewpoint, reliable and trustworthy. The only way the reader has of knowing is either to guess from the scholar's name whether he or she intends to be read as a Muslim or to classify the subject of the article to strictly 'religious'. The Muslim reader is thus forced to read according to the rules of the Western-Christian separation of secular and religious. ....

Thus, the *Journal* by and large acclaims and relays Western academic attitudes to Islam. Insofar as Muslims, particularly those abroad, are fooled by the presence of Muslim names in the list of consultant editors (or in the list of contributors) into thinking that the contents of the *Journal* are sound and reliable, the intention and achievements of the *Journal* are pernicious in the extreme. It does not, in any degree (as it promises to do) acclaim Muslim attitudes to Islam; nor does it relay what Muslims as *Muslims* think about Islam to Western scholars. In fact, it does what the academic journals of Oriental Institutes have been doing for so long, namely promote Western modes of thinking about Islam. The danger is that the collaborative look of the *Journal* and the fact that Muslim scholars lend their names to the venture, may deceive Muslims into believing that those Western modes of thinking are the only ones that deserve consideration.

Under the caption: **SAUDI LOYALTY TO THE KUFFAAR – SAUDI ASSISTANCE TO THE ORIENTALISTS**, Dr. Ghorab lists several incidents to show the Saudi collaboration with the orientalist enemies of Islam. These episodes are reproduced hereunder.

## 1. SAUDI ASSISTANCE TO THE ORIENTALISTS

It is very important that readers should understand *how* Saudi collaboration with the Orientalists and missionaries operates, *how* the Saudis give the assistance that they give. Sometimes the relationship is deliberately open, the well-publicised case of the

Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies' being an obvious example. However, the relationship is not, and could not, be a matter of continuously open public policy. It is established slowly, quietly, under-handedly. The direction of these links is nonetheless clear. So too is the danger they pose to the well-being and security of the Umma.

The best way to spell out for the reader what is happening is to relate a number of incidents, the truth of which I can attest both as observer and direct participant. These incidents disclose the interweaving connections between, on the one hand, senior government officials on the Saudi side and Muslim scholars sponsored by the Saudis and, on the other hand, those Orientalists (academic or missionary) and other Western agents who have a long-term interest in 'developing' Muslims and Islam. The general purpose of these connections, (never directly stated) is:

- \* to introduce the Western-Christian perspective into Muslim minds at source; that is, to make future and present teachers of Islam see and think their religion and way of life in that perspective;
- \* to make the hearing of, and dealing with, that non-Islamic (in fact, anti-Islamic) perspective seem as normal and proper as the hearing of, and dealing with, differences between Muslims themselves;
- \* to achieve certain specific changes in the religion and way of life of Islam. These specific objectives are:
  - i. to have Muslims treat and discuss the Qur'an according to the principles and manners in which the scripture of the Jews and Christians is discussed;
  - ii. to separate the belief in and worship of Allah from the practice of Islam as a social-political order under Shari'ah;

iii. to alter radically the relationship between the Shari'ah as a body of principles of law and the implementation of those principles in positive laws:

it is intended that Muslims should regard certain Shari'ah provisions as 'true' but no longer relevant. For example, the proportions of inheritance for males and females or the prohibition against non-Muslims inheriting from Muslims and vice versa.

It is difficult, at first, to see how so large and dangerous a programme should be embedded in activities so seemingly innocuous as people of different cultural backgrounds sitting

around the same public platform, working in the same library, writing in the same journal. Because what one sees on any single occasion is only particular individuals trying to get along with each other, listening to, or reading each other's views. But in actual reality, this inviting of different individuals to give an address from the same public platform, this sitting them in the same academic space, this providing them with funds to run journals and institutes together, is systematically creating an ethos where one party dominates and controls the agenda for thought and discussion, where one party defines and controls the intellectual space. That party with the upper hand in the affair is not the party of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

### **Incident 1**

In 1983, John Esposito, working at Holy Cross College, a missionary-academic establishment in New York, was invited to King Abdulaziz University in Jiddah to give a lecture entitled 'Islamic Studies in America'. The reader should know that academic visits of this kind do not happen in Saudi Arabia without explicit permission of the university and government authorities at the highest level. Did those authorities think that

they were inviting a speaker who was interested in the spreading of Islam in America or even the understanding of Islam? It is unlikely. At any rate, John Esposito spoke towards the end of his lecture of a project he had in mind for the USA. This project was *the establishment of an institute for the study of Islam in which both Orientalists and Muslim scholars would collaborate.*

That, to the best of my knowledge, is the first public statement of a policy to get Muslims to cooperate with non-Muslims in teaching (or in preparing people to teach) Islam. When a Christian missionary makes such an offer, what should a Muslim think? As I gradually came to the realisation that Esposito's project was to be set up not only in the USA but also in Europe and perhaps even in Saudi Arabia (about which more later), I felt that the senior '*Ulama*' in the country should be alerted to do something about it. I therefore wrote an open letter on the subject to Shaikh 'Abd al-'Aziz bin Baz. Sadly, the most senior '*Alim*' in Saudi Arabia did nothing.

Esposito's project was realised not only in the USA but also in the UK, at Oxford. The Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies' was initiated in 1985 with the help of the Saudis. At Oxford itself the 'idea' for such a centre was not the dream of a Muslim, (though a young Muslim, Dr Farhan Nizami, was appointed its Director), but of his very much older colleague at St Cross College, Oxford, Dr David Browning. Dr Browning is not a Muslim, not a Christian missionary, not an Orientalist. He is a geographer whose field of speciality is - not the Middle East - Latin America. He has retired from his academic commitment to geography and now devotes himself exclusively (and very strenuously) to the cause of promoting the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies'. How Dr Browning fits into the picture is obscure unless one knows that, through his work abroad as independent 'foreign observer' of national elections, he has very strong connections with the British Foreign Office. That ministry is sometimes incorrectly described



as 'pro-Arab'. It is not in the least pro-Arab; it is pro-Arab oil. Its anti-Islamic postures and policies are doubtless an integral part of the West's strategic interest in suppressing the Islamic movements and controlling the oil resources of the region.

## **Incident 2**

Between 18th and 25th October, 1986, a conference was held at University College, Oxford, entitled 'How to deal with Muslims in the Middle East'. The conference, organised by Bishop Dr Kenneth Cragg, was held in association with the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies', its Director being personally present there, as well as Dr 'Ali al-Ghamidi, the Saudi Director of the Islamic Cultural Centre, attached to the Regents Park mosque in London. As I happened to be in Oxford at the time, a Muslim who knew me suggested that I should attend and, if allowed to do so, try to answer Dr Cragg.

It is certain that someone should respond to Cragg's very long and subversive campaign against Islam. He has openly stated his aim as not trying to convert Muslims (which he dismisses as the 'numbers game') but as getting them to experience Christianity's Christ. To this purpose Cragg has, over almost three decades, dedicated a number of books, including studies of the Qur'an and *Sirah*, and also picked out for public exposure Muslim writings that support his programme. An example is his translation of Muhammad Kamil Husayn's *Qaryah Zalimah* as *City of Wrong*, in which a Muslim 'imagines' his way into the Christian experience. Readers should not be misled into thinking that a merely hypothetical or literary 'experiencing' of Christianity is offered. On the contrary, the aim is, after such 'experiencing', for Muslims to mend their ways. Cragg would like, for instance, Muslims to end the legal prohibition on Muslim women marrying Christians. He also supports the surreptitious presentation of Christian witness' to Muslims in the Arab world: committed Christians are to accept work in their professional fields in, say,

Saudi Arabia, and through the contacts they make as doctors (especially women doctors who can gain admission to the heart of the family), pharmacists, engineers, teachers, etc., to run private gatherings through which the Muslims can discreetly be offered Christianity.

For non-Muslims to hold such a conference is their right; for Muslims to attend in order to defend an Islamic view of the religion and history of Muslims is also, unquestionably, proper. But why should Muslims assist in the setting up of such a conference? That is *not* proper. Still worse is it to deny Muslims the right to defend their religion and history, to restrict their freedom to do so, and to take punitive action against them if they do.

I was at that time teaching in the Department of Islamic Studies at King Saud University (KSU) in Riyadh. When I returned, I was summoned for disciplinary investigation by Dr Mustafd al-A'zami, then the Head of Department. Now, it seems to me, that what I had said at the conference in Oxford could in principle be questioned by any concerned Muslim - for its content or its manner. I had not imagined that the right (actually the duty) to speak on matters of deep concern to Islam and to Muslims could also be questioned. But that is precisely the line that Dr al-A'zami took. He did not question what I had said; he questioned *that I* had said it. The complaint was presented as a procedural one: it is not permitted, I was told, for any faculty member of a Saudi institution to speak at any conference or other public occasion without express permission to do so. What this means, in practice, is that whenever (and wherever) such collaborative conferences are held, only those Muslims will be allowed to speak up who, broadly speaking, agree with Muslim-non-Muslim collaborative ventures in this field.

### **Incident 3**

In January 1986, the Faculty of Arts of KSU, began issuing a journal entitled *al-'Usur* (Eras) whose editorial board is made up of Muslims and non-Muslims. Among the Orientalists on that board of consultants is Rev Dr Montgomery Watt who, as well as being the author of several mischievous and misleading works in the field of *Sirah*, is one of the editors of *The Muslim World*, published by the missionary centre in Selly Oak, Birmingham. This journal was established in 1911 by the notorious Samuel Zwemer and is published jointly with the Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, USA. Among other Orientalist names on the editorial board of *al-'Usur* are: Rex Smith (University of Durham) and Richard Chambers (University of Chicago).

Now, it has been claimed that a Western university would not permit the setting up of an academic centre for the study of Islam unless that centre had a management in which Western (non-Muslim) academics were sufficiently represented - in other words, that the price of the prestige of a place like Oxford is the acceptance that non-Muslim have a say in how Islam is to be studied and taught. As we have seen, that is a price Muslims should never willingly pay, unless they mean to weaken and betray their religion. But supposing all that is true of a Western university, how can it possibly be true of a Muslim university in a Muslim capital built on Muslim land with exclusively Muslim resources? What necessity can explain the Saudi authorities following the same pattern of collaboration with non-Muslims as is followed by, for example, the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies'? The answer, alas, is that it is so not by necessity but by volition, by policy, chosen and implemented.

#### **Incident 4**

On 12th August, 1989, I was invited to speak by the student members of the Oxford Islamic Society on 'An Islamic perspective on Orientalism'. In this address, I criticised

Orientalists and the role of the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies' in furthering their programme. To address a small undergraduate society, even in Oxford, is no major event. Hardly worth anyone's notice. There are many small societies in the University; many speakers; many addresses. I was surprised, therefore, that a report on the occasion should have been written, let alone that it should then be sent all the way to Riyadh, to Dr al-Azam!, my Head of Department at KSU.

### **Incident 5**

On 26 Safar 1410 (1990), at a meeting of the Department of Islamic Studies of KSU, I talked about the responsibility of the 'Ulama', especially of those with influence in Saudi Arabia, to at least impede, if they could not stop, the infiltration of Orientalists into the field of Islamic studies - something surely possible where universities were under direct Muslim administration and within the jurisdiction of Muslim governments. I mentioned by name 'Abdullah Naseef and 'Abdullah al-Turki who are certainly influential in Saudi Arabia. They are also trustees of the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies'. I advised them to fear Allah for giving, in their position, encouragement and support to the Orientalists.

### **Incident 6**

On 20 Rajab 1410 (1990), after praying salat al-'isha' in the Riyadh mosque used by university staff members, I stood up before the congregation and criticised two Saudi policies: a) their encouraging Orientalist studies of Islam; and b) their tribalist policy of preferring a Saudi to a non-Saudi for university entrance to post-graduate courses (a policy widely known about and frequently criticised in the non-Saudi Arabic press). I quoted in this talk, the verse from *al An'am* revealed on the occasion when the Quraysh asked the Prophet, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, to dismiss from his circle the non-Arabs and the poor (i.e. the

socially weak) among the Muslims, men like Bilal, Salman al-Farisi, Suhayb ar-Rumi, Khabbab, 'Ammar, and 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud. The Quraysh asked that these 'riff-raff (*Aradhil*) be removed from his presence and then they would join his circle and hear his preaching. Allah then revealed in His Book:

*Do not dismiss [from your circle] those who call upon their Lord at morning and evening, seeking His countenance. You are not accountable for them in anything, nor are they accountable for you in anything; if you should dismiss them you would be a wrongdoer* (al An'am, 6:52)

I quoted also the hadith recorded in all *Sahih* collections that the search for knowledge is *Faridah*, an obligation. I concluded with the appeal: Fear Allah, O Mansur al-Turki! Fear Allah! Fear Allah! (Mansur al-Turki was the Vice Chancellor of KSU.)

Many people in the congregation approved and applauded and indeed rejoiced because this matter had at last been aired in public, and in a mosque.

About an hour later, after I had returned home, two men called at my flat. One of them is the brother of Hasan ibn Said who is a member of the Saudi intelligence service in the Ministry of the Interior. This man threatened that my contract would be terminated if I did not go and apologise to Mansur al-Turki. I refused. Two months later, the threat was carried out.

Another consequence of my speaking in the mosque was the dismissal of Mansur al-Turki from his post. The dismissal was of course called a resignation. The reason he was dismissed was not the policy he pursued but the fact that he had allowed that policy to be criticised in public by a member of his university.

## **Incident 7**

During Sha'ban 1410 (1990) a large seminar was held in the

Intercontinental Hotel in Riyad on the subject of *Da'wah* (the dissemination of Islam) in the world. The chairman was 'Abdullah al-Turki. Among participants were: Muhammad Qutb, Rashid al-Ghannoushi, Hassan Hathut. I asked to make a comment and, in my short comment, I referred to the danger to Islamic *Da'wah* in Europe of allowing non-Muslims to collaborate in the presentation of Islam in the West, since, inevitably, that presentation was a mis-presentation, a distortion. I pointed out that, for that mis-presentation and distortion of Islam those Muslims who are collaborating with it are responsible. I gave the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies' as an example. Many students were there and approved openly and rejoiced. Not so 'Abdullah al-Turki - understandably, as my comment certainly included his contribution to the activities of the Orientalists, as a trustee of Oxford Centre.

### **Incident 8**

Hans Kung, the dissident Catholic theologian, quite well-known in Saudi Arabia, was invited to give a talk entitled 'Original Christianity: between the Gospels and the Qur'an', on the evening of Monday, 14th May 1990, in Riyad. In the morning of that day, he came, accompanied by Dr Ja'afar Sheikh Idris and other figures from Imam University, to the Department of Islamic Studies where I was still working. I attended the informal meeting that followed. In explanation of why Hans Kung was invited, it was emphasised that he was an Orientalist *sympathetic* to Islam and *sympathetic* to the Arab-Palestinian cause. The meeting was chaired by a professor of physics, also an Islamic scholar, Dr Muhammad al-Mas'ari, who encouraged me to speak up and answer Kung. (*In the summer of 1993, Dr Muhammad al-Mas'ari was dismissed from his post in King Saud University and subsequently jailed and tortured for being the spokesman of the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights. ('Legitimate rights' means those rights granted to human beings by Allah as*

*established in the Shari'ah.) In April 1994, Dr. al-Mas'ari escaped from Saudi Arabia and arrived in London. He is now seeking political asylum in Britain.)* Some students from KSU also attended this informal, get-to-know-the-speaker meeting.

During this meeting, I asked Hans Kung the following questions:

1. From where did he derive his knowledge about Islam? The answer: from various Orientalists, especially Paret, Kung's teacher in Tiibingen University. Evidently, Kung was not qualified in Arabic or Islamic studies.

2. He is famous for denying the infallibility of the Pope; did Kung also deny the infallibility of the Prophets, *'alaihim assalam*? The answer: he did deny it, and certainly therefore, he denied the infallibility of the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*.

3. How did he view the position and role of the Americans on the Palestinian question? The answer: he felt the Americans' attitude was favourable to the Palestinians.

Not surprisingly, after this discussion, some students got in touch with the organising authorities and asked them to cancel Kung's lecture. Fearing a public disturbance, the authorities consulted the Ministry of the Interior. I turned up at the time and place appointed for Kung's lecture; so did many others: we found that it had been cancelled.

## **Hans Kung on Islam**

On that occasion, by the mercy of Allah, *subhanahu wa ta'ala*, the truth about Hans Kung's attitudes and purpose with regard to Islam and the Muslims were exposed by his own words uttered, just as they are exposed in his published words for those who will take the trouble to read them before, in neglect

of their responsibilities to their religion and way of life, they invite him to address Muslims.

Kung's views on Islam are very explicitly presented in his book, *Christianity and the World Religions*. (1986; Collins, London, 1987. Page references in the discussion immediately following in this section refer to this edition of Kung's book.) In the part of the book dealing with 'Islam and Christianity' (pp. 3-135), Kung advocates for Muslims what he calls 'critical method' in reading their Scripture. This is the procedure applied, from the early nineteenth century, to Christian study of the Bible. Kung refers to various Orientalists whose works have followed this approach. Among them are:

1. John Wansborough's *Quranic Studies* (1977), in which the author claims that the Qur'an was shaped over a period of two centuries by the Muslim community interpreting what were taken to be Prophetic sayings. (p.33)
2. John Burton's *The Collection of the Quran* (1977) which follows a similar approach but confines the period of 'collection' to the Prophet's lifetime. (p.34)
3. Gunter Luling's *The Rediscovery of the Prophet Muhammad* (1981) based on *On the Primitive Version of the Qur'an* (1974) which claims to distinguish in the Qur'anic text a primitive Christian-Arabian Qur'an attributed to the Prophet and the rest attributed to a much later period. (p.34)
4. Angelika Neuwirth's *Studies on the Composition of the Meccan Suras* (1981) with which Kung appears to be particularly pleased: 'With her training in the formal-critical approach to the Old Testament, Neuwirth can prove that, whatever the case with the rest of the Qur'an, the



Meccan suras were put together by the Prophet himself for liturgical recitation...'. (p.34)

What business can intelligent Muslims who care about and for their religion have with 'curiosity' of this kind? It is a curiosity about Islam whose techniques are directly copied from Western models, regardless of whether the techniques are appropriate, and whose aim is a determination to reproduce among Muslims the same reservations about the Qur'an, as Jews and Christians are bound to have about the Bible. To add insult to injury, Kung offers this line of scholarship as the road to peace and reconciliation between Muslims and Christians what he means is that Muslims will believe and think as modern Christians do.

Kung maintains that the oral influence of Judaic and Christian traditions on the composition of the Qur'an cannot (and should not) be denied by Muslims. There were contacts between Muslims and the People of the Book during the Prophet's lifetime, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*; and many of the Biblical prophets are mentioned by name in the Qur'an, as well as Mary, the mother of Jesus, *'alaihis-salam*. Ming infers that all these prophets were known to the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, before revelation came to him.

Sometimes a wilful blindness accompanies arrogance: how can any scholar who, presumably, has at least read the Qur'an in translation, have missed the fact that this particular line of argument is anticipated and answered by the Qur'an itself? It is the very argument put forward by the arrogant polytheists and Jews during the period of the Revelation which answered them:

*This is [some part] of the tidings of the unseen which We reveal to you. You yourself did not know it, nor did your people, before this [revelation] (Hud, 11:41).*

The Prophet, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, is altogether innocent, by the testimony of the Qur'an, of what the Orientalists (like the unbelievers before them) mischievously allege. Their aim is to enlist the support of Muslims themselves in making these allegations. They begin by saying that the Qur'an is, like their own discredited scriptures, only partly true. Kung himself states (p.34) that he believes the Qur'an to be both revealed *and* the work of the Prophet. He then goes on to offer this position to 'educated modern' Muslims as a way for them to apply to their Scripture the kind of critique that was applied to the Christians scriptures. Kung's point, evidently, is, to imply that any Muslim who takes the whole Qur'an to be *verbatim* the word of Allah - which has always been an axiom of Muslim belief - is neither educated nor modern. He writes with the conviction that Western culture has triumphed and it is up to the Muslims to adapt (i.e. submit) to it: and his, the Christian scholar's task is to make that submission easier, and to look among Muslim scholars for individuals who have been willing to submit and can therefore be applauded for their 'constructive' approach.

Here, in a nutshell, is the whole ambition of the collaboration which is offered to Muslims and in which, alas, so many nominal Muslims are willing to participate:

Christians and Muslims today need to continue their conversation about this difficult but fundamental point of how to understand revelation... Everyone knows that in various Islamic countries right now there are powerful movements for Islamic renewal at work... Perhaps over the long haul, in a more self-conscious Islamic world that is trying in so many ways to catch up with Western science and culture, historicocritical study of the holy book will eventually be allowed to become a reality. (p.35)

It is only natural for the enemies of Islamic renewal to wish

to divert its energies into directions which harmonise with cultural and religious preferences which have nothing to do with Islam. For Muslims to collaborate in any such programme is to capitulate. But it is to Allah that Muslims no matter what their circumstances - are required to surrender, not to the enemies of their religion. The tragedy is that people like Kung are able to find accomplices not only among officials of Muslim governments but also among Muslims whose scholarship should have guarded them against any such betrayal of the *din*.

How will the Qur'an be esteemed if the collaborators have their way? How else but as Kung wishes - relatively, intermittently, adaptably. In his own words (p.36; the italics are Kung's):

"understanding the Qur'an as a *living message*, continually heard anew... as the great *prophetic* testimony to the one and only mighty and merciful God... A consistent testimony that may and should be handed down in a variable form, always freshly adapted to the time, place, and individuals in question, so as to provide an unambiguous, constructive solution for the present-day conflicts with science and history, as well as the modern ethos and sense of law. That would be a historicocritical approach..."

But it is Jews and Christians who adapt their scriptures to their own transient needs and purposes, who fit their religion to the prevailing 'ethos'. Whereas the distinction of the Muslims has always been, by the mercy of Allah, to have a Scripture perfectly preserved, to whose commands they adapt themselves and so make the Qur'an the 'prevailing ethos'. It is indeed difficult to believe that there could exist scholars who, while calling themselves Muslims, are nonetheless willing to go along with the 'adaptive' approach commended by modern Christians and Jews. The intense pressure for this approach since the early eighties, the

denigration of all other Muslims as 'fanatics' and 'fundamentalists', is evidence that the People of the Book (having failed in their attempts at conversion, especially in the face of the renewal of Islam, resort to subversion), invite Muslims to a 'living message', when what they really mean (and want) to do is to stifle and kill that message.

When, later in his study of Islam, Kung deals with the question of the Shari'ah, he follows the same procedure and reaches the same conclusion. Muslims are invited to learn the familiar Christian distinction between law (which, in the Christian perspective, must become legalism) and faith, to learn to see the Qur'an as a source-book for ethics and not, as those who first heard it and then gave their lives in the effort to establish it, as the source for laws as well as values. Again, without much irony, he is able to suggest that Muslims have had little choice in the matter in recent centuries and certainly none now: the 'fundamentalist' programme for the reintroduction of Islamic law (the *hadd* punishments for example, particularly for apostasy and adultery, and the prohibition of *riba* (interest) are doomed to fail, Kung thinks, because Westernisation is too well-entrenched). He seems to believe that wherever education (he means secularisation) lifts the Muslims out of their 'medieval' cast of mind, they are certain to seek the flexibilities of a modern Christian attitude to sacred law. And, once again, Kung is able to enlist the views of 'modernist' or 'reformist' Muslim scholars ('Efforts at an intra-Islamic critique of the Law', pp.66-9) and quotes extensively, and with particular relish, from Fazlur-Rahman.

It soon becomes clear what the contents of the reforms desirable for Muslims in the modern age are: First of all, Muslim must grasp the central (Christian) point that 'the *shari'ah* exists for the sake of man, and not man for the sake of the *shari'ah*. Man is therefore the measure of the law' (p.65; Kung's italics). Having grasped that, Muslims will be able to get rid of 'the scandalous

shortcomings of Islamic law' - Kung especially wants 'dissent' (he means blasphemy) and the charging of interest to be made acceptable, and he wants all the *hadd* penalties to be abolished. He praises the Mu'tazila as being nearer to the truth because they believed the Qur'an to be 'created' and 'therefore modifiable'- he fails to point out that the Mu'tazila scholars (however large a place is given to them by Western Orientalists) had rather less influence on Muslim thought in general than those Christians had on Christian thought in general, who urged the Church to allow polygamy. It comes as no surprise that Kung is 'against' polygamy - it does not fit the modern ethos. He calls for Muslims to join the women's liberation movement (p.84), to eliminate the differences between male and female rights of inheritance, and to make legal testimony equivalent for both sexes - all such laws were all very well in the seventh century, he feels, but not in the twentieth!

That must suffice as an illustration of Kung's *sympathetic* attitude to Islam. We turn now to his sympathy for the Palestinians' cause against the Zionists. His attitudes on this question are explicit in his book *Judaism: The Religious Situation of Our Time*. (SCM Press Ltd., London, 1992; trans. John Bowden from *Die Religiöse Situation der Zeit: Das Judentum*, R. Piper GmbH & Co, KG, Munich, 1991. Page references in the discussion immediately following refer to the translation.) We need to note that this book, dedicated 'For my Jewish friends throughout the world', was most warmly welcomed by Jews - as an example see the review in the London Times ('A Catholic on the Jews', 26 March, 1993) by Rabbi Dr Albert H. Friedlander. Kung devotes several paragraphs in his preface to reassuring the reader that he enjoys close and friendly relations with Israel, with its institutions, with its religious and political leaders inside and outside the country. He records his lecture visits to the Van Leer Institute in Tel Aviv and the University of Haifa, his association with the Swiss-Jewish society, and 'numerous conversations and meetings' with the Israeli Foreign Office and other representatives

of official Israeli politics. Kung does not mention any meeting, association or conversation with any Palestinians either inside or outside the country for which, being secure in his own homeland, he expresses such interest and concern.

Kung's basic political understanding is that the Jews believe themselves, exclusively, to be God's chosen people, and on the basis of belonging to a race, have a right to the promised land, that is, Palestine. Kung is quite unembarrassed by this endorsement of divine favouritism. He is also quite unembarrassed - despite his own passionate argument in favour of a historicocritical reading of all sacred scriptures (the Qur'an included) - by the reduction of the Old Testament to a legal deed of title to a piece of land. The inhumanity of forcible eviction of that land's native population - despite their centuries-long tolerance of the Jews already living there (in contrast to Christian practice in that same holy land) and which broke down only when the Zionist programme became too blatant to be ignored - is accepted by Kung as an inconvenience. Lest the reader should think I am misrepresenting (or exaggerating) Kung's position, I here quote his own words (pp.45-6):

"...for Judaism, which preserved its primal bond with the land of Israel (Hebrew *Eretz Israel*), even in the time of the 'dispersion' (Greek *Diaspora*), the relation to this particular land, the 'promised land', is quite essential... Whether or not it is convenient for others, Yahweh's chosen people and the promised land now belong together."

Kung shows no awareness that accepting the *belonging together of Jews and Israel* is also, necessarily, an acceptance of the dispossession of the land's original inhabitants in favour of European colonists, of the forcing apart of *Palestinians and Palestine*. By what stretch of imagination can this non-awareness (or denial) of the Palestinians' rights be described as 'sympathetic'?

Kung's position is not, in fact, based upon a genuinely sympathetic assessment of the needs or rights of the Palestinians. On the contrary, it is based upon a typically European-Christian cynicism about the realities of power. That cynicism derives, in turn, from the Christian attitude to legality as an alternative domain to the domain of rightness, and practical morality as an alternative to ideal spirituality. Islamic civilisation has always refused this division, although, unfortunately (for mankind in general, as well as for Muslims), there are some eminent Muslims who are willing to play the game of power, just as Christians and Jews do, for its own sake, divorced from any commitment to the life of submission and devotion to the will of Allah: indeed, they achieve eminence precisely by accepting that game of power and its rules. When they do so, they are hailed as moderates, men of vision, progressive, open-minded, tolerant, and so on: and, the faithful, they, alas, are reviled as fanatics and regressives. In short, we should not be surprised by the cynicism within Kung's projected 'compromise', nor should we be surprised that the main elements of that compromise are attributed to one of the West's favourite Muslims, the former President of Egypt, Anwar al-Sadat.

“Kung tells us that Jews, Christians and Muslims 'are bound together by the major characteristics which they have in common'. These are: Semitic origin, belief in the same One God of Abraham, their tribal ancestor, belief in prophetic proclamation and revelation laid down once for all in scripture and which remains normative; the basic ethos of a fundamental humanity founded in God's will, and the ten commandments, etc. (pp. 17-18). He advocates peace on the basis of a recognition of these common characteristics, and commends (somewhat vaguely) the idea of one nation, one religion, one prayer. He advocates the expression of this ancient community in a literal coming together to pray: Jews and Christians already have shared texts; it should not be too difficult to find texts (and avoid rubrics) which would

enable Muslims to join in and address the same words to God in the same place on the same occasion (p.580).

It all seems very charming and positive until the full implications (for legal and political justice, for what is morally and spiritually right in the situation) become clear. How are Jews, Christians, Muslims to proceed with this charming idea *in practice*? Kung tells us:

"Perhaps the suggestion of a Muslim can help us here, that of Anwar al-Sadat, to whom Israel owes peace with Egypt" (p.578).

Sadat's suggestion, also based on emphasising common origins and sharing worship and places of worship, was to build a new place of worship dedicated by the adherents of all three religions and to build it near St Catherine's monastery in Sinai. Kung goes yet further. What need is there of building a new place? A perfect site already exists: **the Dome of the Rock. The mosque could also serve as synagogue and church.** (pp.579-80)

The implications are rather stark. The Muslims do not need to recover Jerusalem: they can have it by making a formal present of it to the Jews and Christians.

We hardly need offer a comment on this suggestion - even if it were not cynically motivated, it would be unacceptable. We do need, however, to remind ourselves of the Qur'anic position on the 'community' between Muslims and the People of the Book: the Qur'an does invite the People of the Book to consider themselves one nation with the Muslims, going back to the Prophet Ibrahim, *'alaihi-salam*, and to do so on the basis that he was neither Jew nor Christian, but *Muslim*:

*Abraham was not a Jew, nor yet a Christian; but he was an upright Muslim (hanifan musliman) and he was not of the idolaters. (Ali 'Imran, 3:67)*



The political and military association between the Saudi authorities and the *kuffar* is not, in fact, so much a relationship of collaboration as of subjection. The Saudi authorities subject the lands, seas, and all the resources which they should administer for the benefit of all Muslims, to Western, specifically American, political interests in the region. That has been the case (though not so widely known as now) since the founding of the kingdom under British imperial 'protection'. It has come to be widely accepted since the Gulf crisis of 1990. At the 'invitation' of the Gulf Arab rulers, notably the Saudis, the military forces of the *kuffar* occupied the Arabian Peninsula in order to prosecute their war against Iraq; thereafter, having destroyed that country's civil as well as military structures, they continue to have a very large and powerful military presence in the Gulf countries. This is done with much less publicity than during the Gulf war but with not much effort at concealment. The policy of non-concealment also has its purposes apart from its effect of proving the Gulf regimes helpless, it makes them vulnerable to the discontent of their own people which in turn makes them more dependent upon the Western presence. The situation is not very different from the protection rackets run by the mafia: the Gulf Arab regimes are required, in exchange for 'protection', to spend huge sums of money on the purchase of arms and other equipment (which, if the Arabs could use them effectively would not be sold to them) and other back-up services, which returns the petrodollars to the West and keeps the Western military industry well-enough supplied with funds to go on producing new kinds and grades of weapons which their victims cannot match. It is a vicious circle in every sense.

The ambition to dominate the Arabian Peninsula is not a new one. The goal has its roots in the missionary activities which were initiated in the Gulf towards the end of the nineteenth century. Samuel Zwemer, the American Christian who established the first mission in the area as long ago as 1889, founded many schools

and churches in the coastal townships. Zwemer is explicit in his understanding of the situation at that time (*See `Abd al-Malik al Tamnī, Al-Tabshir fi-Mantiqat al-khalij alArabi, (Missionary activities in the Arab Gulf area) Kuwait 1982, pp. 48ff.*). The Christian missionaries are to consider themselves as the allies of the Jews in their hopes and plans for the creation of a Jewish homeland in the region. Zwemer justifies this on the grounds that the region had 'belonged' to Christ: before Islam came to dominate, there had been Christian communities in the Peninsula (in Najran) and, similarly, Jewish communities (in Yathrib (Madinah), Khaybar, etc.). Western powers had the right, in his view, to bring the region 'back' to its former religious affiliations.

An American Orientalist, John Kelly, who served as adviser to the President of the United Arab Emirates, advocates the reoccupation of the Gulf area by Western powers to reverse or replace the withdrawal of the British Empire east of Suez (*See John Kelly. Arabia, the Gulf and the West, London 1990 p.504.*). The primary motivation may be to control the oil reserves of the region, but missionary ambitions (religious and cultural), and, most important of all, control of the peoples and of the Islamic revival in the area, are a part of the strategic commitment. The heartlands of Islam, the direction of daily prayers for millions of Muslims and the focus of the annual pilgrimage to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, could, if managed for the sake of the Muslim Umma, unify and organise the efforts and resources of all the disparate Islamic revival movements world-wide. The political potential of this region is therefore immense and the Western powers are only too well aware of this.

As noted above, it is a matter of open knowledge that the Americans and the British have *permanent* military bases in each of the countries of the Gulf except Yaman. Kuwait Bahrain, the Emirates, Oman, Qatar, each have at least one significant

American military installation. Saudi Arabia is host to several military bases which are huge complexes cut off from the rest of the country and run quite independently of it.”

“Who is responsible for the presence of the *kuffar* in the holy lands of Islam? Evidently, those who invited them, the rulers of these countries, and the *Ulama' as-Sultan* who authorised their invitation. The authorisation was given publicly in a formal document (called the Makkah Document) on the 10th October, 1990. Among the signatories were Syed Abul Hasan Nadwi, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Shaikh Bin Baz, and Manna' al-Qattan. The argument of these *'Ulama'* was based mainly on an appeal to *necessity* whereby that which is normally forbidden may be *temporarily* permitted, or whereby one may be *temporarily* excused from doing what is normally obligatory. The argument of necessity is plainly meaningless or unprincipled if the temporary allowance becomes permanent. But leaving that aside, let us look closely at the argument of necessity as it was used in this case. The necessity in question was, of course, the threat of invasion and war from Iraq under Saddam Hussain.

We can begin by asking: who convinced the Saudis that this threat existed? Of course, the Americans. They claim to have shown the Saudi authorities secret pictures of Iraqi troop movements, taken by secretly operated satellites, pictures whose interpretation requires very specialised training which is also secret. In short, the Saudis took the Americans' word for it: they did what they were told. (Iraq invaded Iran also, we may recall; there was no similar response, not from the West nor from the Gulf Arab states, nor from the *'Ulama' as-Sultan*.) In fact, there is no evidence of any immediate threat to Saudi Arabia. The moment for the Iraqis to invade Saudi Arabia, had they had any intention of doing so, would have been immediately after the occupation of Kuwait, or, at the least, well before the 'allies' had

time to establish themselves in that country. In the end – surely a unique event in military history – the Americans enjoyed six full months of a totally unopposed landing. Even assuming criminal intention on the part of Saddam Hussain (not a difficult assumption to make), one would have supposed that he must quickly attack and occupy the oil-fields in the northeast of Saudi Arabia, a perfectly realistic option in the first month of the crisis, and hold them in order to bargain for Kuwait. But the Iraqis made no such move.

We begin by noting, therefore, that the necessity to which the '*Ulama' as-Sultan* appealed was not correctly judged: they had only the word of the *kuffaar* that any such necessity existed. But let us allow that this was an error of judgement on their part, not a wilful attempt to legitimise the demolition of Iraq. Let us allow that they had no wish to help the enemies of Islam kill huge numbers of Muslims by long-range air and missile bombardment, to so thoroughly destroy the roads, bridges and utilities of Iraq as to cause many hundreds of thousands of deaths for years to come. Let us allow that they did not foresee or wish any of this to happen. They saw it as a necessity that Saudi Arabia should be defended. Very well, but events have unfolded. We know what did happen, what was done to Iraq and to its people. The whole world knows. It was televised night after night. Have the '*Ulama' as-Sultan* expressed some sorrow or regret for the loss of so many human lives? Have they no cause to unwish what they did? Evidently not, for these learned men have remained quite silent on the sufferings of the Iraqi people; nor, now that the necessity exists no more, have they had anything to say on the continuing military presence of the Americans and the British and the French in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere.

Yet, even if we accord to these scholars the best of motives for what they did, it cannot make what they did right. They are obliged, insofar as they are *Muslim* scholars, to give advice and

judgement according to the Qur'an and Sunnah. They did not do so. Their judgement was, by the Qur'an and Sunnah, false judgement, a grave surrender of their responsibility in favour of a slavish submission to what the Saudi government needed; certainly, their silence about it ever since is an unqualified evil.

The conditions and principles to be taken into account when a Muslim government, in any situation of necessity or otherwise, solicits or accepts the help of non-Muslims, are well-established and well-known.

Before the battle of Badr, a man came to the Prophet, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, and said that he wanted to join him in the fighting. The Prophet asked him if he believed in Allah. The man said he did not. The Prophet then said to him: 'Go back [or go away]. I will not call on the help of a *mushrik*'. And who does not know what the odds were that the Muslims *face* at that time? (This hadith is in the *Sahih* of Muslim.)

At the time of Uhud, as is recorded in the *Sirah* of Ibn Hisham (As-Siratu n-Nabawiyah. Cairo, n.d., vo1.3, p.64.), the Prophet did not wish, again despite the circumstances, to seek the help of the Jews in Madinah. The Prophet, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, said: We do not call for the help of a *mushrik* against a *mushrik*, nor of a *kafir* against a *kafir*.

There are two precedents in particular which the '*Ulama*' *as-Sultan* offered as pretexts for the judgement that they gave. First they cite the case of Safwan ibn Umayyah at the time of the battle of Hunayn. The Prophet borrowed from this Safwan certain weapons even though he was, at that time, a *mushrik*. But borrowing or buying weapons or any other equipment or technology from unbelievers is not the same thing as calling on them to fight with you. Also, the Muslims certainly had the upper hand and were in full control of the affair - the incident referred to occurred after the conquest of Makkah. Finally, it is important to

remember that Safwan was known to be sympathetic to Islam and, indeed, soon afterwards became a Muslim. The contrast with the Gulf War is all too obvious: the Arabs did not have the upper hand and were certainly not, in any sense, in control of the affair. The reverse is true. The war was conducted by and for the Americans under the leadership, on the field of battle, of General Schwarzkopf who is not, and was not, in the least bit sympathetic to Islam. The situation is directly contradictory to what is required of the Muslims and promised to them in the Qur'an, a verse I quoted earlier: *...Allah will not give the unbelievers any [right off way over the believers* (an-Nisa', 4:141).

Secondly, the '*Ulama' as-Sultan* cite the precedent of the hijra to Abyssinia where the Muslims put themselves under the protection of the Negus, the Christian ruler of that country. But this was not a situation involving fighting and war and, again, the Negus was not only sympathetic to the beliefs and cause of the Muslims but himself accepted Islam. The Prophet himself, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, did the funeral prayer for the Negus when news of that noble man's death reached him. (The incident is reported in the Sahih of Muslim.) The help that the emigrant Muslims received from the non-Muslim Christians of Abyssinia was not of a military nature, not a part or phase of a military campaign.

In sum, there is no permissible alliance in fighting between Muslims and non-Muslims. (That it may have happened in the later periods of Muslim history does not make it permissible since these periods of history have no value except as negative precedents, teaching us what not to do.) The reason that the Muslims do not fight alongside the *kuffaar* is that they have altogether different aims - one springing from iman, the other from *kufr*. And about this reason there cannot be the slightest dispute - it is given in the Qur'an (an-Nisa; 4.76): *Those who believe do battle for the cause of Allah, and those who disbelieve*

*do battle for the cause of idols...* The Prophet, *sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*, was asked in regard to people fighting to get booty or a reputation for bravery or for various other reasons: 'Who is fighting *fi sabil Allah* (in the way of Allah)?' The Prophet said: 'Whoever fights to cause the word of Allah to be the highest, he is fighting *fi sabil-Allah*'. (This hadith is recorded in all major collections; in the version in Muslim's *Sahih* among the reasons not acceptable are *al-hamiyyah al-jahiliyyah* (pagan tribal pride) and *riya'* (vainglory, pretension).)

All the *kuffaar*, whether of the ex-Communist East or the ex-Christian/Jewish West, fight for the wrong reasons - for control of populations (labour resources) and raw materials, for national glory, for arrogant dominion, or for the love of violence, the excitement of defeating others and displaying massive force - like the Pharaohs and all other tyrants throughout history. None of their purposes can ever be *fi sabil Allah*. It follows that there can never be a purpose common to believing Muslims and unbelievers which might lead Muslims to fight alongside and/or under the direction of non-Muslims."

"The nature of the alliance between the *kuffar* of the West and the rulers of Saudi Arabia has three defining characteristics. Let us now examine these characteristics in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah:

"that the alliance constitutes a joining of forces between the *kuffar* and the *Munaafiqun*, the unbelievers and the hypocrites. The *Munaafiqun* are those who pretend to rule according to Islam but in reality have an alliance with the *kuffar* by which they are maintained in prestige, power and privilege. It is an historical fact that the power of the Saudi royal family was established by the British who paid King 'Abdul 'Aziz regular salary and surrounded him with 'advisers and helpers', notably the notorious British spy, John Philby. Such an alliance and collaboration is indicated in the Qur'an:

*Convey to the hypocrites the news that for them there is a painful doom - those who choose unbelievers for their allies instead of believers! Do they look for Power at their hands when surely all power belongs to Allah? (an-Nisa', 4:138-9)*

- “ that their relationship is not one of equals but of master and servant. The psychology of willing servitude to human masters is such that, inevitably, the servants do more to ingratiate themselves with their masters, more even than is asked, becoming ever more eager to please. In the end, they not only betray their religion, their nation, but little by little acquire the habit of vilifying both religion and nation by word and deed, and lose all sense of judgement and decency until, in the case of the Saudi princes and princesses, they have become the source of contempt in the world.
- “ that there is a powerful tendency for the wrong-doers and the corrupt to be attracted to one another so that they flock supporting each other in their wrong-doing and corruption. This condition is described in the Qur'an:

*Now We have set you on a clear road of authority, so follow it, and do not follow the caprices (ahwa') of those who do not know. Surely they can do nothing to help you with Allah; and surely the wrong-doers, they are allies of each other, whereas Allah is the ally of those who have taqwa (al-Jathiyah, 45:18-19).*

The corruption of the rulers of Saudi Arabia has four major attributes. Firstly, their rule is dynastic, in a fashion very similar to that of the Umayyads:

*(We differ with the author on the issue of 'dynastic' rule.*



*Monarchy is not haraam in Islam. Allah Ta'ala Himself had established monarchy. The Qur'aan informs that Allah Ta'ala had created Ambiya and kings among Bani Israaeel. If a king rules according to the Shariah, then he will be a just and a pious Vicegerent of Allah Ta'ala. He will be a legitimate Khaleefah of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam). The Umayyad Dynasty had produced one of the finest Rulers the world had ever witnessed, viz., Hadhrat Umar Bin Abdul Azeez (rahmatullah alayh) who is known as Umar The Second*

*Islamic government is an autocracy. The Khaleefah, whether he is a monarch or one appointed by a small group of elite Muslims, will be the legitimate ruler of the Ummah if his khilaafate is according to the Shariah. The reign of the Khulafa-e-Raashideen was autocratic. They were not appointed the Rulers on the basis of universal suffrage which is alien to Islam.*

*Western democracy is a haraam system which Islam does not tolerate. The First Four Khulafa were autocrats. After them, all the Khulafa who rules the Islamic empire were monarchs of three dynasties – Umayyad, Abbaside and Ottoman. — The Majlis)*

they have appointed for themselves the worst of advisors, and go far beyond the Umayyads in favouring members of their own family. The injustice and illegitimacy of their government is such that they can trust no one else and so are obliged to trust the least trustworthy in their kingdom, themselves. (One American official is reputed to have remarked that the Gulf States were the only countries he knew of where it was considered unremarkable that all senior and junior ministers should have the same surname.) The purpose of this favouritism is not to exploit the special talents or patriotism of a particular family, but simply to retain all wealth and power of patronage within one group, like a family business. The Western powers, having engineered this situation, are, naturally, very content with it. It enables them to control, through the privileged family, the wealth and resources of the whole

nation. The tyranny of the Saudis is described in the West as a force for moderation and stability. But anyone who has lived there knows that the Saudi government is a *hukm al-Jahiliyyah*; it is very far removed indeed from having any Islamic character.

Secondly, there is no shura or consultation in the Saudi government, nor any justice. Their rule is based on strict policing and coercion, on massive bribery, and on the 'protection' of the *kuffar*. Violation of even minimal human rights is widespread - the Shi'a minority (who are the majority in the main oil-producing region of the country) have been continually victimised for years with many well-documented cases of brutal tortures and killings. More recently, there was the case of the expulsion of more than 600,000 Yamanis for no fault of their own, but simply because the Yamani government had refused to support the *kuffar* in their war against Iraq.

Thirdly, the Saudis have consistently followed the policies, both domestic and foreign, dictated to them by the Americans, even when these policies are obviously anti-Islamic. For example, the Saudis gave support to Islamic movements when these were judged by the Americans to weaken the forces of Arab nationalism. Then, when the Americans judged that the danger to their interests was from the Islamic movements, the Saudis switched their support to the Arab nationalists, now regarded as 'moderates'. This is precisely what has happened in Algeria. Again, in Sudan, now that the Islamic movement has become established there, the Saudis have been instructed to support the animist/Christian rebels in the south of that country against the Muslims, and they are doing so. Similarly, as the battle lines become clearer, the Saudis have been advised to give *visible* support to the cause of 'peace in the region' which is a euphemism for supporting the Israelis who, able to cope with Arabs fighting as nationalists, are unable to cope with the resistance of Arabs fighting as Muslims. ”

## CONCLUSION

It should now be clear to any Muslim reader that the aim of these new centres of Orientalist study of Islam are pernicious, and incurably so. It is no good hoping that, in time, with longer and still more patient surrender to the perspectives and purposes of secularists and missionaries, somehow Islam will finally come to be tolerated in the Western world. It will not. It is no good hoping that because, as patron of the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies', Prince Charles, the future head of the Church of England, has stood in the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford University [These words were written before the Prince gave his Oxford lecture (October 27th, 1993).] to appeal for mutual understanding between 'Islam and the West', that with this a new era of mutual understanding has really been ushered in. Far from it. All that is likely, if we learn anything from the history of the past or from present realities, is that Muslims will be required to accommodate themselves economically, politically, socially *and* morally, to the norms which the West perceives it necessary to maintain for the preservation of its dominance in the world.

The first duty of Muslims is to find out what threatens the *Umma*, how the threat is managed, what its dimensions and resources are. I have, *insha Allah*, gone some way towards that in this book. However, it does not suffice to only know what is wrong, and feel badly about it. It is a part of Muslim conscience to take the next necessary steps - to proclaim and publish that which is wrong so that people are widely informed of the danger that surrounds them, and the will begins to form in the community to do something about it. Any Muslim who reads this book and, after due consideration, agrees with the general tenor of its argument, is duty-bound as a Muslim to inform other Muslims, in particular *imams*, scholars, teachers and students and any others who have influence in the community. More than that, a Muslim reader is bound to make the effort to be persuasive; that is to persist in the

task of proclaiming and informing.

The further duty is to put right that which is wrong. In this case, that means sitting down with like-minded Muslims to discuss, and then establish, ways of getting the appropriate education to Muslims, of giving them access to Islamic perspectives on Islamic history and civilization. Large funds prestige and power will be denied to any Muslim who try to do this. That much can be anticipated with confidence. However, in most countries Muslims are free to organise *informally* in small circles, to learn the Qur'an and Sunnah, to invite informed speakers, and to read in Islamic history. Such humble programmes, intelligently and patiently followed through - not simply begun and then let drop at the first or second hurdle could eventually lead, as Allah wills, to the establishment of an informal institution for higher learning which by intelligent association with recognised Muslim institutions in Muslim countries could begin to function as a formal, reliable route for the training of Muslim scholars of the future. This is a way that requires much sacrifice - especially for the young. It can be difficult to turn down the attractions of prestige and financial reward that Western academic institutions can offer to Muslim scholars who will fit in with them. But Muslims able to make such sacrifices must be found if the pernicious influence of this new breed of Orientalist centres, partly staffed by Muslim collaborators and partly funded by nominally Muslim governments, is to be countered effectively.

The Qur'an has warned quite unequivocally about the intentions of the People of the Book:

*Many of the People of the Book want to make you unbelievers after you have believed, through the envy from their own selves, and after the truth has been made clear to them (al-Baqarah, 2:109)*

*And the Jews will not be pleased with you, nor will the Christians,*

*until you follow their religion. Say: 'Surely, the guidance from Allah is the [only right] guidance.' And if you follow their desires after the knowledge which has come to you, then you will find in Allah no protecting ally or helper. (al-Baqarah, 2:120)*

But Allah has also said in His Book that the believers should not be intimidated by the apparent power of the enemies of Islam nor by their seeming to be so united in their opposition to Islam. They seek to wage war and destruction from positions they think are impregnable. In reality, they are weak and divided amongst themselves and their modes of thinking lack true discernment:

*They will not fight against you in a body save in well-fortified places or from behind walls. Their enmity amongst themselves is very great. You think of them as a unified body whereas their hearts are at odds [with one another]. That is because they are people who lack intelligence. (al-Hashr, 59:14)*

The circumstances in which believers presently find themselves, the odds against them, enemies within and without - all these are tests and proofs of the quality of belief. For it is not sufficient for believers to claim, 'We believe', and then suppose that that claim would not be put to the test:

*Do people imagine that they will be left [to live in ease] because they say 'We believe', and will not be tested with hardship? (al-'Ankabut, 29:2)*

*wa l--hamdu li-llahi rabbi l-alamin.*

## **UPDATE MAY, 1994**

Supporters of the Oxford Centre for 'Islamic Studies', and of the general policy of facilitating collaboration between Muslim scholars and Orientalists and missionaries, have been promoted to influential positions in Saudi Arabia. A few specific examples are:

1. 'Abdullah Naseef: promoted by King Fahd to the post of Deputy Chairman of the *majlis ash-Shura*, the so-called consultative assembly.

2. 'Abdullah al-Turki: promoted to Minister of the newly-created Ministry of Islamic Affairs. (He recently held a conference in London for *Da'wah*, in which papers were delivered encouraging collaboration with Orientalists.)

By contrast, those who have had the courage to speak out against Saudi policy, especially against Saudi Government violations of human rights, were dismissed from their posts and/or arrested and imprisoned.

### **Arrested and imprisoned**

3. Dr. Safar al-Hawali, formerly Head of 'Aqidah Department of Umm al-Qura University, and author of a long published letter to Shaikh Bin Baz, in which he objects to the occupation of the holy lands by the kuffar, was deprived of his passport, dismissed from his post and imprisoned.

4. Dr Ahmad Tuwajri, Professor of Education at the King Saud University.

5. Dr 'Abdul 'Aziz al-Wuhaibi, Professor of Physics at the King Saud University.

6. Dr Sa'd al-Faqih, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine at the King Saud University.

7. Dr Muhsin al-'Awaji, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Agriculture, at the King Saud University.

8. Dr Salih al-Wuhaibi, Lecturer in Literature at the King Saud University.

**Dismissed from their posts, their telephones and faxes cut, their work stopped for forming the Committee for the**

## **Defence of Legitimate Rights under the Shad'ah:**

9. Dr Muhammad al-Mas'ari, Professor of Physics, at the King Saud University, and the CDLR spokesman, who is now seeking political asylum in Britain (*see ch.3 footnote 2*)

10. Shaikh 'Abdullah al-Mas'ari, his father, a retired judge and former head of the Board of Complaints (Diwan alMazalim).

11. Dr 'Abdullah al-Hamad, Professor at the Imam University, Riyadh, a university dedicated to Islamic studies.

12. Dr 'Abdullah al-Tuwajiri, Professor at the Imam University, Riyadh.

13. Hamad al-Sulayfih, senior officer in the Ministry of Education.

14. Shaikh 'Abdullah al-Jibrin, senior member, under Shaikh Bin Baz, of the administration of research and *fatwa*. Sulayman al-Rashudi, a lawyer whose office was shut down, preventing him from working. ”

## DIVINE CURSE AND DUMB DEVILS

Cursing those who initiate and aid efforts which minimise the exclusivity and the absolute Truth of *Tauheed* by placing it on par with kufr ideologies, the Qur'aan warns: *“Verily, those who conceal that which We have revealed of the Clear Signs and Guidance after We have explained it to the people in the Kitaab, indeed Allah has cursed them and all those who curse, curse (them as well).” (Aayat 159, Surah Baqarah)*

Allah Ta'ala curses the participants of the inter-faith plot, and so do all sincere Muslims who understand the far-reaching evil consequences of these joint-propagation programmes.

Instead of watering down the stance of *Tauheed*, the Qur'aan commands Muslims to say: *“Verily those who commit kufr and die whilst they are kuffaar, on them is the curse of Allah, of the Angels and of all people.” (Surah Baqarah, Aayat 162)*

The apologist modernists, half-baked molvis and sheikhs in a futile and puerile attempt to justify the common platform of equal tableegh for all ideologies and false religions seek to appease the kuffaar with the Aayat: *“Your God and our God is One God.”* They stop in the middle of this aayat, concealing the full Truth and, like dumb shayaateen maintain silence on the evil beliefs of trinity and idolatry which are never associated with “Our God” Whom the very same Aayat fully describes as follows:

***“And, your God is The One God. There is no god but He, Who is Ar-Rahmaan, Ar-Raheem.”***

***(Surah Baqarah, Aayat 163)***