

ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SOCIAL SCIENTISTS (UK)

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO.6 • 2003

Muslim Education in Challenging Times. A Conference Report.



A REPORT ON THE 4TH ANNUAL AMSS (UK) CONFERENCE, *MUSLIM EDUCATION IN EUROPE*, HELD ON 27-29 SEPT. 2002 IN BONN, GERMANY.

The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (UK), The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (Germany) and The Islamic Cultural Center in Ireland organized a three day conference in Germany on: *Muslim Education in Europe*.

The past year has seen a variety of challenges to Muslims living in the West, ranging from the hostility of Islamophobic prejudice to the subtler questioning of Muslim loyalties within a system of liberal democracy. Perhaps foremost among these challenges has been the debate among both the Muslims and the non-Muslims with regard to the manner

in which future generations of Muslim children are to be educated in the West. During this year's AMSS conference, some 40 speakers from different European countries and the United States tackled the issue of education in the peaceful surroundings of Bonn's Gustav-Stresemann-Institute. The changed environment in which Muslims now find themselves was marked by the absence of Dr. Zaki Badawi, now some eighty years of age, courtesy of newly adopted German anti-terrorism regulations!

A common set of core concerns were in evidence among participants. Should Muslim education seek to achieve assimilation or integration for Muslim children in Europe? Is the task of the Muslim educationist to reform Islamic edu-

Cont'd on page 2

EDITORIAL

Team Spirit Revisited

Our editorial in issue 2 focused on the subject of team spirit where we emphasized how this spirit had permeated the relationship of those working for the AMSS leading to its successful launch in 1999 during the first annual conference. Last month the work and dedication of the past three years were recognized and acknowledged in the form of an award presented at *The Muslim News Awards for Excellence 2002* ceremony held

Cont'd on page 16

cation or to revive it? Where is the balance between protecting variety and achieving social harmony? What follows is an attempt to capture the richness and breadth of thought that characterised the discussions on such questions. The fact that it was Europe, not the Muslim world, that played host to this unfettered exchange of ideas is a point to ponder.

Dr. Tariq Ramadan reminded the conference attendees that whilst we know how to be good Muslims, the question of how to remain a good Muslim is the practical one for Muslims living in Europe. We must prepare our children to deal with Europe as it is, not aim for an idealised Islamic environment. For Dr. Ramadan “*halal* or *haram*?” was too simple a question in the European context. He argued that we should study the context of the Prophet’s (saw) actions in order to derive principles, and then proceed to apply those principles in today’s context. This would be a far better approach than merely replicating the Prophet’s actions. Akram Khan-Cheema used the example of swimming to develop the point that context should not be confused with subject matter. He pointed out that swimming is not *haram*, but the conditions in which Muslims swim may be. Clearly, the context within which children are educated is a vital part of the Islamic educational mix.

Whilst it is self-evident that the goals of education should be defined before implementation of an education policy is attempted, it also seems that Muslim educationists do not often have the same goals. One easily forgotten point is that if the goals are not well enough defined, then performance measurement becomes rather difficult. One strategy, Dr. Ramadan argued, that Muslim educationists should adopt is good tools and good goals. Sometimes good tools are adopted (learning Qur’an, for example) along with bad goals (earning a high

income perhaps), and sometimes bad tools (beating children who misbehave) are combined with good goals (the promotion of good behaviour). Yousif Al-Khoei wished to find the middle ground between visions of educational utopia and an educational safe haven. According to him neither vision achieved the necessary balance in Muslim education. The former promotes unrealistic goals given the realities on the ground, whilst the other is evidence of a siege mentality among the more traditional Muslims. Mr. Al-Khoei feared that a kind of schizophrenia is being created in Muslim children by a system (he did not specify which system, though perhaps he was thinking of the *madrassas*) that forces cultures and languages upon children that are inappropriate to the society around them.

The distinction between *tarbiyyah* (the transmission of knowledge) and *ta’lim* (the instruction of pure information with no values attached to it) came to the fore in many discussions. One participant noted that the more modern idea of leaving children to determine truth for themselves denies the very concept of instruction. In his examination of UK education policy, Dr. Jeremy Henzell-Thomas struck a chord with many participants. He saw a tendency towards micro-management of school affairs from a centralised authority, a bureaucratic strangulation of individuality, a focus upon materialism at the expense of spirituality, and of memorisation at the expense of understanding. He also identified the adoption of performance targets and the promotion of quick pay-back strategies such as testing as evidence of the intrusion of heartless corporate ideas into an environment where they do not belong. In another section of his address, he reminded the audience of the need to appreciate the subtleties of language when developing policy responses as Muslims. “We can take

a secular approach without being secular, we can stick to fundamentals without being fundamentalists” he urged.

Various presentations provided practical guidance for those on the front-line of Muslim education. Dr. Nasim Butt highlighted the many forms of intelligence (for example, spatial, musical and logical) and asked how many Muslim schools have understood this or catered for it in their syllabus. Dr. Musharraf Hussain focused upon the promotion among pupils of self-assessment skills, of social skills (using such tools as the “critical friend”), and the instillation of daily religious practice (for example in the pronouncement of a *du’a* before eating). Tackling the sensitive issue of music, Diane Harris stressed her belief that knowledge of pitch and rhythm are as essential for reciting Qur’an as they are for understanding classical or popular music. Many participants in the music session seemed to agree that terminology was a key barrier to progress, with terms such as “music” being too easily confused with “musicality”. During a discussion of sex education, the Islamic Foundation’s “Miracle of Life” publication was aired as an example of a successful Muslim adaptation to circumstances. Various speakers concluded that if the will is there, the teaching of sensitive subject matter can be implemented within traditional Islamic norms. Dr. Sabiha El-Zayat from Germany suggested that the Arabic language should be brought into the syllabus as a theme across many subjects rather than merely as a subject in its own right. Meanwhile, Joe Ahmed Dobson and Tarek El Diwany addressed funding issues in Muslim education.

Perhaps the most earnestly debated issue was that of citizenship. Muslims are not foreigners in Europe, argued Dr. Ramadan. His reminder that modern Europe was built upon the foundation of Muslim arts and sciences is indeed

Tribute

PROFESSOR ZAKI BADAWI O.B.E.

Friends and admirers gather to pay tribute to an outstanding man

“I am pleased to send best wishes to Zaki on his 80th birthday and look forward to many more years of partnership in our efforts to make Britain a better society for all.”

THE PRIME MINISTER
TONY BLAIR

At a reception held in London on 14 January 2003 the annual AMSS Lifetime Achievement Award for 2002 was presented by Dr. Anas S. al Shaikh-Ali, Chairman of AMSS (UK), to a scholar whose name and outstanding work is known to almost every British Muslim. What many did not know however, is that the infamously hard-working Islamic scholar and community activist known as Shaikh Dr. Zaki Badawi has reached an honourable eighty years of age, with an endless list of lifetime achievements that are unmatched by any other individual. From putting Muslims on the political map after the Rushdie Affair to clarifying the Islamic understanding of Jihad after September 11, Dr. Badawi's message has always been clear, consistent and confident.

Though not a British citizen himself, Dr. Badawi's work with the community has for decades been inspired by his vision for a confident British Islam; one that is summed up in his famous statement, “Britain is the best place in the world to be a Muslim.”

It is no wonder then that such a diverse mix of people gathered to celebrate eighty years of Dr. Badawi's life at the Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre on 15 January 2003. The event, jointly organised by AMSS, Al-Khoei Foundation, FAIR and Q-News, was attended by over a hundred and fifty representatives of not only British Muslim organisations but people from every sector, from politicians to leaders of other faith communities. Indeed the diversity amongst the crowd itself was testimony to not only the varied work that Dr. Badawi has been involved in, but how much he is respected for his relentless efforts.

The programme for the evening began with the flavour of Lebanese cuisine and ended with the fervour of enthused individuals who spoke passionately about their work with Dr. Badawi and how his commitment to furthering the cause of British Islam has increased dialogue and understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims in this country. Amongst those who conveyed their heartfelt appreciation were representatives of the four organisations hosting the event: **Sayid Yousif al Khoei** of Al Khoei Foundation, as well as **Ms. Khalida Khan**, Trustee of



FAIR, **Dr. Anas al Shaikh-Ali**, Chairman of AMSS (UK), and **Mr. Fouad Nahdi**, Publisher of *Q-News*. Speakers also included: **Sidi Hassan Le Gai Eaton**, **Sir Sigmund Sternburg**, Chair of Three Faiths Forum, **Rev. Dr. David Marshall**, Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and **Lord Ahmed of Rotherham**. Messages of goodwill were also sent by the **Prime Minister**, the **Rt.Hon. Tony Blair** (reproduced below) and read out by **Lord Filkin**, Home Office Minister; the **Shaikh of Al-Azhar University**, Cairo, read out by **Imam Dr. Anas Abu-Shadi**; **Dr. Taha**

Cont'd on page 7

relevant, as was his assurance that “Muslims have something special to offer ... the minority feeling is a trap”. Other speakers insisted that Muslims should teach their children that they do not belong to Europe. “What else does ‘*lakum dinakum wa liya din*’ mean?” asked Dr. Musharrif Hussain. Dr. Imran Alawiye cautioned that children should be taught to respect those institutions that are in keeping with Islam even if the institutions themselves are not explicitly Islamic. Teaching children that non-Muslims are “bad” can easily lead children to disrespect non-Muslim teachers at school. This can be counterproductive, not least from the perspective of the child's own educational achievement, he argued.

In an effective workshop on citizenship, Dr. Jeremy Henzell-Thomas urged participants not to be cynical about citizenship, to understand the concepts of dialogue and dialectic, of discussion and debate, and to contribute to the various national efforts at improving inclusivity in education. His position was that if Islam's arguments are better than the non-Islamic alternatives, we should seek to demonstrate that fact through engagement. In this regard he showed the value of well-directed research, giving as one example the frequently cited relationship between religion and war. According to his research, of the ten worst wars of history nine had little or nothing to do with religion. Other delegates could not suppress the equally deeply felt notion that citizenship education is a strategy for coercing citizens into harmony with the existing establishment order. With the Muslim community facing deep social inequality, evidenced for instance by its over-representation in the prison population, and with the continuing media stigmatisation of Islam, Mr. Al-Khoei feared that Muslims could become the “new Jews of Europe”.

From among the non-Muslim speakers, Professor Karl Nipkow discussed religious freedom and the

societal impact of religious education. Religious education should delve deep rather than simply skating over the surface, he argued. He went on to distinguish “weak tolerance” (an expression of indifference), and “strong tolerance” (an appreciation of the intellectual position of other faiths) of which he believed only the latter is of true value to society.

On matters of political representation, Shabbir Mansuri, founding director of the Council on Islamic Education in California, argued for an Islamic institutional framework to be established so as to bring about change from within the existing system. This would contrast with previous, rather unsuccessful, attempts at challenging the so-called gatekeepers to bring about change on behalf of Muslims. Yousif Al-Khoei insisted that government often has no way of knowing who to speak to in the Muslim community because of the latter's fragmentation. With regard to the Muslim community's internal organisation, Dr. Anas al Shaikh-Ali noted that many *fatawa* in respect of European Islam are still being given by Muslim scholars who have either not lived in the West or not visited it. Indeed some *fatawa* relating to the European Muslim are still published entirely in Arabic and are therefore inaccessible to the very audience for whom they are presumably intended. Meanwhile, Dr. Sabiha El-Zayat discussed the case of the Islamische Federation in Berlin, the first Muslim organisation in Germany to have been granted the right to teach Islamic Religious Education in German state schools, as part of her examination of the interaction between political authority and those promoting Islamic curricula.

In a fascinating presentation, Yahya Michot examined “populo-fascism” and used a historical analysis of the treatment of minorities to understand political developments following September 11. Secular criticism of religious education often focuses

upon the harm of implanting ideology in children, yet the implantation of ideology seems quite acceptable when part of the secular response to religion. Respecting the law was not enough to satisfy the Spanish Inquisition, pointed out Dr. Michot. For them the objective was to eradicate every last ounce of non-Christian belief within their jurisdiction. Perhaps today materialist secularism has replaced Christianity as the overarching religion, and perhaps the tools of the Inquisition have been blunted in favour of less visible weapons, but a question remains over the manner in which a Muslim should engage with the secular society. In a widely applauded presentation, Rabeya Mueller addressed this issue in her discussion of secular pedagogy. She argued that God has given us the method of understanding and imparting revelation, and that this method allows pluralism without requiring a “claim of dominance”.

This year's AMSS conference produced a number of key points for further action. It was decided that an agreed syllabus on the teaching of Islam should be produced for the 11 to 16 age group in the UK, based upon the successful Berlin model. Also a paper is to be produced on under-performance and under-achievement among Muslim children in England and Wales. In addition an Arabic language teaching syllabus for both primary and secondary students will be prepared and discussed in a forthcoming workshop. The UK and German branches of the AMSS and the Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland should be congratulated for staging a very well managed conference in a most welcoming setting. ☪

Tarek El Diwany

Tarek El Diwany is a researcher and writer in the field of banking and monetary economics. He runs a small internet software company and is the Editor of www.islamic-finance.com. He is also the author of The Problem with Interest.

Occasional Paper Series

The AMSS (UK) is pleased to launch the first paper in its Occasional Paper Series The Challenge of Pluralism and the Middle Way of Islam by Dr. Jeremy Henzell-Thomas. The aim is to publish a number of research papers, articles and lectures from the Association's conference programmes as well as from social scientists willing to make contributions, in order to generate informed debate on issues of vital importance.

REPRODUCED BELOW IS THE FOREWORD BY THE EDITORS, DR. ANAS S. AL SHAIKH-ALI AND SHIRAZ KHAN

In a world increasingly polarised by the events of September 11th Dr. Jeremy Henzell-Thomas presents a beautifully written, impassioned plea, appealing to the higher virtues of man to realise within himself, and the society around him, a spiritually deeper and more multiculturally aware social order. On the level of individual existence man is simply a creature passing through a series of stages on the road to self-development. The nature and quality of this development will largely be governed by his interaction with those around him. As with individuals, so with nations and communities. As citizens of a largely interdependent world, it is imperative that we try to understand ourselves and the myriad of cultures around us, more perhaps in today's volatile world than at any other period in human history.

Unfortunately, a gross lack of communication, understanding and multicultural awareness is daily stifling our natural sense of justice, peace and "fair play", and, in a climate of extreme volatility, loaded rhetoric and empty dialogue are only serving to fuel ever increasing flashpoints of conflict. In addition to this the parameters of debate increasingly seem to hinge upon a societal sense of "us" and "them" polluting our sense of citizenship. When the "them" are more often than not dwelling amongst us, as our neighbours, co-workers and friends we would do well to heed Dr. Jeremy's advice urging man-kind to engage in real, meaningful dialogue. Empty debates between two positions only serve to give an illusion of dialogue, when what is required, rather, are truth seeking encounters as

a means to reconciling opposites. The author also points to the need for convergence, entirely possible in a truly pluralist society. Muslim participation in this process is critical as Pluralism is an ideal environment to project core Islamic values. There is a great need for active engagement by Muslims today and they should

rise to the challenge instead of retreating into isolation. An important area of convergence between the West (as typified by the Anglo-Saxon spirit) and Islam is that of the "middle way", one of the most important guiding principles in English life. The ideals, principles and ethics of the "middle way" need to be revived to restore our sense of balance, beauty, harmony and justice. An appreciation of the "other" does not mean the flattening out of differences into a new pulp (of course no-one can be understood from all conceivable angles) but a celebration of diversity and multiculturalism.

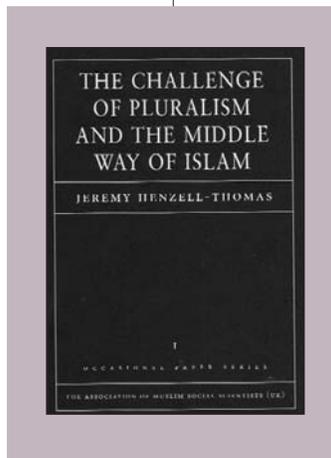
The high principles and ethics embodied in the ideas put forward by the author, himself the traveller-linguist whose story he relates with much admiration in his short narrative, are a way forward. Openness and commitment rather than the exaggeration of differences is the essence of his message.

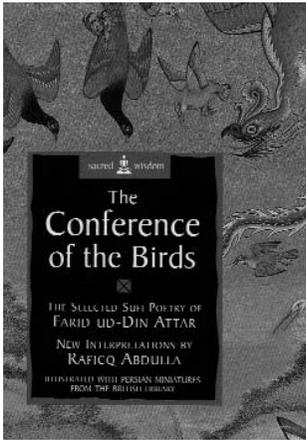
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The Institute of Islamic Banking & Insurance (IIBI) in London will be commencing a series of Executive Development Programmes in March 2003. Each Programme is of 3 days duration and will run on a quarterly basis, covering a wide range of theory and practice in the field of Islamic finance, banking and insurance. In addition to a thorough examination of the core concepts, this year's programmes will offer a number of advanced modules on topics of special interest. These will include an analysis of the Islamic mortgage market in the UK, and an examination of Malaysian moves to establish the Islamic gold dinar as a medium of international trade settlement. ☞

For further information please contact:

Rumman Faruqi, IIBI
Tel: 020 7245 0404

American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)

The contents of the present AJISS issue (vol.19, no.3, Summer 2002) include:

Murad Wilfried Hofmann, *Has Islam Missed Its Enlightenment?*; **Kamran A. Bokhari**, *A Constructivist Approach to American Foreign Policy*; **David D. Grafton**, *The "Religious Secularism" of Lebanon and the United States*; **M. Aslam Haneef et al**, *Values & Their Relationship to Social Problems in Malaysia: An Islamic Framework*; **AbdulHamid AbuSulayman**, *Culture, Science, and Technology: How to Respond to Contemporary Challenges*; **Chandra Muzaffar**, *Morality in Public Life: The Challenge before Religion*. ☞

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Scholars to Share Research on Islam in Britain

Establishment of a Research Network to Meet Bi-Annually

During the first half of the 1990s there was a group of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars and researchers who met bi-annually at the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations (CSIC) in Birmingham, to share news of mutual research on Islam in Britain. For various reasons, this research network lost momentum over a number of years, but this was certainly not due to lack of involvement and participation among those with a research-active interest in British Islam. At a recent meeting, Professor Jorgen Nielsen (University of Birmingham), Dr Sean McLoughlin (University of Leeds) and Dr. Sophie Gilliat-Ray (Cardiff University) felt that it was important to try to re-establish the research network. They intend to meet bi-annually as before, but this time rotating the meetings around the three universities of Birmingham, Cardiff and Leeds. They plan to retain the pattern for the day of open discussion and sharing of news in the morning, followed by a formal paper by an invited speaker in the afternoon.

The first meeting of the re-launched network took place at Cardiff University on Monday 20 January.

For further information or if you would like to join the network please contact:

Gilliat-RayS@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: 01544 388440

The second scheduled meeting will be at Birmingham University on Tuesday 15 April. ☞



Cont'd from page 3

Jabir al Alwani, IIIT USA, read out by **Mr. Siddique Seddon**; **Rabbi Professor Jonathon Magonet**, Principal, Leo Baeck College, read out by **Ms. Mehri Niknam**, The Maimonides Foundation (*extracts of which are reproduced below*).

Ms. Niknam also presented Dr. Badawi with a folio from a 17th century Persian Qur'an on behalf of Professor Nasser Khalili, Chairman of the Maimonides Foundation, in recognition of Dr. Badawi's invaluable leadership in Jewish-Muslim dialogue.

The evening came to an end with words of gratitude from Dr. Badawi himself, who reminded the audience that this should not just be a celebration of his life, but of the progress and achievements of the British Muslim community. In his inspiring speech, Dr. Badawi spoke of how he has helped to nurture a confident British Muslim identity over the decades and how far the community has come from the days when he first conveyed this message. It came as no surprise then that his closing remarks were met with a standing ovation when he ended the evening by declaring that, "The British Muslim community has arrived!"

Messages:

Prime Minister
Tony Blair

"I am sorry that I cannot attend the reception to celebrate the 80th birthday of Shaikh Dr. Zaki Badawi. I am, however, delighted to send my very best wishes for this important occasion. Shaikh Badawi's contribution to British Islam has been invaluable. During the last three decades he has provided crucial leadership as an Imam, teacher and social commentator. Learned, articulate and bold he has been a great defender of mainstream Islam and its message of tolerance, compassion and justice. Over the years he has taken many

initiatives aimed at establishing Islam in Britain, including setting up the Muslim College, the Council of Imams and chairing the Shariah Council.

I am pleased to send best wishes to Zaki on his 80th birthday and look forward to many more years of partnership in our efforts to make Britain a better society for all."

Dr. Taha Jabir al Alwani

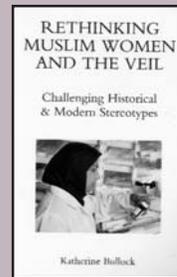
"The Azharees (graduates of Al Azhar University) who have lived in the West and mastered its languages, culture and thought are very few. Even fewer are those who have added to this a knowledge of Islam and its contemporary methodologies with which Islam can contribute to the West and enrich its values and thought. Professor Shaikh Zaki Badawi ... has acquired both the traditional and contemporary knowledge of Islam. He has combined this with the purest of Islamic thought and the best and most useful of Western knowledge. Indeed, he is a model for contemporary Azharees, just as Imam Muhammad Abdu was in his time...I do hope that Al-Azhar and other Islamic universities and schools will regard Shaikh Zaki Badawi, and the few like him, as models to be emulated. May Allah Almighty bless our Brother Professor Zaki Badawi with health and continued intellectual contribution. And may He bless him with a long and fruitful life and plentiful reward. May Allah bless our Ummah with more scholars of his calibre."

Rabbi Prof. Jonathon Magonet

"I would like to take this opportunity to convey my very best wishes to Zaki on this occasion of a well deserved tribute for his extraordinary contribution to British life and to the values of interfaith dialogue."



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by Dr. Katherine Bullock

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AWARDS

AMSS (UK) 2002 Lifetime Achievement Award



*Presentation of the Award
January 2003*

PROFESSOR ZAKI BADAWI

Principal, The Muslim College

In recognition for a distinguished career and service to the field of Islamic thought, community service and the promotion of inter-faith relations, the AMSS (UK) gave its 2002 Lifetime Achievement Award to Professor Zaki Badawi. Professor Badawi is Principal of the Muslim College in London, Chairman of the Imams and Mosques Council, UK, Chair of FAIR and a member of the AMSS Executive Committee. He began his studies at Al-Azhar in Cairo and obtained a PhD from the University of London. He has taught at Al-Azhar in Cairo; King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah; Ahmadu Bello University in Nigeria; and also at the University of Malaya in Singapore. He frequently writes and broadcasts on Muslim affairs.

AMSS (UK) 2002 Building Bridges Award



*Presentation of the Award
June 2002*

CHARLES LE GAI EATON

Writer, Lecturer and Broadcaster

The award was presented to Charles Le Gai Eaton at a ceremony held at the House of Lords in June 2002 in recognition of his achievement in bringing to light the universal and authentic message of Islam. Charles Le Gai Eaton was born in Switzerland and educated at Charter House and Kings College, Cambridge. He worked for many years as a teacher and journalist in Jamaica and Egypt (where he embraced Islam in 1951) before joining the British Diplomatic Service. He retired early to take up an appointment as Consultant to the Islamic Cultural Centre in London. He is the author of many well-known publications including *Islam and the Destiny of Man* and *Remembering God*. He writes, lectures and broadcasts on religious topics.

Award for Excellence for AMSS (UK)



The Muslim News Awards for Excellence 2002 was held in London on 11th December 2002. At the event, attended by HRH The Prince of Wales, as well as 550 Muslim and non-Muslim politicians, professionals, students and community workers and leaders, the AMSS (1999) won The Fazlur Rahman Khan Award for Excellence in Engineering, Technology and Science. The AMSS (UK) won the award for its work on the social sciences by providing a unique platform for the development of Islamic thought through research, publications and conferences, and for creating an awareness of Islamic opinions on topical and emerging academic issues relevant to Muslims. Receiving the Award on behalf of the Association, Dr. Anas al Shaikh-Ali, the Chairman said: "I am sure the Executive Committee, the Advisory Board and all our members and supporters will be delighted to see that the work and the potential of the Association have been so quickly recognised and acknowledged. The main reason for its success is team work and team spirit."

Total Quality Provision for Able Children in European Muslim Schools of the 21st Century

DEFINITION AND APPLICABILITY

It is appropriate, before going further, to devote a few lines to exploring the meaning of 'total quality' (TQ) and how appropriate its application is to European Muslim schools. TQ's pedigree originated in the total quality management preoccupations of business and industry in Japan and the USA. Its impact was not felt in Britain until the early eighties. A brief survey of literature from Juran (1964) to Deming (1982) to West-Burnham (1992, 1997) reveals total quality as meaning different things in different situations. It resembles much more a broad framework than a unitary model. However, the common denominators in TQ's guiding principles may be summed up as mission and culture, the collective role of leadership and team-based management, provision and measurement of quality customer service, and constant analysis and review of work processes involving all employees. Suitably refined to the situation and needs of any given organisational context, these different strands are harnessed to the pursuit of continuous improvement. The turn of this decade saw recognition of TQ's potential as a mechanism for school effectiveness and improvement.

In applying the principles of total quality to a public service like Muslim education, concerns may be

expressed about the importation of business and manufacturing principles. What possible use could they be, given the gulf between mass-producing industrial components and satisfying the individual educational needs of young Muslims? Cultures and day-to-day problems differ, but there are also similarities. Quality has always been important to practitioners in Muslim schools, even if the means for securing it have not been particularly well codified in the past. Quality issues are much more in the public domain nowadays as a result of the market context of competition and accountability in which schools have to operate, which in turn reflects wider economic pressures and changes. The adoption and adaptation of TQ's guiding principles, therefore, is perfectly feasible because of their complementary relationship to many of the practices internationally acknowledged by educational research to be valid and successful. The emphasis in school effectiveness literature on teamwork, shared decision making and creating a positive school culture, for instance, closely parallels Deming's philosophy (Weller, 1997).

The extent to which different characteristics of total quality are relevant, singly and in an inter-related sense, to one key factor in Muslim school effectiveness, i.e. provision

for the most able, is the subject of the remainder of this paper. Writers about TQ have grouped its components into various discrete but inter-related categories. For the purpose of discussion here, the four broad headings of vision, people, prevention and customers are used (West-Burnham, 1996).

VISION

Putting this heading first underlines the difference between 'total quality' and 'total quality management' approaches. Discarding the term 'management' enables one's emphasis to move from a purely transactional level - whereby short-term, controllable and attainable processes are subjected to regular review - to a more transformational plane, involving the communication of vision and commitment. It is one in which moral imperatives are paramount.

How does that apply to a Muslim school? The core purpose of any educational establishment should be to offer an environment in which teaching and all-round expectations are of sufficient quality to have the maximum impact on pupils' learning and progress (Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore, 1995). A high quality school is one that clearly articulates such an over-arching purpose and then sets about meeting its goals, thus demonstrating that it is 'fit for its purpose'. This sense of mission becomes fulfilled by permeating and enthusing all aspects of strategic planning, thereby facilitating its total application within the institution. It must attract everyone's hearts and minds.

My belief that this kind of vision provides a moral basis for action leads me to justify provision for able pupils in terms of helping them 'achieve their full potential by ensuring Muslim schools create learning environments in which they are able to progress as far and fast as they can'. In addition, I would argue that every Muslim school should have a policy statement

acknowledging provision as an integral part of a wider commitment to quality teaching methods, classroom resources and learning styles. To ensure consistent application, this should be reflected in departmental policies for the most able.

There is also a need for leadership. Leaders are crucial in the implementation of any vision by virtue of their conviction that it is attainable, particularly in the time-lag between implementing developments and achieving improved results (Barber, 1995). Their status provides them with sufficient clout to prioritise, enthuse, resource, celebrate and generally 'make things happen'. From a quality assurance viewpoint, they have a further role in auditing and evaluating whether the provision programme is successfully achieving the aims set for it.

A total quality approach calls for the 'significance and responsibility of every employee' to be recognised in an organisation's pursuit of its mission (West-Burnham, 1997). In that sense, everyone is a leader. A quality culture requires all of its members to take a personal responsibility for its delivery. Therefore, the greater the opportunities for every teacher - individually or on a team basis - to be involved in the production of his/her subject department's interpretation of the whole school policy for able children, the more likely one is to raise his/her awareness, promote a sense of ownership in the initiative, and foster a common approach, within the limits of acceptable diversity, to extending these pupils. There is always a danger that when one person has a named responsibility, others tend to think they need not be involved. A quality management approach will both invite and demand active participation at all levels (Hampton, 1994). The ideal is that all teachers feel sufficiently confident that even if a young Ghazzali (or his female equivalent) started in Year 7, they would have a clear idea how to recognise, cater for and cele-

brate his talents.

Mention has been made (in the abstract) of the ethical reservations some Muslim teachers might hold. Herein lies a possible problem for applying total quality principles to an organisation such as a Muslim school, that is characterised by 'phenomenological perspectives' (Davies and West-Burnham, 1997). How, in this particular case, can greater consensus in outlook be worked for? My suggestion is that a programme for the most able be set in the context of equal opportunities for all. To be true to their name, Muslim schools should foster a climate that recognises each child has equal value and individual needs. Just as pupils with special educational needs must be catered for, so those with marked talents should be encouraged in their achievements.

One of the reasons for the needs of the most able remaining unconsidered in many Muslim schools is the popular belief that they are a very small minority. The notion that high ability is restricted to purely intellectual talents, however, has been questioned by research indicating that there are multiple intelligences by which children can learn effectively (Gardner, 1993; Perkins, 1995). Failure to provide teaching and learning opportunities that work through, and aim at, these different areas could be represented as neglecting the right of a sizeable proportion of one's 'customers' (or 'trusts' from an Islamic point of view) in the school population to optimise their potential.

In getting away from the traditional equation of quality with exclusivity (Pfeffer and Coote, 1991), and making one's definitions of ability inclusive, Muslim teachers who are inclined to dismiss provision as 'elitist' because of the distinctiveness it confers on a small minority might well think again.

As with leadership, there is a quality assurance dimension to the creation of collegial structures. The more staff are trusted and involved

in meeting the needs of the most able, the greater the devolution of responsibility to each of them for personally maintaining quality teaching and learning experiences.

PREVENTION

Much of what has been written about total quality concerns quality control, assurance, management, audit and assessment of the 'product' - in this case, the creation of an appropriate learning environment for able pupils. It is to do with specific techniques to help 'translate principle into practice - the abstract into concrete experience' (West-Burnham, 1997). In defining the standards for a quality programme for the more able, first one has to establish methods of identifying pupils. One problem with introducing TQ initiatives is the lack of sound data on which to build them. Suitable techniques and procedures include:

- Observation and nomination by teachers
- Assessment by teachers
- Observation of pupil performance
- Observations and nominations by parents
- Checklists of general and subject characteristics of high ability
- Primary school profiles and assessment records
- Standardised achievement and intellectual ability tests. Following this, Muslim schools must specify a number of mechanisms, procedures and processes that would cover the key areas of curriculum provision, organisational strategies and teaching methodology:
- Curriculum provision.

Incorporating extension and enrichment in schemes of work will help able pupils develop wider knowledge and use high-level skills or creative responses. Individual study programmes will cater for those with specific talents or deep interest in a topic. Enhancement should extend beyond subjects to a central programme of problem-solving, visits, courses, workshops, competi-

tions, etc. There must be scope for 'fast-tracking' to GCSE, A-Level and even first-year degree work, taking advantage of modular courses and distance-learning materials.

- Organisational strategies. Most able pupils benefit from interacting with each other, although other types of grouping should be employed, such as mixed age and specific interest. Operating withdrawal groups is a further option. Classrooms and resources should be organised to allow for group work and supported self-study.

- Teaching methodology. Muslim teachers should use a broad repertoire of open-ended tasks, group and individual work, problem-solving activities and investigations, as well as more formal teaching. Differentiation of this kind will help them match tasks to the variety in pupils' preferred learning styles. Variety is important, too, in the means by which they record their work and the resources available. Tasks should be challenging and sometimes the cause of struggle. Repetition must be avoided, since able children usually need the least reinforcement.

How is one to ensure that these characteristics of a quality programme actually appear? The ideal is that everything is done right without checking (Crosby, 1979), but in reality it is necessary to employ quality assurance measures. It is here that I return to my earlier points about the part to be played by everyone, from senior staff to classroom teachers, in monitoring the translation of principle into practice. If anyone has the key role, arguably it is the latter. TQ is a means of improving personal effectiveness and aligning all individual effort throughout an organisation (Stott, 1994). The active involvement and responsibility of everyone in agreeing a process, and then implementing it in a consistent manner so that they become managers of their own quality, is what marks a genuine 'democratising' of quality

within the institution (Harvey and Green, 1993).

The measurement of quality, its potential for incrementally improving and developing pupils' needs, are questions that go beyond a mechanistic preoccupation with prevention and processes.

Consequently, there must be assessment and monitoring procedures in place to gauge each child's progress, the extent to which value is added and the continuing 'fitness for purpose' of the overall programme.

However, to be sure that the quality of provision is what it should be, quality assurance must be linked to the moral basis identified for the programme, viz. the creation of an appropriate learning environment for the most able. The implication is that teachers see their role in terms of raising questions, offering challenges, encouraging the use of divergent learning activities and providing a responsive environment that makes the act of learning an interactive process. Underpinning this must be the cultivation of a reflective understanding of the basic learning processes and how individuals differ in their capabilities to learn. By marrying prevention to vision, one should be more certain that pupils are benefiting from the enhancements offered and that these do indeed constitute challenging experiences. Also, one can more confidently claim to be working towards a state of 'zero defects' in terms of optimising the achievement of all the pupils involved in the programme. This leads to a discussion of how far one's programme for the most able represents 'quality' to the customer.

CUSTOMERS

Who are 'customers' in Muslim schools? The philosophy of total quality points to those people 'who receive products or services from an organisation, including those within the organisation' (Smith, 1996). Applied to a school setting, they are

simple enough to identify. The internal customers are, first, the classroom teachers who look to their senior staff to 'supply' the programme for able pupils. In turn, they make the appropriate implementation for their customers, viz. the pupils who are in direct receipt of provision. The next link comprises the parents (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1992). This notion of the internal/external customer chain is a key element of TQ. I referred earlier to the importance of an inclusive definition as far as the pupils are concerned, in view of the growing recognition that high ability can take various forms. Only a small minority of pupils are academic 'all-rounders', whereas 25 per cent or more of a school's population will excel in one or a few areas (Denton and Postlethwaite, 1985). It is a mirror image of the bottom end of the ability scale as identified in the 1978 Warnock Report and the 1994 SEN Code of Practice.

This focus on the customer can be problematic for a sector that traditionally has been supplier-led, particularly given the basic tenet of TQ that quality is defined by the customer (West-Burnham, 1997). Are the pupils identified as having high ability actually customers? Is the term better applied to their parents, who expect appropriate educational provision for their children's needs in turn for their taxes funding Muslim schools? It might be more accurate to refer to the children as 'consumers' or 'clients'. Do the pupils actually know their needs? Are they in a position to judge whether they are being met? Are their parents, given their sometimes over-optimistic opinions of their children's talents, in a position to judge? Should we reject such product-based notions as inappropriate to the education service and think of teachers as having a transformative relationship with their 'customers' because they do something to, rather than for, them (Harvey and Green, 1993)? These questions

explain why education has long defined and interpreted quality in Platonic terms of what pupils are assumed to need. They also reveal the semantic and conceptual nature of attempting to define the 'customer' in a service that is not accustomed to such thinking (West-Burnham and Davies, 1994).

It is difficult to identify a precise mechanism by which programmes for Muslim pupils can fit Juran's axiom: 'Quality is what the customer says it is' (Davis and West-Burnham, 1997). However, in a more general sense, Muslim schools can show how responsive they are by the type of learning strategies extended to the most able. Offering pupils some ownership of the organisation and completion of their work, permitting a variety of means of recording work, promoting the use of creative and critical thinking skills, and employing internal rather than external methods of motivation are all means by which they can be transformed into critical, self-aware and autonomous individuals. It will better equip them to make informed choices and decisions. This particular focus in making them co-managers of the teaching and learning process requires their teachers to become more like enablers and guides and resource managers. There is likely to be no turning back. Once pupils have tasted the 'delight' of a quality learning experience, they will not accept something inferior (Tribus, 1994). Again, it brings one back to the over-arching vision of what a Muslim school should be offering by way of a suitable learning environment.

Quality assurance must involve some kind of mediating influence from pupils and parents, based on assessments, tutorials, consultation evenings, etc., so that they can declare their levels of satisfaction regarding the fitness of provision. Customer requirements exert an influence, too, with the increasing 'market economy' in which schools

exist: Muslim parents (like others) will pick and choose establishments that offer services for the most able matching their own specifications. The DfEE's Circular 9/94 (now, of course, the DfES) recommends that every school should include in its prospectus details of its arrangements for able children (state-funded Muslim schools are no exception). The customers might not be sovereign, but the effect of their notional 'spending power' on the formula funding of schools cannot be ignored. It would be a foolish (and unfit for purpose establishment) that allowed its provision to be seriously at variance with their broad expectations of what should be available. The time has long passed when parents were prepared to be passive recipients of professional opinions, and it mirrors the expectation of customised quality and service in other 'markets' (Davies and West-Burnham, 1997).

SELF-REVIEWING QUALITY PROVISION

Awareness of the responsibility to review and enhance the quality of any Muslim educational programme has led me to some initial thoughts on a suitable model for reviewing the effectiveness of the strategy I have formulated as part of my educational research. The four headings under which my programme can be discussed from a total quality perspective have a lot in common with the typology comprising the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model, which has been translated into a setting more suited for educational use with support from the Royal Mail and Sheffield Education Authority (Sisum, 1996; West-Burnham, 1997). Adapted to my programme for enhanced quality provision for able children in Muslim schools, the components of the model could consist of:

Senior leadership

- Proposing a vision and relating the

programme to it

- Prioritising provision via school development plan
- Coordinating, monitoring and evaluating whole school and department provision
- Allocating appropriate and sufficient resources
- Organising in-service training (Inset) for professional development of staff in this area
- Recognition and celebration of pupil achievements in school and the wider community.

Staff management and involvement

- Motivation, involvement and confidence of all staff in implementing provision arising from shared sense of purpose
- Pursuit of professional development regarding provision for the most able through Inset
- Development of identification procedures for departments
- Employment of appropriate curriculum, organisational and teaching strategies
- Use of school procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress; opportunities for regular review and reflection.

Policy and strategy

- Development of a policy and strategy embodying total quality principles
- Foundation of policy on knowledge of effective learning processes and awareness of good practice in similar initiatives elsewhere
- Clear communication, a strong sense of purpose and identification of defined goals
- Regular review and up-dating of policy.

Resources

- Timetabling of central enhancement programme
- Funding for appropriate departmental resources
- Facilitation of alternative grouping arrangements and withdrawal classes
- Allocation for staff professional development

Processes

- Establishment of clearly defined procedures for identifying able pupils
- Specification of processes for translating principles into practice in terms of curriculum provision, classroom organisation and teaching methodology
- Active involvement of staff in implementation of policy on consistent basis
- Use of common format for assessment and monitoring records
- Effective liaison with partner primary schools to ensure systematic transfer of information
- Continuous evaluation of provision to monitor its continuing 'fitness for purpose'.

Staff satisfaction

- Researching, evaluating and responding to staff perceptions of, and satisfaction with, policy implementation.

Pupil and parent satisfaction

- Researching, evaluating and responding to pupil and parent perceptions of, and satisfaction with, the variety of classroom learning experiences available
- Extent of pupil involvement in voluntary and extra-curricular activities organised as part of the programme
- Extent of parental involvement in providing a supportive home environment, and engaging in regular dialogue with the school.

Impact on stake-holders

- Popularity with prospective parents of identifying arrangements for able pupils
- Cooperation of partner primary schools in establishing effective liaison arrangements for transfer of information
- Interest and involvement of governors in development of provision
- Support from LEA (Local Education Authority) in terms of resources, guidance and external auditing from inspection/advisory team
- Interest and involvement by members of the wider community, e.g.

business and industry, the media, higher education.

School outcomes

- Creation of a school culture in which able Muslim pupils are positively encouraged to express their talents
- Contribution to the creation of a high-quality teaching and learning environment for all pupils
- Fulfilment of the Islamic ideal of providing an appropriate education for children of all abilities and aptitudes.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This is not intended to be an authoritative or exhaustive list of components. Definitions of what constitutes quality vary and reflect different perspectives and interests. It is easier to state one is working towards quality than to define what it actually means. A process of experiment, modification and adaptation, therefore, may be necessary until proven applications emerge. Strategies take time to establish and sustain themselves and mature only over time. All I would claim here is that the EFQM model seems to represent a useful framework to develop and customise when reviewing strategies for school improvement. It offers scope for a holistic approach to evaluating a programme of provision for able Muslim pupils based on the principles and processes of total quality. I look forward to the day that it becomes an integral element of schemes for improving quality and performance in Muslim schools.☺

Dr. Nasim Butt

Dr. Nasim Butt is Assistant Headteacher at King Fahad Academy, London and OFSTED Inspector. He has a PhD in Science Education and an MBA in Educational Management. He has successfully completed the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), the

new qualification for head teachers in the UK. His publications include: Science and Muslim Societies (1991), An Exploration of the Limits of Modern Science (2000) and A Pack of National Curriculum Workcards (2000–2001).

THIS ARTICLE IS TAKEN FROM A PRESENTATION GIVEN AT THE 4TH ANNUAL AMSS (UK) CONFERENCE IN OCTOBER 2002. A BIBLIOGRAPHY CAN BE SUPPLIED ON REQUEST

NOTICE!

AMSS (UK) AGM

Election of New Executive Committee

The Annual General Meeting of the AMSS (UK) was held at the Muslim College on Saturday 16 November 2002. As it was the month of Ramadan *iftar* was provided once the fast broke. After presentation of a financial report of the AMSS (UK) accounts for the year 2001–2002 as well as a report on its activities during this period elections were held for the formulation of a new Executive Committee. The results were as follows:

CHAIRMAN:

DR. ANAS S. AL SHAIKH-ALI

MEMBERS:

FAUZIA AHMAD

DR. SOPHIE GILLIAT-RAY

MOHAMMAD SIDDIQUE SEDDON

Once nominations are received from the organisations who jointly founded the AMSS (UK) the remaining members will be added.

The new Executive Committee is planning to hold its first meeting early in 2003.

Education for Peace and Justice

Seminar Report

A seminar entitled, "Education for Peace and Justice in the Light of September the 11th" was held on 19-20 October 2002 at Homerton College, University of Cambridge. It was jointly organized by the Islamic Academy, Cambridge and the Cambridge University School of Education. There were thirty-three participants from different fields – university professors, education officers, school teachers and religious leaders from three major faiths, Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Nineteen papers on various topics were presented.

The rationale behind the seminar was as follows. The end of the cold war was greeted by a rising tide of optimism that humanity, at least in the area of international relations, was at long last turning to the ways of peace. Disputes might still inevitably arise, but they could and would be settled by negotiation based on the principles of equity, respect and reconciliation.

All this was given a new and terrible twist by the events of September 11. The most secure countries of the West felt threatened by an unpredictable and ruthless terrorism. Their reaction was swift and overwhelming. What was worse, such acts of terrorism were claimed to be in the name of a major world religion, Islam. The complex causes and injustices lying behind such events were forgotten and too many commentators saw them as further examples of religion as the source of conflict, division and war. Yet this was gravely misleading. Most followers of Islam abhor such acts of violence on innocent peoples wherever they are found. Indeed Islam with all the major religions of the world has strong teachings on peace and justice, which if they were fol-

lowed would create a very different world order to the one we now experience.

The seminar explored these teachings and above all suggested ways through education in which young people might be made aware of those paths of peace made explicit by the religions. It also investigated how young people might become more media literate and learn to critically re-evaluate those misrepresentations which too often attribute to the religions what they in fact most strongly oppose.

The seminar recognised that peace without justice is no peace at all. There is room for respect and decency between people of all faiths and none, but the dominant faith or group professing a faith has to be willing to give that respect, and allow other faiths to flourish. In order for people to understand Islam and Muslims there has to be established a context which is presently largely absent; and to achieve this there has to be a complete change of heart in attitudes and approaches to Islam here in the West engendered by honesty and truthfulness.

Many participants presented evidence that Islam and Muslims are not treated fairly in the Western mass media and the Western literature. Muslims are often blamed for actions for which they are not actually responsible as was seen in the case of Oklahoma City bombing. The whole Muslim community and their faith are blamed for any act of violence caused by an individual Muslim — very often the word "Islamic" is attached to an act of violence as if it is Islam that led to such an act. Justice and fairness demand that such ways of interpreting events should be avoided. Islam

is often projected in the mass media as a religion that breeds conflicts and terrorism, and the dissemination of such ideas give rise to prejudice and violent reactions towards Muslims in the minds of the people of other faiths leading to mistrust and social disharmony.

In this connection, faith schools especially have a very important role to play in challenging discrimination through interfaith dialogue, exchange programmes for staff and pupils. They have also a role to play in reducing prejudice. Educational institutions in general play a very important role in contributing to young people's awareness of religion, peace and justice but schools exist in the context of society as a whole and they cannot and should not be expected to do everything that needs to be done in terms of working for peace and justice in the light of September 11.

Islam's condemnation of terroristic activities was reiterated by many participants but it was also stressed that to remove terrorism by further acts of violence was not a solution. One should go to the root causes of terrorism which in many cases are results of gross injustice inflicted upon defenceless people. Many participants of the seminar drew attention to the double standard at present operating at the international level especially in the treatment meted out to the Palestinian people.

Muslims must present a proper picture of Islam to the West through their own actions and the work of *da'wah* which might help to educate people in Islam and remove a lot of misunderstandings about it.

They should be more flexible and more accommodating, as without a reasonable level of compromise Muslims would only make them-

selves segregated. They should develop a culture that is appropriate for British Muslims, a culture that is going to strike roots in the British soil. Muslims living in the West have the tasks of confronting the challenge of the West i.e. its secular philosophy and lifestyles; engaging in fine-grained debates with Muslim scholars in order to find limits of applicability of Shari'ah in the Western context; and explore the common grounds among different

faiths which will help to promote mutual respect and tolerance.

In line with the usual practice of the Islamic Academy and the School of Education it was decided that an Agreed Statement would be produced which will encapsulate the rationale of the seminar, the major issues discussed and its recommendations.

This document will be sent to schools, departments of education, important religious leaders and

people in authority responsible for policy making. ۞

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FAIR'S SUCCESS

Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism

Following the well received report that FAIR submitted to the House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences earlier this year, the organisation's credentials should be further strengthened this year. In addition to a response to the DTI considering the employment status of imams, a consultative document on the subject of Muslims and education in the UK is being prepared by FAIR in cooperation with AMSS (UK), The Muslim College, Al Khoei Foundation and FED 2000.

FAIR are also hosting a media seminar and a joint conference on the role of Muslims in Europe. However, its challenging and wide-reaching report into the disturbances in Bradford last year will probably be the most headline-grabbing. Raising questions about the disturbances' underlying causes, the subsequent sentencing, and the political motivation that has impacted upon all levels of reaction, the report adds its voice to the growing number calling for an independent enquiry into the situation.

FAIR's continued commitment to research excellence will no doubt ensure that its academic research team remain at the forefront of documenting the situation of Muslims in contemporary Britain.

■ Christopher Allen
Policy and Research Coordinator, FAIR

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Set up as an independent charitable organisation the Forum Against Islamophobia & Racism has been established to:

- ☞ *promote* better awareness of Islam
- ☞ *monitor* and respond to cases of Islamophobia in the media and popular culture
- ☞ *support* and assist victims of religious and racial discrimination
- ☞ *formulate* advice for relevant agencies tackling Islamophobic & Muslim-alienating trends in society
- ☞ *encourage* good relations between people & communities of different religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds

These aims are to be pursued through several projects and activities including: an Islam Awareness Project; a Media and Popular Culture Watch; a Muslim Equality Casework Project; an Institutional Discrimination Project; and Policy Research and Lobbying.

Although specialist in nature, FAIR will emphasise partnership and multi-agency working and work with organisations across disciplines and communities. It will seek common purposes in building a fairer Britain for all.

For further information or if you have something to report or can contribute please contact:

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Cont'd from page 1

in London. The AMSS (UK) won The Fazlur Rahman Khan Award for Excellence in Engineering, Technology and Science for its work in the social sciences, primarily for its role in providing a unique platform for the development of Islamic thought through research, publications and conferences, and for providing an awareness of Islamic opinions on topical and emerging issues, as well as for hosting successful conferences in the UK and Europe drawing on the contribution of analysts and researchers through out the Muslim community in Europe.

For an organization which relies mainly on voluntary work provided by very busy people this award, won after only three years of functioning, is seen as an important achievement. Once again it should be emphasised that the most important factor behind this success is the selfless dedication of all those involved in the work of the association.

This dedication to team spirit draws on the example of Abu Bakr al Siddiq and Omar ibn al Khattab (RA) who debated with each other and expressed different views but were always united in action to achieve the objective of serving Allah (SWT) and following the Sunnah of His Prophet (SAAS). We should all draw inspiration from their glorious history and seek to remind and alert one another to them as outstanding role models for organising the affairs of society and producing effective work.

Unfortunately, this team spirit has suffered serious decline in many Muslim circles being displaced too often by internal disputes and personal ambitions. Rather than teamwork, one sometimes encounters organizations relentlessly interested in pushing their own agendas only. Individualistic agendas within organizations have also done untold damage as individuals try to use organizations to promote themselves rather than the noble work they have been entrusted with. It is

only when personal agendas are left at the door that an organization can fully realize its potential and put the group dynamics into effective use.

One of the important achievements of many of the conferences that the AMSS (UK) has organized is the strong cooperation it has maintained with a number of the organizations who have collaborated with and supported its activities, i.e. AMSS Germany, The Muslim College, Al-Khoei Foundation, The Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland, FAIR, Q-News, IIIT and many others. The AMSS has proven beyond doubt that team spirit, cooperation and selfless dedicated work open wide the door to the successful growth and development of an organization.

The award for excellence won by the association is a credit to its Advisory Board, Executive Committee, and members. It is also a credit to all those organizations who have worked closely with the AMSS and supported its work. ☞

Membership to AMSS (UK)

IF YOU WISH TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE AMSS UK PLEASE WRITE TO US OR DOWNLOAD THE APPLICATION FORM FROM OUR WEBSITE: WWW.AMSSUK.COM

Members will be given:

- *discounts on registration fees for all AMSS (UK) conferences;*

- *a free subscription to our quarterly journal AJISS and*

- *a free subscription to Islamiyat al Marifah (journal for arabic speakers);*

- *full voting rights.*

Regular Members

£25.00

Students (and concessions)

£12.50 ☞

AMSS (UK) Specialist Groups

The AMSS intends to establish a number of specialist groups in various areas of the social sciences and provide support to these groups to organize activities in issues related to their own disciplines. The AMSS intends to begin with the formation of the following two groups:

- **Media**
- **Education**

This will be coordinated with FAIR as well as other organisations working in these two areas. Those interested in joining these groups or coordinating their activities, please write to the Executive Committee sending your name, address and short CV. ☞

The Muslim College Launches its Latest Course

The Muslim College has launched a course leading to an M.A. degree in Imamship. The course comprises a deep and broad study of the Qur'an, the Prophetic Tradition, Shari'ah, Theology and Thought, Islamic History and Civilization, World Religions, Western Philosophy and Culture, Modern Islamic Movements, Public Speaking, Mosque Administration, Pastoral Care, and the use of the media. Special courses are also arranged for Imams working for the Prison service, or working with the Health Service in hospitals or hospices.

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Citizenship in Islam

A SHORT ESSAY BY PROFESSOR M. A. ZAKI BADAWI

The term citizen as used in the Graeco-Roman world described the free man of a particular city. The Roman was the free man of the Empire, the rest were subjects with far fewer rights. In contemporary society the term applies to a person belonging to a State, as British indicates a citizen of Britain, an Egyptian is a citizen of Egypt and Dutch indicates a citizen of Holland.

But what does it mean to be a citizen, or in other words what is citizenship? There are many definitions of the term but for this lecture I choose to define citizenship as a set of legal, political and ethical rights and duties that are shared by all members of a particular state. The state is taken to mean a geographical location with institutions to identify and enforce the law. The citizens themselves should in a democratic society be the ultimate source of authority of the institutions that uphold the law. This is achieved through participation in decision-making by way of electing representative bodies or by referenda. The absence of participation deprives the inhabitants of the state of the most important element of their citizenship. Thus women, racial, religious or political minorities who, in some states, are deprived of the exercise of the right to participate are only paper citizens who may carry the state's passport, be allowed the use of common facilities such as education and health services but they resemble the subjects of Rome rather than its citizens.

This concept of citizenship allows for pluralism in tradition, belief and political affiliation for as long as these diversities fall within a broad framework that covers the relationship between the different groups and individuals. This framework allows for debate among the citizens as to the permissible level of diversity. Such debate must ensure a fair distribution of the common good. The principle of justice is therefore at the very heart of the idea of citi-

Human Rights and the concept of citizenship now built upon it are the product of a secular outlook in which religion is excluded though not necessarily rejected. Citizenship in Islam is of course wholly religious. Based on the principles enshrined in the revealed word of Allah in the Holy Qur'an and on the action, judgment and conduct of His Prophet. The starting point in Islam's vision of citizenship is its regard for the human race. In the

Qur'an Allah declares, "We have honoured the children of Adam."¹

This is the foundation of Islamic ethics. Human life and dignity, regardless of race, colour or creed is sacrosanct. Only if the person transgresses this rule would the right to be protected be denied him. Islam speaks less of human rights and more of human duties. This approach sanctifies human rights by basing them on obligations to God. Thus the right to life is expressed in the Islamic system as the duty to save life.

"Whosoever saves one soul shall be construed as if he had saved the entire human race and whosoever kills one soul shall be construed as if he had killed the entire human race."²

Sharing of resources, caring for the needy etc. are there. Freedom of conscience is instituted by the Qur'anic verse: "No compulsion in matters of religion."³

The Qur'an tells us that our Sustainer created Adam to be His vicegerent on earth.⁴ Adam's descendants inherited his place in relation to this planet and also were

*"We have honoured
the children of Adam."*

(The Qur'an)

*This is the foundation of
Islamic ethics. Human
life and dignity, regardless
of race, colour or creed
is sacrosanct*

zenship. Justice itself is defined in terms of the Declaration of Human Rights, which has been more or less adopted by all the members of the United Nations.

It would be idle to suggest that all entitled to the enjoyment of citizenship get their dues, or that the universal Declaration of Human Rights has delivered its high sounding prescriptions. Both, however, set the stage for debate and development towards a better world.

The Universal Declaration of

To me religion is not only the belief in one's heart but also and perhaps even more importantly the manifestation of one's words and actions.

made morally responsible for each other through the various revelations that came over the centuries to guide them to the right conduct. The last of these revelations is the Qur'an that lays the foundation for a society based on justice and tolerance.

Let us see how it worked in practice. The first Muslim political order was established in Madinah when the Prophet migrated to it in 622 CE. The Prophet entered Madinah on the basis of an agreement drawn earlier with some of the leaders of two Arab tribes in the city. It assured the Prophet of protection inside Madinah against all his enemies, especially the Makkans who were pursuing him to kill him and end his mission. Once he settled down in the city, he drew a series of treaties with the Arab and Jewish tribes in Madinah setting out the system of government and the rules that transformed a primitive tribal justice system based on collective responsibility into a legal system making every individual responsible for his/her action. The duties regarding the defence of the city were outlined. The religious diversity of the population was celebrated and the common framework for the system was defined. These docu-

ments are collectively called the Constitution of Madinah. Its recognition of pluralism is an example of humanity and justice. It states in this regard: The Muslims are an 'Ummah (a religious community) in themselves, and the Jews are an 'umma in themselves. The Muslims and the Jews are together an Ummah in themselves.⁵

Thus the Madinah Constitution respected the rights of both Muslims and Jews to follow their religious and social practices but both were made bound by their citizenship of the city to co-operate for its defence and common good.

I have always cited the arrangement of Madinan society under this constitution as the first plural society in history. Many European historians in the Age of Enlightenment, which led some of them to an anti-Christian attitude, showed contempt for Christian-ruled Europe under the Holy Emperors and divine kings. This was because of its intolerance that manifested itself in religious wars and the oppression of other religions, or different interpretations of Christianity. They contrasted the Christian epoch with that of heathen Rome, favouring the latter over the former. They admired the Roman tolerance of the gods of the people they conquered and marveled at their propensity to include them in their own pantheon. Some even condemned monotheism as inherently hostile to human freedom to be different in belief and custom. They longed for the tolerant and permissive polytheism of Rome. No doubt they were oblivious of the fact that Judaism and Christianity suffered terrible persecution under this so very tolerant Rome! Why did the fate of these two faiths differ from that of the ancient Egyptian and Syrian gods? The answer is illustrated in the novel *Thais* by Anatole France.⁶ He leads us into the presence of the Roman Governor of Alexandria who receives a Christian monk to debate the Roman perception of

Christianity. This took place when the Romans had grown tired of throwing the Christians to the lions and allowed them, very reluctantly, to pursue their own faith. The Governor in Anatole France's novel says to the monk, "You Christians are difficult. We Romans are willing to include your Christ among our deities if only you join the cult of the Emperor."

Tolerant Rome was only indulgent with those who bowed to the divine head of the Empire. The Constitution of Madinah did not require the Jews either to change their custom or to accept Muhammad as the Messenger of God. The system was based on consultation and participation. No major issue affecting the destiny of the city was resolved without the matter being thoroughly debated by the community. Although the authority of the Prophet was fully recognized by the Muslims, he never finalized a decision without seeking their views and deferring to them.

When he was unexpectedly confronted by a well-armed Makkan force at Badr, his original aim was to intercept the caravan trading in the stolen property of his companions; but the caravan fled and a superior force faced him instead. He did not issue an order to the Madinans to join the battle. Their agreement with him was to defend him inside the city, not to engage in conflict outside it. But once he sought their opinion, they agreed to stand by him.

When on another occasion the Makkans marched on Madinah the Prophet gathered the people to discuss the crisis and suggest an answer. He himself favoured staying put in the city with its small defence force protected by the buildings against the much more numerous enemy. The majority, however, insisted on meeting the Makkans some distance from the town. The Makkans won the battle⁷ but the Qur'an instructed the Prophet that notwithstanding that the majority

decision proved wrong he must nevertheless continue the practice of consultation: "Consult them in the affairs [of state]"⁸

Now, who was consulted before this battle? The sources are silent on this important matter. Searching through the reports I came across a piece of information about those who fell in the battle⁹. It included a Jew by the name of Mukhayriq who called upon other Jews to join the Prophet but they declined saying that it was the Sabbath that they had to keep. Mukhayriq on his part told the Prophet that should he be slain he would leave his entire property to the Prophet. Such was the loyalty engendered by the respect accorded to the Jews that this particular Jew expressed his allegiance to a man he did not follow as a religious leader but as the head of the citizenry.

As the Muslim state expanded, the non-Muslims retained their right of citizenship. Omar the second Caliph, who began his reign two years after the Prophet's death, chanced on a blind beggar in Madinah. He enquired who he was. The beggar said that he was a Christian carpenter until he grew old and lost his sight and now had to depend on begging for survival. Omar said, "We [the Muslim state] would not be fair to you if we enjoy the fruits of your work when you were young and healthy and then abandon you in your sickness and old age." Omar allotted the man a pension from the treasury (*bait al-mal*).

The status of non-Muslim was regulated into the Dhimmi system which though given a bad name was far more just to the minorities than any alternative. The majority Muslims did not always enjoy the benefit of Islamic citizenship as the Muslim world endured a series of oppressive rulers. Nevertheless most of these rulers adhered to the precepts of the Shari'ah and were answerable to the Ulema or the Muslim scholars who mediated

between the people and the rulers.

I have so far dealt with Islamic citizenship as it is practiced in Muslim society. Its essential characteristic is its concern for human beings as a manifestation of the worship of God. This is the fundamental difference between this vision and that of the secular form of citizenship. You may have noticed that I have quoted few texts focusing instead on the actuality of Muslim society. To me religion is not only the belief in one's heart but also and perhaps even more importantly the manifestation of one's words and actions. Apologists for religions take refuge in their usually idealistic scriptures from the failure of their adherents to live up to them. It is my contention that Islam's record in the question of citizenship especially when it is concerned with pluralism is unequalled in any other culture. The land of Islam has over the centuries been a safe haven for the persecuted and oppressed. The history of the Jews in particular is punctuated with flights from persecution into the welcoming and safe lands of Islam.

To be sure, there were occasional lapses from tolerance to violence but they were exceptions that proved the rule; they were often a reaction to provocation such as the Crusades or the expulsion and oppression of the Palestinians.

Another side to the issue has to do with the Muslim residents of a non-Muslim country such as Holland or Great Britain. Is there a place for a Muslim citizenship to operate? In other words, does citizenship in Islam preclude Muslims from living as a minority. Further, is it permitted for a Muslim to be a citizen of a non-Muslim state?

Over the long centuries of conflict, some scholars advised Muslims not to live outside the land of Islam except in cases of necessity. This view though often repeated by its adherents has never been taken seriously. Muslims conducted themselves in the spirit of their faith,

which is totally opposed to ghettoizing their community. If one of the most important duties of the Muslim is to proclaim his/her faith to the world, how can they be locked into the cage of their homeland and not be allowed to step outside it?

The fear of these isolationist scholars that a non-Muslim environment will endanger the faith is greatly exaggerated. The history of Islam itself points to the rejection of this attitude. The Prophet (SAAS) lived in polytheist Makkah at the head of a small band of followers and had the Makkans not threatened his life he would not have departed to Madinah. Ibn Ishaq¹⁰ reports that as the Prophet (SAAS) began his journey to Madinah he turned to the city of his birth and said "You are the dearest spot on earth to my heart. Had your people not driven me out, I would not be departing now."

As the Muslim state expanded it developed a system of international relations based on classifying states as enemies whose land is the Abode of War, or friends whose land is the Abode of Agreement, both in contrast with the land of Islam, the Abode of Peace. A Muslim may not voluntarily reside in an enemy country particularly if he/she is forced to act against his/her faith. Beyond this there is no restriction on a Muslim living in and acquiring the citizenship of any country that does not demand that Muslims should abandon their faith and desist from fulfilling their religious duties.

A Muslim therefore may become part of a non-Muslim society as a citizen in a democratic system that accords him/her all the rights and charges him/her with all the duties as other citizens. Like the Muslim concept of citizenship, the democratic system gives space to others, allowing for diversity in religion, culture and custom within the broad umbrella of being committed to the common good. Muslims have

to accept the basic aspects of democracy such as respect for the law, the various bodies of government accepting the right of the state to monopolize arms and to impose the rule of law etc.

Accepting citizenship of a non-Muslim country is an obligation for those who make their home there. This is because without acquiring the status of citizens they would precluded themselves from the process of decision making. This neglects a fundamental religious responsibility to sow concern for others. The Prophet (SAAS) said, "Those who care not for the affairs of the Muslims cease to be one of them".

He was addressing a mono-religious group, but we can legitimately carry the message further and say that those who do not care for other human beings do not deserve to be counted among them.

Islam has enjoined Muslims to care for their neighbours, which in the modern world means the entire inhabitants of our planet. Those who interpret Islamic citizenship as confining Muslim loyalty to only one section of humanity miss the essential universality and humanity of Islam.☞

Notes

¹ *The Qur'an* 17:70

² *The Qur'an* 5:32

³ *The Qur'an* 2:256

⁴ *The Qur'an* 2:30

⁵ Alfred Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, (Oxford University Press, 1995), p.233

⁶ Anatole France, *Oeuvres*, (Gaullimard, 1948), p.687

⁷ *The Qur'an* 3:159

⁸ *The Qur'an* 3:159

⁹ *The Life of Muhammad*, p.384

¹⁰ *The Life of Muhammad*

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