

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

En el Nombre de Alá, el Mas Misericordioso, el Mas Compasiro
In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Alianza Islámica

April/May/June 1987 C.E.

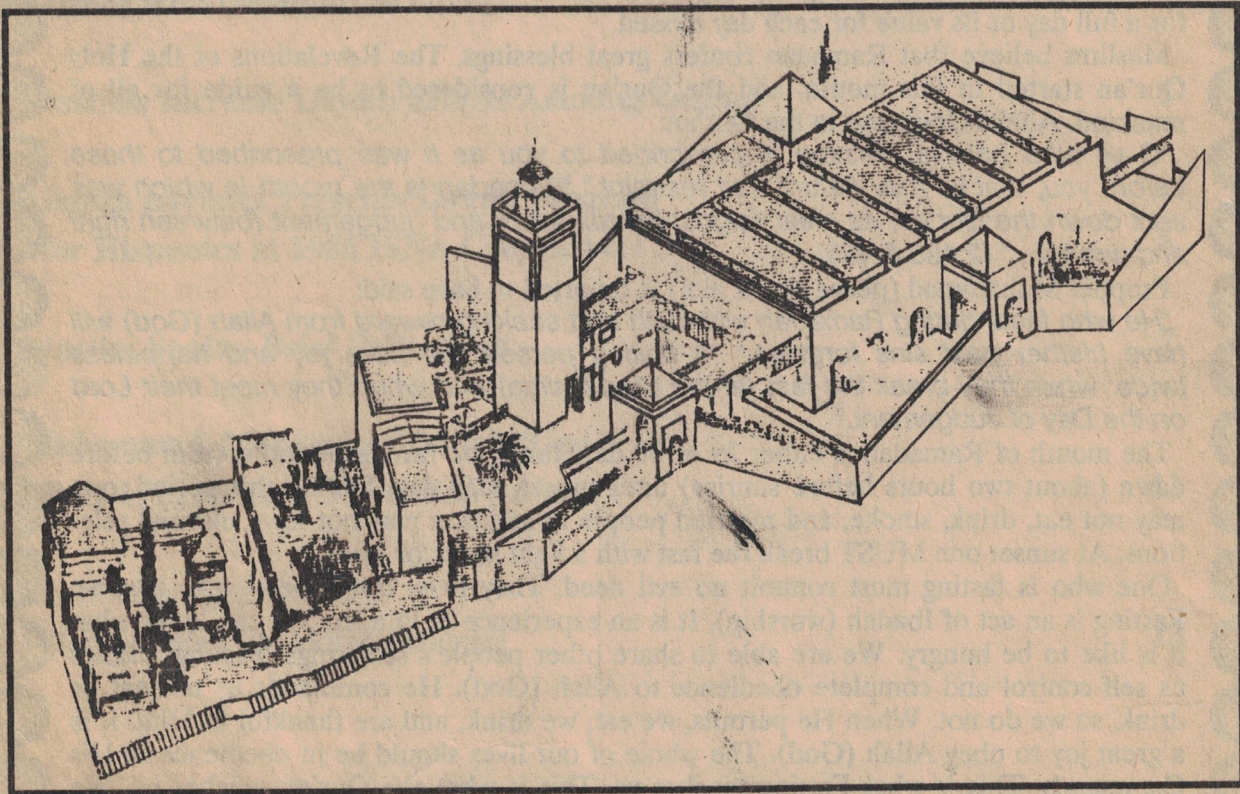
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Islam and Latinos

Reclaiming Our Islamic Heritage

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MASJID/ISLAMIC COMPLEX UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN GRANADA, SPAIN

RAMADAN, THE BLESSED MONTH

by Carl Askia El-Amin

The month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, approaches soon; approximately April 29th. Depending on the phases of the moon, it begins eleven or twelve days earlier each successive year on the Gregorian/Christian solar calendar. Over one billion Muslims around the world are preparing for this blessed month.

Siyam (Fasting) during Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. The Islamic requirement of fasting is not new, it is prescribed in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. Siyam (Fasting) is compulsory for all Muslims. Little children, insane and retarded people, people who are sick, travelers, women during pregnancy and lactation, and those engaged in hard work, such as soldiers on the battlefield are exempt from fasting. Women during menstruation or post-natal discharge are forbidden to fast. Except for children, the insane, and the retarded, a day for a day of fasting must be made up. Elderly people who are physically unable to fast, are to give a needy person food for a full day or its value for each day missed.

Muslims believe that Ramadan confers great blessings. The Revelations of the Holy Qur'an started in this month, and the Qur'an is considered to be a guide for all of mankind. Allah (God) says in the Qur'an:

"O ye who beleive! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self restraint." "Ramadan is the month in which was sent down the Qur'an, as clear (signs) for guidance and judgement (between right and wrong)..." (2:183 & 185)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) is reported to have said:

"He who fasts during Ramadan with faith and seeking reward from Allah (God) will have his/her past sins forgiven." "A fasting person will have joy and happiness twice: when they break the fast (at the proper time) and when they meet their Lord on the Day of Judgement."

The month of Ramadan is either 29 or 30 days long; the fasting period is from before dawn (about two hours before sunrise) until sunset each day. During this period, one may not eat, drink, smoke, and married people in addition may not have marital relations. At sunset one MUST break the fast with a light snack or juice

One who is fasting must commit no evil deed. They must not quarrel with anyone. Fasting is an act of Ibadah (worship). It is an experience in hunger. We can know what it is like to be hungry. We are able to share other people's sufferings. Fasting teaches us self-control and complete obedience to Allah (God). He commands us not eat or drink, so we do not. When He permits, we eat, we drink, and are thankful to Him. It is a great joy to obey Allah (God). The whole of our lives should be in obedience to His Commands. This is what Fasting teaches us. This is what the Qur'an teaches us. We should always be ready to obey His Commands.

After Ramadan, the month of fasting, has ended, the Festival of Fast Breaking (Eid-ul-Fitr) takes place on the first day of the succeeding month of Shawwal. Eid is a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing for the fulfillment of the obligation of fasting according to Allah's command. In the morning, at some time after sunrise and before midday, a special congregational prayer is made giving thanks and praise to Allah (God, The Most High).....Ramadan Mubarak

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EDITORIAL

This is the introductory issue of ALIANZA ISLAMICA, a journal for those of Hispanic heritage, as well as all Americans, dedicated to the propagation of the way of life called Islam. The Latino segment of American society will soon become the nation's largest minority and is quickly attaining major importance. However, the spread of Islam among Latinos has not kept pace with their growing significance. This humble effort is but one of the many attempts that are now being undertaken to rectify this situation in America by informing the non-Muslims about this religion of over one billion adherents, as well as to strength'en the bond of brotherhood among our Muslim brothers and sisters.

The message of this journal is none but the message given to all of mankind from the beginning of creation in the classic Islamic formula: There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His servant and messenger (peace be on him). We want nothing more than to insure that Islam receives maximum exposure in the Latino community is the pure, unalloyed Islam of the Qur'an (the last and final revelation from Allah to all mankind), our beloved Prophet (peace be on him), his companions, and their righteous followers, who together form that illustrious group we call the Salaf (men of repute for piety and faith in past generations). In this regard we make no apologies to those whose vision of Islam strays from the pristine practice of the Sunnah (the example of the Prophet) and wanders into those streams of innovative delusion which have historically passed for legitimate Islamic expression.

We are not merely interested in starting a new cultural phenomenon of halal tacos and Islamicized aguinaldos. Nor are we interested in the parochial,

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Editorial

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chauvinistic rise of a subject people to dominance and superiority at the expense of others. On the contrary, we, insha-allah (if Allah so wills), will dedicate ourselves to making Latinos aware of their birthright as vicegerents of the Lord of the Universe, what that position entails, and how the proper execution of their responsibilities can lead to true happiness in this life and in the hereafter. Another objective of this publication is to make Latinos aware of their glorious Islamic heritage as exemplified by Spain's "Golden Era" when Islam ruled her for over seven hundred years. Also the Islamic legacy present in modern Latino culture will be highlighted, insha-allah, in order to remove the stigma of Islam as a foreign element in our culture. This will give us a more balanced and complete perspective of ourselves and our history.

In Spain there is a growing number of Muslims, as people accept Islam as their way of life. In this country Latino Muslims are still few in numbers, but they are raising a considerable share of eyebrows when spotted on subways, at department stores, or while strolling through the park with their families. In some quarters, mouths still drop and jaws become slack with amazement that a Latino could be a Muslim. This sense of astonishment is not confined solely to non-Muslims but also found among our Muslim brothers from abroad.

When non-Muslims, curiosity aroused, ask us about our religion, oftentimes there is a titillating streak of excitement in the air. The lure of the daring, the bold, the new is there to awaken a whole new generation to their lost heritage. We therefore urge our readers to study and contemplate the message of this journal and to use it and whatever tools are available and plunge headlong into real-life human drama where the souls

ISLAM AND MUSLIM

Islam is an Arabic word which means peace, purity, acceptance and commitment. The religion of Islam is the complete acceptance of the teachings and guidance of God.

A Muslim is one who freely and willingly accepts the supreme power of God and strives to organize his life in total accord with the teachings of God. He also works for building social institutions which "Muhammadanism" is a misnomer for Islam and offends its very spirit since the Prophet Muhammad was merely the messenger of God, and is not worshipped by Muslims.

Muslims use the word "Allah" for the English word "God". The understanding of Deity in Islam differs from some of the connotations in the English word, God.

Islam is not a new religion. It is, in essence, the same message and guidance which Allah revealed to all His Messengers.

"Say: We believe in Allah and that which was revealed to us, and that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes and that which was given to Moses and

Jesus and to the Prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit." (The Qur'an 3:83)

The message which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammed (Peace be on him) is Islam in its comprehensive, complete and final form.

of men are at stake; we urge you to spread this message by word, deed, and example. And finally, we urge all to band together to recreate that beautiful sense of pop-eyed wonder as a people, heretofore despised and rejected, assume their rightful place in the family of man as vicegerents of the Lord and Master of all the worlds.

Umar Abdur-Rahim Ocasio

WHY ALIANZA ISLAMICA?

by Umar Abdur-Rahim Ocasio

He stood there on the living room floor with a look of defiance in his eyes holding in sweat-moistened hands the brightly colored bust of an Indian brave. Across the room stood the young man's father, grimly determined to hold his ground, displaying a look of bold puzzlement and sternness as he contemplated his offspring's impertinence.

"If I should drop this on the floor, no thunderbolt will come through the window to strike me dead." said the young man. "See," as he turned the bust to reveal the sticker on its base, "this is nothing but a piece of plaster made in Hong Kong. No puede hacer nada."

"I don't say anything about your religion, so don't say anything about mine!" the father replied, with forced indignation that belied the impact his son's words had on him. For perhaps similar thoughts had run through his mind on many a night as he chanted his prayers faithfully from his botanica-bought handbook and peered blankly across the eerie combination of distorted images and incandescence produced by the vela's flame.

This is but one of the scenes of an all new chapter in Hispanic history being written in barrios throughout the country. It is at once the drumbeat of a new dawn as well as the echo of an ancient past. Latinos in small but ever-increasing numbers are accepting Islam, the religion which represents Allah's final communication and the religion that ruled the Iberian peninsula for a period of 700 years during which left an indelible imprint on the Spanish culture that forms the basis of our Latin identity.

The emergence of a new Latin Islamic identity is no small feat nor one which has developed a clearly definable path. For example, the vast

majority of Latinos who have accepted Islam on the East Coast are first generation Puerto Ricans from New York City. Though bilingual, they tend to be far more fluent in English, the language of most of their formal education. They have had to fight to maintain their Latin identity in the midst of tremendous acculturating and assimilating social forces. This frequently creates the sadly ironic paradox of the Latino Muslim Da'iy struggling to be recognized as such but unable to be effective in giving the call of Islam to those who are primarily Spanish-speaking because of his marginal fluency in the language.

The tendency, unfortunately, is for the Latino Muslim to be absorbed into the existing established ethnic communities while maintaining only a token, marginal attachment to their own ethnicity. Consequently, a tangible Latin Islamic presence and a communal effort to spread the call of Islam among Latinos has, until very recently, been virtually non-existent.

But this situation is beginning to change. El Instituto de Envolvimiento Islamico in New York City, the Bism Rabik Foundation in Chicago, and Musulmanes de Nuevo Mexico in Abiquiu together with concerned individuals throughout the country have decided to merge their efforts and resources under an umbrella organization called Alianza Islamica. This new organization has put forward a strategy for Da'wah in the Spanish-speaking community and made provisions for the coordination of efforts on a nation-wide basis, as well as international.

The fruit of this cooperation has led to the increased availability of Spanish Islamic literature and Da'wah material. It has also led to the publication of this newsletter and to a continual

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LATINOS HOLD SEMINAR ON ISLAM

by Ibrahim Gonzalez

A SEMINAR ON ISLAM AMONG LATINOS: RECLAIMING OUR ISLAMIC HERITAGE, took place in the fall of 1985 at El Museo del Barrio.

El Museo is East Harlem's own museum and a culture landmark in the New York City Latino Community, thereby making it a choice location to hold this event. Dr. T.B. Irving, also known as Ta'lim 'Ali, was the keynote speaker. He has endeavored throughout his scholarly pursuits to highlight the greatness of Islamic Spain through his numerous and authoritative lectures and writings.

Dr. Irving spoke to a full audience representing a broad spectrum of Latino and non-Latino Muslims as well as non-Muslims. Some attendants of the seminar flew in from the South and Midwest.

This writer had the honor of moderating this seminar and opening it with recitation of Qur'an and rendering its meaning in Spanish and English. In fact the entire seminar proceeded in English with a phrase for phrase Spanish interpretation.

Dr. Irving delivered his talk on Islamic Spain, North and West Africa and their influence on the Americas via Muslim artisans and slaves brought to the "New World" under Spanish colonialism. He pointed out numerous examples of Muslim workmanship showcased in the architecture of the colonial period. These artisans known as "Los Mudejares" recreated monuments reminiscent of their Andalusian homeland which stand today as statements of the Muslim presence in the Americas. Reference was also made to the overwhelming literary, philosophical, and cultural works left as Islamic legacy.

He also stressed the careful study of this monumental period of history, so that Muslims themselves may reach a profound understanding

of the "Golden Age of Islam in Iberia". These influences are inherent in the contemporary fabric of Latino culture.

At the conclusion of Dr. Irving's informative lecture, the audience made encouraging remarks and posed numerous intelligent questions which he answered in his astute and often witty manner.

The seminar continued with the observance of salat-ul-Thur (midday prayer). The prayer attracted a large number in the courtyard of El Museo. An invitation was cordially extended to the non-Muslims to observe prayer or meditation in their respective manner. The moment was all embracing and one could sense the spirit of religious tolerance which once existed in Andalusia.

Shortly thereafter a slide presentation on the Islamic influence in the architecture of Puerto Rico was viewed, immediately followed by a hearty lunch featuring typical Puerto Rican food 'a la halal.

The seminar reconvened with a fiery and timely speech delivered by Umar Abdur-Rahim Ocasio, a hard working Da'iy among the Latino community. He firmly stated that the Din of Islam transcends culture and is the supreme plan of the Creator designed to justly administer human affairs. His speech along with the diverse representation of Muslims present at this gathering exemplified the universality of Islam.

Worth mentioning are the efforts of Muslims who contributed to the success of this event. The Muslim World League in New York underwrote the expenses, it was co-sponsored by El Instituto de Envolvimiento Islamico and La Sociedad Cultural de Damas Musalmanas, and hosted by El Museo del Barrio and its helpful staff. This long awaited occasion may, insha-allah, spark a series of events and activities in reawakening the dormant spirit of Islam among our peoples.

Muslims Increase Dawah Efforts Among Latinos

by Ibrahim Gonzalez

The Bism Rabik Foundation in the fall of 1985, which followed the seminar conducted in New York City by the Latino Muslims, held a key meeting dealing with the work of Da'wah among Spanish-speaking people.

Its director, Carl Askia El-Amin, moderated the meeting and invited individuals who are visibly involved in the field. The American Islamic College offered its space for the event and present at the work session were Brothers Abdul Hasib Castaniera and Muhammad 'Ali Serrano, editors of the Spanish language Islamic periodical, Pais Islamico, and members of La Comunidad Musulmana en Espana; Dr. T. B. Irving, an Elder Statesman in the Islamic Community, presently serving as Trustee of The American Islamic College; Daniel Ahmed Mena, native of the Dominican Republic, who has numerous Spanish translations of Islamic literature to his credit and is currently working with the Muslim Community in Atlanta, GA; Mohamed Ahmed Kazi and Liagat Ali of Kazi Publications of Chicago; Malik Bennett, a young, bright and energetic Da'iy who through his writings and activities aspires to reach the generality of Americans; and this writer.

The meeting commenced with the recitation of Qur'an and the statement of objectives. After the participants became acquainted with one another through general discussion of their work and backgrounds an intensive interchange of concepts and approaches followed.

The conference addressed the genuine needs of underprivileged people with a special focus placed upon Latin America, Spain and Latino Communities throughout the United States. It was agreed that the group and individuals present would cooperate in the effort of Da'wah through every available resource at their disposal.

In order to meet these goals a solid bond of communication is being fostered between these localities and Pais Islamico will be publishing a special edition geared towards thoroughly elaborating on these points containing articles written by individuals from the above mentioned localities. Thus, this will be a collaborated, unified and coordinated effort reaching out to non-Muslims with valuable information on al-Islam and an open invitation to all Muslims who want to carry on this particular work. A network of communication was established with the Bism Rabik Foundation as its center being that it was computer and telecommunication facilities which can competently complete the tasks at hand.

There is a growing amount of Islamic literature available at present, for which a complete list is being compiled for mass accessibility to these sources, and also to avoid duplication of literary efforts. La Comunidad Musulmana en Espana has a team of scholars currently, translating the Qur'an into a standard Spanish which is near completion; they have also published excellent works on the life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), Maliki, Fiqh and Tasaw-wuf. The gathering endorsed this translation as well as that of Julio Cortes, which contains an excellent introduction and commentary. Attention was also given to a monumental translation by Ahmed Aboud and Rafael Castellanos, done under the auspices of the Muslim World League and published in Argentina. We strongly encourage and urge the MWL to print this particular Qur'an as soon as possible, for free and mass distribution. Kazi Publications pledged its cooperation in the distribution of Spanish Islamic literature.

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Muslims Increase Dawah Efforts Among Latinos

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A couple of conferences are being planned in sequence. First, a national conference in the United States encompassing representatives of Muslims working in Latino communities. And ultimately, an international conference to be held in Latin American country where Muslims from all over the world can convene and plan an overall strategy for the promulgation of Islam among people.

In conclusion, concrete tasks were assigned to those present:

Communications

Distribution of Literature

Outline of Da'wah based on Qur'an and Sunnah

Organization of Qur'anic translations and source materials

Planning for the South American Conference

Coordination of Latino affairs in the United States

The Brothers involved in these efforts welcome any suggestions or contributions which will aid the work. Any correspondence can be addressed to:

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Why Alianza Islamica?

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program of Spanish translation of relevant literature. The weak area is that of basic field work which suffers primarily from a lack of manpower. But even this problem, with the help of Allah (The Most High), can be conquered. The Latino initiative is on the march and all efforts must be

made to insure that it maintains its integrity and is safeguarded and protected from all those who would attempt to co-opt the legitimate striving of

ALIANZA ISLAMICA PRESENTS DAWAH PROGRAM FOR HISPANICS AT 1986 ISNA CONVENTION

by Carl Askia El-Amin

In the late summer of 1986, Alianza Islamica was invited to participate in the Islamic Society of North America's (ISNA) 1986 Annual Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. The convention theme was "Islam in North America: Direction and Strategies", it was attended by thousands of Muslims representing different people from around the world.

Brother Ibrahim Gonzalez, representing Alianza Islamica, addressed the seminar: "Future strategies for Islamic Dawah work in North America", at the convention. The Hispanic Dawah program, drafted at the Chicago seminar in 1985, was presented along with a brief overview of Latinos in America (read article: "Muslims Increase Dawah Efforts Among Latinos").

The presentation was well received and this first issue of this magazine gets this important message out more. In 1987, Alianza Islamica plans to start a series of conventions and seminars for Latinos on Islam. Alianza Islamica currently is working with Dr. Omar Hasan Kasule of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organization (IIFSO) in planning its first convention for the first quarter of 1987. Your input is very important: Please write your ideas and suggestions to Alianza Islamic.

those working on the local grass-roots level.

We would like therefore, to extend an invitation to all those who would desire to play some role in this noble cause to contact Alianza Islamica

at any of the addresses listed in this newsletter. This invitation is extended to Latinos and non-Latinos alike. It will take the effort of all Muslims to break the barriers to a greater understanding of our faith and our God, Almighty Allah.

Muslim Spain Brief Reflections

by Carl Askia El-Amin

The year was 710 C.E., Musa ibn Nusair was the Muslim governor of North Africa. Count Julian, the Byzantine governor of Ceuta, was impressed by Musa's efficient and peaceful governorship. He invited Musa's general, Tariq ibn Ziyad to invade Spain and deliver its people from the cruel and corrupt King Roderick. In 711 C.E., Tariq landed on the Iberian peninsula near the mountain which still bears his name, Jabal al-Tariq (incorrectly spelled today as Gibraltar). This was the beginning of Muslim Spain.

For nearly eight hundred years (712 - 1492) Muslims ruled Spain, longer than anyone or any faith. Hate and ignorance were turned into love and knowledge. They made Spain their home and everyone was treated fairly. Many people embraced Islam. Christian and Jews were allowed to exist in peace. They could have easily converted the people by force, but this never took place.

"Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from error., Whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustowrthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things." (The Qur'an 2:256)

The famous University of Granada, founded by Muslims in the early 15th century, and the following inscription over its entrance:

"The world is supported by four pillars: the wisdom of the learned, the justice of the great, the prayers of the righteous, and the valor of the brave." These great virtues are missing from modern Spain. This has been the cause today of Spain's lost status in the world.

The Muslims found Spain a jungle and turned it into a "Garden of Roses". Victor Robinson (The Story of Medicine p. 104) remarks:

"Europe was darkened at sunset, Cordova shone with public lamps; Europe was dirty, Cordova built a thousand baths; Europe was covered with vermin, Cordova changed its undergarments daily; Europe lay in mud, Cordova streets were paved; Europe's palaces had smoke-holes in the ceiling, Cordova's arabesques were exquisite; Europe's nobility could not sign its name, Cordova's children went to school; Europe's monks could not read the baptismal service, Cordova's teachers created a library of Alexandrian dimensions."

In Muslim Spain, according to a distinguished Dutch scholar Dozy, "nearly everyone could read and write," today has one of the lowest reading and writing percentages in Europe. Though the country enjoys political stability, it is only at the cost of personal liberty. In spite of U.S. aid the economic situation has changed little; thousands of Spaniards are going over to France, Germany, and Switzerland to work.

Through careful research of Muslim Spain, writer T.B. Irving acknowledges the tremendous debt of obligation that the modern civilization owes to Islam:

"Arab Spain was the epitome of refinement and courtesy. While the rest of Europe lived in stables and slept on straw, the Andalusian had all the delicious luxuries known to Syria, Persia, and Byzantium: patios and fountains; balconies carved in wood and stone; arabesques traces on stucco and metal; frail columns and ornate chandeliers; Furniture made of precious woods inlaid with even more precious mother-of-pearl, ivory, gold, silver, lapis lazuli or rock crystal; exquisite porcelains and priceless mosaics; jewelry and filigree; marble baths with hot

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Muslim Spain

Brief Reflections

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and cold running water; libraries and schools..... It was from the Spanish Arabs and their pupils like Roger Bacon, Michael Scott, William Ockham, and Peter Abelard, that Europe received the spirit which has enabled man to dominate the world and utilize it to his own ends." (Falcon of Spain, pp. 132 and 144).

Islam is a symbol of peace and harmony, as well as tolerance. Muslim rule over Sp[ain is considered to be one of the greatest eras in the history of the world. For nearly eight centuries, under her Muslim rulers, Spain set an example to all Europe of a civilized an enlightened state. Since the beginning of time, God provided Spain, as well as other parts of the world, with rich fertile land. The Muslims made it productive a hundredfold, bring new industries and engineering skills that even today are apart of our life. Art, literature, and science prospered as they then prospered nowhere else in Europe. Many students came from England, France, and Germany to learn from Muslim teachers. Architecture, art, astronomy,. chemistry, geography, history, music, natural sciences, philosophy, physics, political sciences, and sociology were mastered in Spain. In addition to the material progress made under the Muslims, Islam gave to Spain new spiritual values, new cultural ideas, and a new philosophy of life.

With the fall of Granada in 1492, the cross replaced the crescent on its minarets. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella failed to follow the terms of their peace treaty which were to allow Muslims freedom to practice their faith. Within seven years, under the leadership of the Queen's confessor, they went back on their word. A vigorous campaign of forced conversion of Muslims to the Christian faith began. This was done by terror and persecution. In Granada, as well as

other places, the Arabic-Islamic books were burned. Many great works of science and literature have been lost forever! The Inquisition was then instituted and kept busy. It was estimated that about 3 million Muslims were executed and a far greater number expelled!

The new government in Spain believed that the Muslim problem was now solved. But as Lanepoole (The Moors in Spain, p. 280) remarked:

"The Moors (the name applied to the Muslims of Spain) were banished; for a while Christian Spain shone, like the moon, with borrowed light; then came the eclipse, and in that darkness Spain has groveled ever since. The true memorial of the Moors is seen in desolate tracts of utter barrenness, where once Muslims grew luxuriant vines and olives and yellow ears of corn; in a stupid, ignorant population were once wit and learning flourished in the general stagnation and gradation of a people which has hopelessly fallen in the scale of the nations, and has deserved its humiliation."

Lanepoole again remarks:

"The misguided Spaniards knew not what they were doing. The exile of Moors delighted then; nothing more picturesque and romantic had occurred for some time. They did not understand that they had killed their golden goose. For centuries tSpain had been the center of civilizatioun. The seat of arts and sciences of learning, and every form of refined enlightenment. No other country in Europe had so far approached the cultivated dominion of the Moors. Whatsoever makes a kingdom great and prosperous, whatever tends to refinement and civilization, was found in Muslim Spain."

"In 1492 the last bulwark (stronghold) of the Moors gave way before the crusade to Ferdinand and Isabellaq, and with Granada

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Muslim Spain

Brief Reflections

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fell all Spain's greatness..... Then followed the abomination of desolation, the rule of the Inquisition, and blankness of darkness in which Spain plunged ever since. In the land where science was once supreme, the Spanish doctors became noted for nothing but their ignorance and incapacity and the discoveries of Newton and Harkew were condemned as pernicious to faith. Where once seventy public libraries had fed the minds of scholars, and half a million books had been gathered together at Cordova for the benefit of the world, such indifference to learning afterwards prevailed that the new capital, Madrid, possessed no public library in the eighteenth century..... The arts and industries of Toledo and Almeria faded into insignificance; the very baths, public buildings of equal ornament and use, were destroyed because, cleanliness savored too strongly of ranks infidelity. The land deprived of the skillful irrigation of Moors, grew impoverished and neglected; the richest and most fertile valleys languished and were deserted; most of the populous cities which had filled every district of Andalusia fell into ruinous decay; beggars, friars, and bandits took the place of scholars, merchants, and knights. So low fell Spain when she had driven away the Moors. Such is the melancholy contrast offered by her history." (The Moors in Spain, pp. 279, 280, and Preface).

Islam has survived today in many hostile non-Muslim governments such as Russia and China (100 million plus) and shall also survive, God willing, in Spain. Today there are over 12,000 Spaniard Muslims, who once, did not openly declare their faith for fear of persecution. But this is changing, Spanish people are quite thirsty for truth. Islam is based on truth that comes only from God (The Most High). Open Muslim

communities of Spaniards are now growing rapidly in such cities as Cordova, Granada, Madrid, and Seville. The Muslims in Spain today are working hard, translating many Arabic-Islamic books into Spanish. Muhammad Imran (Position and Prospects of Islam in Latin America, pp 123 and 124) relates an account given by Prof. Nayer Wasti, a leading Hakim (physician) from Pakistan, who visited Spain in 1968 said:

"The land of Andalusia provided me new angles for thought and consideration and bestowed fresh hopes and inspirations. I had the opportunity of meeting all sorts of people there. Their innocent questioning and a buried passion stirred me. One person asked me: "Do you know about Tariq?" Whatever I knew, I told him. But he insisted that I should repeat this story time and again and in the meantime he gathered together many eager listeners. When we reached the hotel we had with us a large gathering of interested people. There too they listened about Tariq. I asked one of them as to why they were so much interested in our history? Thereupon he heartily replied: "This history is also ours. Every inch of this land bears your (Muslim's) indelible marks. Our language, our culture, our libraries, our houses, and in short, every aspect of our life refreshed your memory. What a nice people you were!"

"When he uttered these words, tears started rolling down his eyes and in the heart of every man present in the gathering there was an unknown seething struggle. I felt in the heart of my hearts that if suitable arrangements were made for the preaching of Islam, this land can again become the center and citadel of Islamic civilization within a few decades..... Islam from its very beginnings had spread in spite of stiff opposition and mounting difficulties".

Islam attracts the attention of every serious thinker, not only

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Muslim Spain Brief Reflections

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because it a civilized religion and the greatest spiritual force in the modern world, but also because it offers all the solutions to the problems which confront mankind in today's modern world. This fact was recognized by George Bernard Shaw who said:

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad (Islam) in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity of the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to very age. I have studied him, the wonderful man, and in opinion far from being the anti-Christ he must be called the saviour of humanity. I believe that if a man like him was to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad (Islam) that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today". (The Genuine Islam, Singapore, 1936, Vol. I, No. 8).

A scholar once said: "Islam is the religion of the universe. Islam is the destiny of mankind. That destiny must come to fulfillment sooner or later."

The Holy Qur'an states: "He (Allah) it is Who hath sent His messenger (Prophet Muhammad) with the guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religion, however much the idolaters may be averse." (9:33)

In closing, Marquerite Brown (Magnificent Muslims, The Story of Spain's Arab Centuries, pp. 96 and 97) wrote:

"Writing a perfectly fair history, like any other aspect of perfection, is an unattainable goal. History is written by humans whose prejudices, no matter how good their intent, will show. Let us consider for a moment the contrast between the

images we have of Muslims with those of Vikings., Both were aggressive invaders who occupied large areas of Europe and the Mediterranean shores at about the same period. The Vikings, pagan and primitive, left only destruction and death in their wake; yet they are pictured in our history books as clean, brave, adventurous explorers - a bit uncouth perhaps but basically good."

"Muslims, on the other hand, are portrayed as bloodthirsty barbarians who surged across continents lopping off heads of unbelievers. In fact, as we have noted, Muslim respect for those of other faiths is at least equal to that of the other two great religions of the west. They have always offered their subject peoples the opportunity to embrace Islam; the only penalty for refusal was a higher tax, and many Christians and Jews who did refuse still rose to high positions in Muslim governments.... One can not but wonder how such mistaken notions have persisted even in our supposedly enlightened age. Could it have been that Western historians, most of them Christian, could except illiterate Vikings, especially after they abandoned their gods of fire and water for the Christian way of life, but felt threatened by Islam which shared their faith in the same God and which developed a fabulous civilization throughout so much of the World?"

To learn more about Muslim Spain, read the following books (English Only): Falcon of Spain by T.B. Irving, Magnificent Muslims, The Story of Spain's Arab Centuries by Marguerite Brown, and Muslim Contributions to Civilization by Haidar Bammate.

MUHAMMAD, MESSENGER OF ALLAH (GOD)

PART 1: PROPHET OF MERCY AND LOVE

by Abdul Kadir Hubaiti

"Oh people! Listen to my words and transmit them to those who are absent. Know that every Muslim is a brother to every other Muslim and that Muslims are one brotherhood. It is not legitimate for anyone of you to take for himself anything that belongs to his brother unless it is willingly offered to him by that brother. Hence do not wrong each other...."

"Return what is placed with you in trust to its rightful owners. Your women have rights over you as you have rights over them. Be good to them. All Muslims are equal in their rights. Do not oppress your servants or usurp their rights: feed them as you feed yourselves and clothe them as you clothe yourselves...."

"No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab. Nor does a white man have superiority over a blackman, nor the blackman any superiority over the white man. You are all from Adam and Adam is from dust. "Oh mankind! We have created you from a male and a female.... Verily, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous (the best in conduct)...."

"Usury (interest) is totally abolished. You are only entitled to your capitals. Hurt no one and you will not be hurt...."

"Satan is now despaired of leading you astray in major matters, but he would be pleased to be obeyed in trivial matters. Therefore, beware of him! You may soon have to meet Allah and account to him for your deeds. Your blood, your property and your fame is sacredly preserved by Allah's law. So do not go astray after I am gone...."

"Oh people! No Prophet will come after me. I am leaving with you the Book of Allah (the Qur'an). Hold fast to it and you will never go astray...."

Those are only some glimpses of the shining guidance given by the noblest of all the Prophets and the greatest of all men, the Holy Messenger of Allah (The Most High), Sayyidna Muhammad (peace be on him).

Those words were delivered at the Farewell Pilgrimage (Hajjatul-wada) in the month of Thul-Hajjah (Islamic calendar), 10 years after Hijrah (the start of the Muslim era in 622 C.E.). The noble sermon which the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) delivered at Mount Arafat is very frequently quoted for it contains the fundamental principles of Islam.

The Farewell Sermon was joined by some forty thousand or more of his companions and other followers. Nearly all of them had been idol worshippers and living in complete darkness before they embraced Islam. By the Grace of Allah (The Most High) and through such teachings and guidance of the merciful Prophet (peace be on him) they turned into saints whose lives became shining examples of virtue and righteousness. In the words of the Prophet (peace be on him) they became "Luminous stars," "Whosoever of those you follow, you will be fully guided."

The Holy Prophet has gifted mankind the best of everything it could ever hope for. His teachings enriched humanity with eternal bliss and benediction. His blessed name connotes all the virtues; Muhammad means "the praised one" on earth and in Heaven. The noble generation that received the Prophet's guidance put his precepts and teachings in their hearts, lived up to their stand and many of them sacrificed their lives to carry them over the later generations for east and west. Within a short time the Muslim Ummah (community) became the

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Muhammad, Messenger of Allah (God) Part 1

(Continued from page 11)

strongest Ummah that ever came on earth. By God's grace, his promise of victory and vicegerency on earth for the believers was fulfilled. Through their struggle (jihad), devotion and sacrifice, Islam was transmitted to us.

What are we doing now to preserve these precepts and teachings, to live up to their standard and make them a dynamic reality in our lives. How much sacrifice are we willing to offer in order to carry the light of this guidance over to the rest of humanity.

The Holy Prophet was the saviour of mankind. He spent his life fighting for the rights of the oppressed and the down-trodden, for the rights of women, of the orphans, the slaves and the poor. He took care to offer solutions to all human problems of his time, our time and of the time to come. He did so by both precept and practice. His life was a practical illustration of the noblest ideals that could ever crown a human head or brighten a human heart.

He was sent by Allah (The Most High): "And We sent you (Oh Muhammad) not but as a Mercy for the worlds." (The Qur'an 21:107). He showered his love and kindness on all humanity. He was model of the highest moral standard and a paragon of virtue. To love him is therefore, to love Allah (The Most High), and to obey him is to obey Allah (The Most High).

"Say (Oh Muhammad), if you (men really) love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (The Quran 3:31)

It is further stated in the Glorious Qur'an that: "Indeed in the Apostle of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow (do according to his deeds) for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much." (33:21)

It should, therefore, be a matter of pride and honor for Muslims to owe allegiance to their Holy Prophet, to follow in his footsteps, to accept all of his message wholeheartedly, to put it into practice in their day to day affairs and to carry it proudly to the rest of the world. This would be the best way of expressing our love to Allah (The Most High) and our thankfulness to Him as well as our love to His Prophet and our gratefulness to his benefaction.

"The best among you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it to others," The Prophet says. He further declares: "The most honorable persons of my Ummah are those who carry the Qur'an (to others)."

The Glorious Qur'an invokes us to carry the prophet's message to all mankind: "He it is Who has sent him among the unlettered ones an Apostle (Muhammad) from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom. And verily they had been before in manifest error.... Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying, ect.) I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless favors on you) and never be ungrateful to Me." (62:2 and 2:152)

To remember Allah (the Most High) and to be thankful to Him would mean that His guidance should be conveyed to humanity at large.

That "Beautiful Pattern," that perfect specimen of humanity who graced this world, who transformed the idolators into "saints and Luminous stars," is still there to be emulated as an example, to remold our lives in accordance with his precepts and the ideals and morals which characterized his noble life.

Indeed, the noblest and most prominent feature of his character is mercy and love to all creatures. For those who threw at him, resented his call and hurt him, he only prayed: "Oh Lord: Guide my people, for they know naught."

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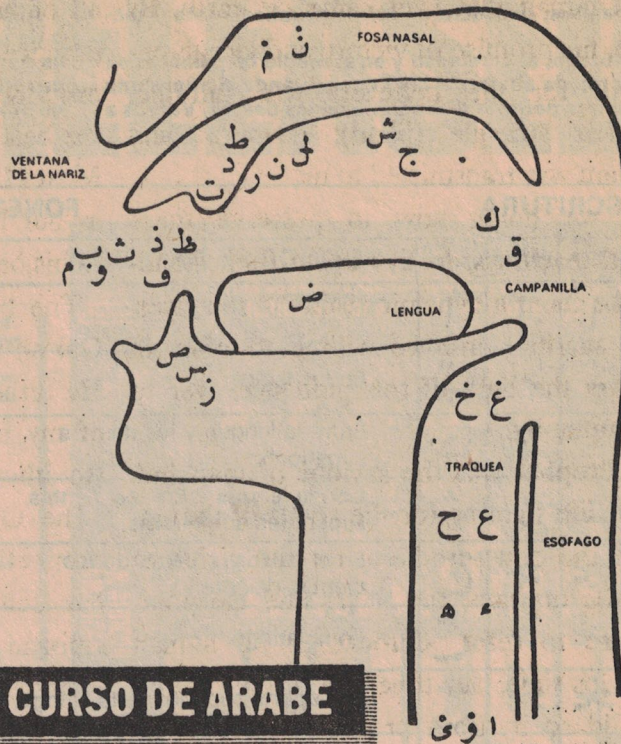
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LOS PUNTOS DE ARTICULACION



CURSO DE ARABE

by Abdul Hasib Castineira

LAS LETRAS

El árabe tiene veintinueve letras, de ellas veintiocho son representaciones de sonidos muy precisos, que se articulan en puntos también muy precisos de la caja del habla, desde lo profundo de la garganta hasta lo más externo de los labios. Algunos de estos sonidos no se pueden aprender correctamente sino es escuchándolos y repitiéndolos muchas veces hasta

dominarlos. Este primer paso —pronunciar correctamente las letras— es la base del aprendizaje del árabe y el estudiante debe buscar a quien le dé el sonido de cada letra hasta que lo reconozca y lo pueda repetir por sí mismo. Después debe ser constante en la pronunciación correcta hasta que esta se vuelva natural y espontánea.

قال عمر ابن الخطاب رضى الله عنه:
«تعلموا العربية فانها من دينكم»

— Dijo 'Umar Ibn al-Jattab, que Allah, el Exaltado, esté complacido con él:
"Aprended el árabe pues es parte de vuestra forma de vida".

En la página opuesta están claramente localizados los puntos de la caja del habla en que se articula cada letra de la lengua árabe. Ahora vamos a examinar individualmente cada una de ellas, y las distintas formas en que pueden escribirse. Cuando una letra árabe está aislada o al final de una palabra, conserva su forma prácticamente intacta.

Sin embargo, al comienzo y en el medio de palabras su forma se puede alterar, si bien conservando siempre una identidad que permite distinguirla de las demás. Vamos a

presentarlas en un cuadro, para facilitar su memorización. En cada letra explicaremos cuál es su sonido y su equivalencia en lenguas occidentales —si la tiene— y también recordaremos, en cada caso, cual es su punto de articulación.

Al principio es muy útil fijarse en qué punto de la boca o de la garganta se articula cada letra, más tarde, como es natural, se convertirá en algo espontáneo. He aquí el cuadro de las nueve primeras letras, seguido de un pequeño vocabulario para practicarlas.

ESCRITURA				FONÉTICA		NOMBRE DE LA LETRA
FINAL	MEDIA	INICIAL	FORMA AISLADA	DONDE SE ARTICULA	SONIDO	
ا	ا	ا	ا		No tiene.	ALIF
ب	ب	ب	ب	En los labios.	Como una "b" española.	BA
ت	ت	ت	ت	Entre la lengua y los dientes superiores.	Como una "t" española.	TA
ث	ث	ث	ث	Con la lengua entre los dientes superiores e inferiores.	Como una "z" española.	ZA
ج	ج	ج	ج	En el paladar y cerrando los dientes delante.	Como una "j" francesa en "jolie".	YIM
ح	ح	ح	ح	En la laringe.	No existe en lenguas occidentales. Es un sonido aspirado y fuerte.	HA
خ	خ	خ	خ	En la parte superior de la laringe.	Como una "j" española fuerte.	JA
د	د	د	د	Entre la lengua y la base de los dientes superiores.	Como una "d" española.	DAL
ذ	ذ	ذ	ذ	Con la punta de la lengua entre los dientes superiores e inferiores.	Como una "th" inglesa en "that".	DAL

VOCABULARIO

puerta, *bābun*. بَابُ

amor, *hubbun*. حُبُّ

mejilla, *jad-dun*. خَدُّ

casa, *baytun*. بَيْتٌ

relato, *hadizun*. حَدِيثٌ

almohada, *al-mujad-datu*. الْمُخَدَّةُ

pernoctar, *bāta*. بَاتَ

cortes, *adībun*. أَدِيبٌ

aljibe, *al-ŷub-bu*. الْجُبُّ

la peregrinación, *al-haŷ-ŷu*. الْحَجُّ

NOTAS:

- 1) La letra Alif no tiene sonido propio pero alarga la vocal "a", como veremos en próximas lecciones.
- 2) La palabra almohada, en árabe, significa: lugar donde reposa la mejilla.

(de la página 13)

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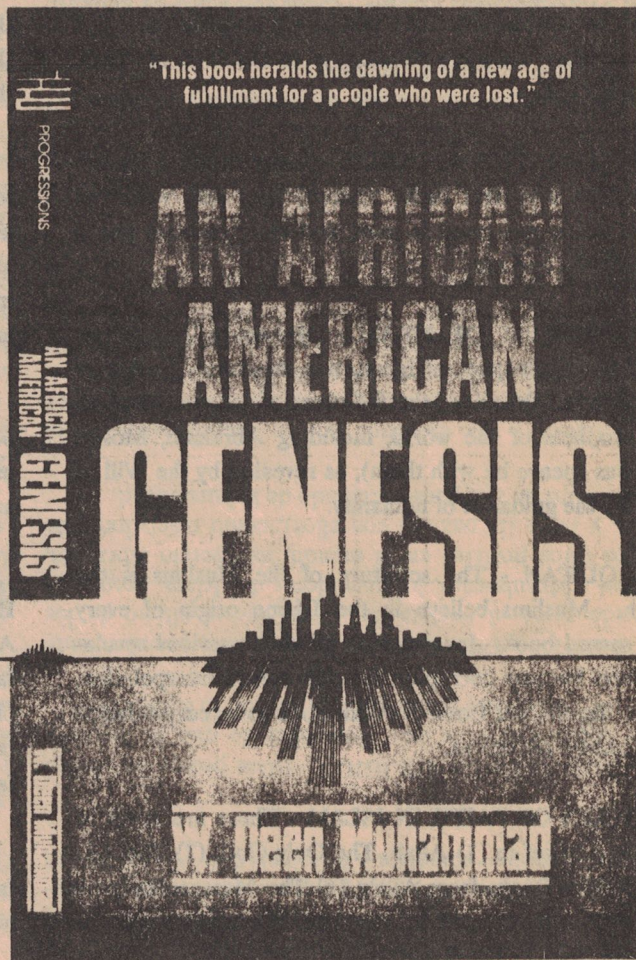
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AN AFRICAN AMERICAN GENESIS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Imam W. Deen Muhammad leader of America's largest Muslim community has established direct and genuine interfaith dialogue between leaders of Al-Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Among his many honors the "Four Freedom Award" (other recipients include the late President John F. Kennedy, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Dr. Ralph Bunche). Recently, he was elected to the Supreme Council of Masajid of the prestigious and scholarly Muslim World League (Rabita) of Makkah and New York.



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ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE - The word "Islam" literally means: (1) peace; (2) submission. The word signifies complete submission to the Will of Allah, The Only God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION - Islam provides its followers with a perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM - Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last of the Prophets. Muslims, the followers of Islam, accept all such prophets of the world, including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (peace be with them), as revealed by the Will of Allah for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR'AN - The scripture of the Muslims is the Qur'an. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book. Inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur'an, the last Book of Allah came as a recapitulation of the former scriptures.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM - These are seven in number: Belief in (1) Allah, The Only God; (2) The Angels; (3) The Books from Allah; (4) The Messengers from Allah; (5) The Hereafter; (6) The Premeasurement of good and evil; (7) The Resurrection after death.

PILLARS OF ISLAM - These are five in number: (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of Allah, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Alms-giving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'aba (House of Allah) in the city of Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH - The Muslims worship One God, Allah - the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the worlds, the Friend, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is

indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION - Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and the Hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM - The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the best fibre, is capable of unlimited progress and development.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM - Islam is the religion of the Unity of Allah and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honors are accidental things: virtue and the service of humanity are matters of real merit. Distinctions of color, race, and creed are unknown in the Principles of Islam.

KNOWLEDGE - The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior even to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOR - Every labor which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness (laziness) is deemed a sin.

CHARITY - All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from Allah for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to Allah. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.