

THE
RELIGION OF ISLĀM

A COMPREHENSIVE DISCUSSION
OF THE SOURCES, PRINCIPLES
AND PRACTICES OF ISLĀM

by

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THE AḤMADIYYAH ANJUMAN ISHĀ'AT ISLĀM

LAHORE - PAKISTAN

PREFACE

THERE could be no better comment on the prevalent Muslim lethargy towards Islām than the fact that non-Muslim contributions to Islamic religious literature in English, are by far in excess of the Muslim. It is true that much of this literature draws a distorted picture of Islām, but even here the Muslim is more to blame than the non-Muslim, for it is his duty to place the right kind of material before a world whose thirst for knowledge is insatiable. But whatever may be said as to the superficiality of one part of this literature and the prejudicial tenor of another, it cannot be denied that Europe has made a most valuable contribution to research work in connection with the religion of Islām and the history of the Muslims. The Muslims are also turning their attention to the producing of religious literature in English, but the attempt is, as yet, a very weak one, directed more to appealing to the market than to serious efforts requiring hard work and critical acumen.

“The Religion of Islām” is the name of a book written by the Rev. F. A. Klein and published in 1906. It was through the courtesy of a friend that this book fell into my hands in the year 1928. He had read it with pain, he said, on account of the distorted picture of Islām that it contained, and he suggested that I should write a comprehensive work containing a true picture of Islām and dealing in detail with its teachings. More than twenty years before this, and just about that time when this book had been published in London, on the 13th of February 1907 to be exact, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah movement, Ḥadẓrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, had charged me with the writing of

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an English book which should contain all that was necessary for a Muslim, or a non-Muslim, to know about the religion of Islām, and to give a true picture of the religion which was largely misrepresented. The multifarious duties which I had to perform as President of the Aḥmadiyyah Anjuman Ishā'at Islām, were a great hindrance, but the call of duty overcame these difficulties, and I set to work immediately, after going through Klein's book, and the work is now being published under the same name.

Had I been able to devote myself entirely to this task, it should not have taken more than three years. But seven years have passed, and still I am not satisfied that the book is as complete a picture as I had wished it to be. It has been my good fortune, from one point of view, to contribute to the literary activities of Islām and to be the head of a society which aims at the propagation of Islām, as the two works are so closely associated ; but from another point of view it is a misfortune, since each of these works requires entire devotion to itself, to the exclusion of the other. I turned to the author's work again and again, amidst the many duties which I was required to perform as the head of a newly established society, but always to be recalled to some other task which the urgency of the moment forced on my attention. An author's singleness of purpose was not vouchsafed to me, and I have to confess that the work may, perhaps, suffer somewhat from this handicap.

There is yet another circumstance which may detract from the value of the book. I fell ill, rather seriously, in March 1935, and my medical advisers ordered complete rest for some time. Even after convalescence, I was advised to give up hard work, a direction which, to be candid, I have not been able to carry out, since the

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publication could not be delayed any longer. So I had to hurry on the work ; and, more than that, I had to relinquish two chapters which I originally intended to include.* Besides, the concluding chapters have not been dealt with as exhaustively as I had wished. I only hope that these and other deficiencies will be removed if I am spared to bring out a second edition.

Islām, as I have pointed out in the Introduction to this book, is a religion which deals not only with the ways of devotion and the means which make man attain communion with God, but also with a vast variety of problems relating to the world around us and questions that pertain to the social and political life of man. In a treatise which aims at giving a true picture of Islām, it was necessary not only to discuss all the laws and regulations of the system but also to throw full light on the principles on which it is based, and even upon the sources from which its teachings, principles and laws are derived. I have, therefore, divided this book into three parts. The first part deals with the sources from which the teachings of Islām are drawn, and which can serve the purpose of guiding the Muslim world in its present and future needs ; the second with the creed of Islām or the fundamental doctrines of the religion ; while the third treats of the laws and regulations of Islām which govern not only a Muslim's domestic, social and international relations but also his relations with God, which are the mainspring of the development of his faculties. An introduction has been added dealing with some general questions relating to religion and the religion of Islām in particular.

A work of this nature would have carried little weight if it did not give full references to original

**The Ethics of Islām and The Muslim State.*

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authorities, and this has made the work laborious, for it contains over 2,500 references and quotations. The Holy Qur'ān being the original source on which all principles and laws of Islām are based, occupies the first place in this list, and next to it comes Bukhārī, the most reliable book of Ḥadīth. It is on these two authorities that the present work is chiefly based, but others, besides these, have been freely quoted and referred to where necessary.

SECOND EDITION

Owing to a heavy demand of the book all of a sudden, I was called upon to send this Second Edition to the press urgently and could not find time for the two chapters which I had promised to add to the second edition. I have however dealt with these two subjects, Ethics and State, in a later work, *The Manual of Ḥadīth*, and have also included a chapter on State in another work of mine, *The New World Order*, and I would refer the reader to these two books for necessary information on these subjects. The book is therefore going to the press as it was printed first with very insignificant changes only.

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Lahore.

LAHORE :
Aḥmadiyyah Buildings,
21st November,

In the second edition, the above date should have been amended to a date in 1949, but was left unchanged by mistake.

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In conclusion I wish to express my indebtedness to the Hon'ble Chaudhri Sir Shahāb al-Dīn, President of the Punjab Legislative Council, who is the friend, referred to above, and who, besides drawing my attention to the need of such a book, has helped me with valuable suggestions. I am also thankful to Dr. K.D. Sāgu, M.A., D.C.L., M.R.A.S., Barrister-at-Law, who has prepared the general index and the index of Arabic words and phrases.

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This is the last page of the Preface from the 1936 edition, added online here for comparison with the 1950 edition.

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TRANSLITERATION

IN this book I have adopted the most recent rules of transliteration recognized by European Orientalists, with very slight variations, as explained below, but no transliteration can exactly express the vocalic differences of two languages, and the Roman characters in which Arabic words and phrases have been spelt give the sound of the original only approximately. Besides the inability of the characters of one language to represent the exact pronunciation of the words of another, there is this additional difficulty in romanizing Arabic words that in certain combinations the pronunciation does not follow the written characters ; for example al-Raḥmān is pronounced ar-Raḥmān, the sound of *l* merging in that of the next following letter, *r*. To this category belong all the letters which are known by the name of *al-ḥurūf al-shamsiyya* (lit. *solar letters*), and they are as follows: *tā*, *thā*, *dāl*, *dhāl*, *rā*, *zā*, *sīn*, *shīn*, *ṣād*, *dzād*, *ṭā*, *zā*, *lām*, *nūn* (dentals, sibilants, and liquids). Whenever a word beginning with one of these letters has the prefix *al* (representing the article *the*), the *lām* is passed over in pronunciation and assimilated to the following consonant ; in the case of all other letters, *al* is pronounced fully. This merging of one letter in another occurs also in certain other cases, for which a grammar of the Arabic language should be referred to. I have followed the written form, but in transliterating the *adhān* and prayer recitals, I have followed the pronunciation, for the facility of the lay reader, writing ar-Raḥmān instead of al-Raḥmān, and so on.

TRANSLITERATION

The system adopted in this work, which differs a little from that adopted in my Translation of the Holy Qur'an, is as follows :—

CONSONANTS

Arabic letters	Sounds	Represented by
ء	hamza (sounds like <i>h</i> in <i>hour</i> = a sort of catch in the voice)	,
ب	bā (same as <i>b</i>)	b
ت	tā (the Italian dental, softer than <i>t</i>)	t
ث	thā (between <i>th</i> in <i>thing</i> and <i>s</i>)	th
ج	jīm (like <i>g</i> in <i>gem</i>)	j*
ح	ḥā (very sharp but smooth guttural aspirate)	ḥ
خ	khā (like <i>ch</i> in the Scotch word <i>loch</i>)	kh
د	dāl (Italian dental, softer than <i>d</i>)	d
ذ	dhāl (sounds between <i>z</i> and <i>th</i> in <i>that</i>)	dh
ر	rā (same as <i>r</i>)	r
ز	zā (same as <i>z</i>)	z
س	sīn (same as <i>s</i>)	s
ش	shīn (same as <i>sh</i> in <i>she</i>)	sh
ص	ṣād (strongly articulated <i>s</i> , like <i>ss</i> in <i>hiss</i>)	ṣ
ض	ḍzād (aspirated <i>d</i> , between <i>d</i> and <i>z</i>)	ḍz
ط	ṭā (strongly articulated palatal <i>t</i>)	ṭ
ظ	ẓā (strongly articulated palatal <i>z</i>)	ẓ
ع	'ain (somewhat like a strong guttural <i>hamza</i> , not a mere vowel)	'
غ	ghain (guttural <i>g</i> , but soft)	gh

* European Orientalists represent it by *dj*, but I see no reason for adding *d*, as the sound is exactly like *j*.

TRANSLITERATION

Arabic letters	Sounds	Represented by
ف	fā (same as <i>f</i>)	f
ق	qāf (strongly articulated guttural <i>k</i>)	q*
ك	kāf (same as <i>k</i>)	k
ل	lām (same as <i>l</i>)	l
م	mīm (same as <i>m</i>)	m
ن	nūn (same as <i>n</i>)	n
ه	hā (same as <i>h</i>)	h
و	wāo (same as <i>w</i>)	w
ي	yā (same as <i>y</i>)	y

VOWELS.

The vowels are represented as follows :—

Short vowels	$\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ <i>fatḥa</i> , as <i>u</i> in <i>tub</i> $\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ <i>kasra</i> , as <i>i</i> in <i>pin</i> $\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ <i>dzamma</i> , as <i>u</i> in <i>pull</i>	a i u
Long vowels	$\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ long <i>fatḥa</i> , as <i>a</i> in <i>father</i> $\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ long <i>kasra</i> , as <i>ee</i> in <i>deep</i> $\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ long <i>dzamma</i> , as <i>oo</i> in <i>moot</i> <i>fatḥa</i> before <i>wāo</i> <i>fatḥa</i> before <i>yā</i>	a ī ū au ai

Tanwin $\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ $\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ $\overset{ˆ}{\text{—}}$ is represented by *an*, *in*, *un*, respectively. The short and long vowels at the end of a word are shown as parts of the word, as *qāla* where the final *a* stands for the *fatḥa* on *lām*, but the *tanwin* is shown as a separate syllable, as *Muḥammad-in*.

* European Orientalists represent it by *k*, perhaps owing to the fact that in the English language *q* requires a *u* after it

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AND

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