

التراث الإسلامي ودوره في تصحيح صورة الإسلام

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التراث الإسلامي هو كل ما ورثناه عن السلف الصالح من قيم ومبادئ، وما خلفوه لنا من مؤلفات في شتى فروع المعرفة بصرف النظر عن اللغات التي كتبت بها تلك المؤلفات، وعن الجنسية التي ينتمي إليها مؤلفوها، فالإمام البخاري شيخ المحدثين كان من أوزبكستان، وسيبويه شيخ العربية كان من فارس، والطبري والخوارزمي وابن سينا والفارابي والبيروني خرجوا من آسيا الوسطى، وابن كمال باشا وآشق باشا وفضولي ظهوروا في تركيا، وكلهم كانوا يرحلون في طلب العلم شرقاً وغرباً، ولا يفرقون بين عالم شامي أو غربي أو يماني.

وأمام الحملة الشرسة التي تُشنّ على الإسلام في هذه الأيام، ينبغي أن تفرغ الأمة الإسلامية إلى تراثها تستلهم منه عناصر قوتها، وتجمع الخيوط المتفرقة التي تتسج شخصيتها، وتتعرف من خلاله على حقائق دينها التي يحاول الآخرون أن يطمسوها أو يزيفوها.

وعلى رأس الدعاوى الباطلة يأتي ربط الإسلام بالإرهاب، والادعاء بأنه دين عدوان وعنف وقسوة، وأنه انتشر بحدّ السيف، مع أن القرآن الكريم ينصّ صراحة على أنه ﴿لا إكراه في الدين﴾، ﴿لكم دينكم ولي دين﴾، ﴿فمن شاء فليؤمن ومن شاء فليكفر﴾. ويأمر المسلمين بأن يتعاملوا مع الآخر بالحسنى ﴿ولا تجادلوا أهل الكتاب إلا بالتي هي أحسن﴾. بل إن الجهاد لم يُفرض في الإسلام إلا لردّ العدوان وكفالة حرية العقيدة بدليل قوله تعالى: ﴿وقاتلوا في سبيل الله الذي يقاتلونكم ولا تعتدوا إن الله لا يحب المعتدين﴾، و﴿فمن اعتدى عليكم فاعتدوا عليه بمثل ما اعتدى عليكم﴾، و﴿وإن عاقبتهم فعاقبوا بمثل ما عوقبتم به ولئن صبرتم لهو خير للصابرين﴾، ويمضي القرآن الكريم إلي ما هو أبعد من ذلك فيقول: ﴿لا ينهاكم الله عن الذين لم يقاتلوكم في الدين ولم يخرجوكم من دياركم أن تبروهم وتقسطوا إليهم إن الله يحب المقسطين﴾. والله سبحانه وتعالى يأمر المسلمين صراحة بأن يلتزموا بالسلم والسلام فيقول: ﴿يا أيها الذين آمنوا ادخلوا في السلم كافة﴾، و﴿وإن جنحوا للسلم فاجنح لها وتوكل على الله﴾. وفي حجة الوداع يخطب رسول الله ﷺ في أتباعه ويعلن على الدنيا كلها أن ﴿دماءكم وأموالكم عليكم حرام إلى أن تلقوا ربكم﴾.

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وعلى هدي المسطفى سار الخلفاء الراشدون من بعده، وكانت سيرتهم تطبيقاً عملياً لتعاليم الإسلام وسماحته، ويُعدّ عمر بن الخطاب نموذجاً رائعاً للعدل وديموقراطية الحكم، ومن مواقفه الشهيرة أنه دعا الناس ذات يوم إلى عدم المغالاة في المهور فتهضت له امرأة من الرعية تراجعته وتقول له بأعلى صوتها: يعطينا الله وتحرمنا يا عمر. فيرجع أمير المؤمنين عن رأيه بشجاعة نادرة ويقول: أصابت المرأة وأخطأ عمر، كل الناس أفتقه منك يا عمر.

ويعتدي ابن عمرو بن العاص والي مصر على صبي من أقباط مصر ويضربه بالسوط قائلاً له: خذها وأنا ابن الأكرمين، فيشكو الأب إلى أمير المؤمنين فيستدعي عمرًا وابنه ويأمر الصبي القبطي أن يأخذ الدرة ويضرب بها ابن الأكرمين، ثم يقول له: أجلبها علي صلعة عمرو فوالله ما ضريك ابنه إلا بسلطان أبيه، ويلتفت إلى عمرو ويقول له قولته المشهورة: متي استعبدتم الناس وقد ولدتهم أمهاتهم أحراراً؟.

destroyed, with its property, crosses and money untouched. They are not to be forced out of their religion, or harmed. No Jew is to inhabit Iliya. They have to pay tribute like other states. If any of the natives should desire to accompany the Romans with his property, he and his property are safe, till they reach their target".⁴⁵ This is the text of the contract which protected the natives of Iliya and their sacred places, and ensured their freedom of belief. The tribute was not a royalty imposed on the People of the Book, but a tax for defence or national security, because they were exempted from recruiting and their safety was the responsibility of the Islamic army. While writing the contract, the time of the prayer fell due. Umar went out of the church, and performed his prayer beside it. He dreaded praying inside, lest Muslims should keep that place later.

Keeping all this in mind, can any fair person accuses Islam of violence and terrorism? After all this, can it be said that Islam instigates hatred and enmity for non-Muslims? How come that the Islamic society is accused of being based on aggression and racism?

Our ignorance with our Heritage and our disability on defining it correctly give chance to the voices of our enemies to rise, and their false, claims to find listeners. This why I say that our current crisis is that of ignorance more than weakness. A correct knowledge of our Heritage can unite us and consolidate our unity. Heritage is the mind of our nation and its consciousness. A mere knowledge of it is not enough. We should revive it, make it competent and adhere to it. We should inform of its ideals and values, which unite and do not divide, build and do not destroy, keep and do not waste, spread love and fraternity among the whole humanity, spare blood, money and honour, set man free from submission, except for Allah, and release his hidden abilities for enriching the universe and improving life.

45- *Haqa'iq al-Islam wa Apatil khusumu*, p. 242.

he could not refute. What kind of democracy is that? Any democracy, be it in East or West, would bow in reverence of Umar, or hide ashamed and mortified. Sometimes I feel that if Umar was not born and people knew that he was there, no one would have believed that the world had ever a ruler as just and modest as Umar.

How come that a nation of such Heritage is accused of terrorism? How come that a nation is accused of terrorism, while its religion is Islam, its prayers are concluded with peace and its *Qur'an* call for peace? – “O ye who believe! Enter into peace whole-heartedly”⁴¹, “But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah”⁴², “Therefore if they withdraw from you but fight you not, and (instead) send you (guarantees of) peace, then Allah hath opened no way for you (to war against them)”⁴³. How come that Islam is equated with terrorism, while its Prophet advises the leaders of his troops not to cut a tree, scare a child or a woman or hurt any worshipper in his cell, no matter what his religion or belief is? It is an advice kept by the four righteous Calipha who followed him; Abu Bakr said to his troops, “Do not grudge, betray or mutilate. Do not kill a little child, an old man or a woman. Do not uproot palm trees or burn them, cut a fruitful tree. Do not slaughter a goat, a cow or a camel, except for eating. You will pass by people retired into their cells; leave them as they are”⁴⁴.

Muslims are not men of war, but peace. They respond to its caller, if their enemies showed desire for safety and protection. If some of the Muslims misunderstood or behaved wrongly, the blame falls upon them, not upon Islam. The Prophet and his companions provide us with a good example in the Hudaibiya Treaty. They wanted to visit Mekka to perform Umra, but the infidels stopped them. The Prophet said, “We did not come to fight, but to perform the Umra”. He accepted to go back with his companions that year, and to come back the following year. Quraish would leave then, and they would spend three days in Mekka. It may be said: Islam was weak. The Prophet had better accepted what they offered, in spite of the protest of his friends against the conditions of the Treaty and its form. But what can be said about the contract of Jerusalem which was given by Umar bn al-Khattab to the natives of Iliya, “promising them safety for themselves, their money, churches, crosses, the sick, the healthy and all the cults. Their churches are not to be inhibited or

41- Surat “al-Baqara”, Verse 208.

42- Surat “al-Anfal”, Verse 61.

43- Surat “al-Nisaa”, Verse 90.

44- *Gamharat Khutab al-Arab*, Part I, p. 74 (and *Tarikh al-Tabai* [*The History of al-Tabari*]: 3: 213).

take not the least bit of it back”³³ How did Umar, the Prince of Muslims respond to this? He did not order putting her into custody or jail. He changed his opinion in a rare courage, saying from above the pulpit, “The woman spoke rightly and Umar spoke wrongly. All people are more conversant than you, Umar”.

Who said this? It is Umar bn al-Khattab, the fair, devout, whom the Prophet said about, “The sun never rose on a man better than Umar”³⁴, “If there was a prophet after me, it would have been Umar”.³⁵ It is Umar whom the *Qur'an* agreed with his opinions several times. Even some of his words are mentioned in the *Qur'an* as he pronounced them. Umar said, as narrated by al-Bukhari, “Allah agreed with me three times. I said, ‘O Prophet of Allah, why do not we take the station of Abraham as a place of prayer?’, then a Verse descended, ‘And take ye the Station of Abraham as a place of prayer’³⁶. I said, ‘O Prophet of Allah, why do not you order your wives to be veiled? They are talked to by the bad and debauched’, then the Verse of veil descended. When the wives of the Prophet agreed on their jealousy, I said to them, ‘It may be, if he divorced you (all), that Allah will give him in exchange Consorts better than you’³⁷, then this Verse was descended”.³⁸

There are other situations in which the *Qur'an* agreed with Umar. When Ibn Ubai passed away, the Prophet was about to pray upon him. Umar reminded him of his conspiracies against Islam and Muslims, and the Verse, “Whether thou ask for their forgiveness or not, (their sin is unforgivable): if thou ask seventy times for their forgiveness, Allah will not forgive them”.³⁹ The Prophet smiled and said, “If I know that more than seventy could absolve him, I would have done that”. He prayed upon him, attended his funeral and buried him, then a Verse was descended: “Nor do thou ever pray for any of them that dies, nor stand at his grave”.⁴⁰

Umar the Calipha retaliates a Coptic boy aggressed by the son of his ruler over Egypt, in a way no one is capable of except him. He changes his opinion before a woman from populace, who confronted him with a proof

33- Surat “al-Nisaa”, Verse 20.

34- “Sunan al-Tirmizi” (“al-Turmuzi Precepts”), Kitab *al-Manaqib* (*Book of Good Traits*), Ch. 17.

35- *Masnad al-Imam Ahmed bn Hanbal* (*Ahmed Ibn Hanbal's Record*), Part 4, p. 154.

36- Surat “al-Baqara”, Verse 125.

37- Surat “al-Tahrim”, Verse 5.

38- *The Authenticated al-Bukhari*. Riyadh: Dar al-Salam Press, 1999, p. 71.

39- Surat “al-Tawba”, Verse 80.

40- Surat “al-Tawba”, Verse 84.

his famous statement: O Umar, you acted justly, so you felt safe and could sleep.

One evening, Umar found a woman who put a pot on fire, while her children were crying. He asked about the reason of their crying, and she answered, "Hunger". He asked, what was in the pot? She answered, "water to calm them till they sleep. Allah will give his verdict on Umar and us". He said, "How could Umar possibly know about you?" She answered, "He rules us, then forgets about us?" Umar went with one of his companions to the Public Treasury and took flour and oil, saying to his companion, "Put them on my back". His companion said, "I will carry them instead of you, Prince of Muslims". Umar said, "Will you carry my sins in the Doomsday?" The Prince of the Muslims carried the flour and went to the woman and her children. He helped her in cooking, blowing under the pot, so smoke went up through his thick beard. When the food was done, he cooled it, remaining there till they all satisfied their hunger. The woman kept saying, "May Allah rewards you. By what you did, you deserve the place of the Prince of Muslims more than him".³¹

Under the rule of Umar, Amr bn al-As opened Egypt. His son's horse raced with the horse of an Egyptian Coptic. Both argued about the winner, so the son of Amr beat the Coptic and whips him saying, "Take it, I am the son of the honoured". His father sent a complaint to the Prince of Muslims who sent back asking for the two boys and Amr bn al-Aas. When they stood before him, he said to the Coptic boy, "Here is the lash. Whip the son of the honoured". The boy whipped him till he was hurt badly (as Anas bn Malik, the narrator said). When he finished, Umar said to the boy, "Turn to the baldness of Amr. By Allah, his son beat you by the power of his father". Amr said in alarm, "O Prince of Muslims, you punished and took revenge". The boy said in embarrassment, "O Prince of Muslims, I beat the one who beat me. His father, Amr, did not beat me". Umar said, "By Allah, if you beat him, we would not stop you till you get your full". He then turned to Amr saying, "O Amr, when did you enslave people, since their mothers gave birth to them free".³²

When Umar knew that rising dowries caused many youth to abstain from marriage, he delivered a speech asking for moderation. A woman stood out, saying very loudly, "Allah gives us, and you detain, Omar? Did not He say in the *Qur'an*, "But if ye decide to take one wife in place of another, even if ye had given any of them a whole treasure for dower,

31- *Al-bqariyat al-Islamiya (Islamic Geniuses)*. Abbass al-qqad. Beirut: Al-Kitab al-Libnani Publishing House, 1974, Vol. I, p. 411.

32- *Ibid.*, pp. 490-491.

with, "Salman is one of us, the Household".²⁷ Whenever Umar saw Bilal he said, "Bilal is our master, freed by our master (meaning Abu Bakr)".

The Prophet used to ask about his companions, visit the patient and console the afflicted. There was a woman called Umm Mehgan used to clean his mosque. One day the Prophet asked about her, and was told that she passed away. He said: Why did not you tell me to pray upon her? Those whom I pray upon in life has my prayer as an intercession after life. They said: O Prophet of Allah, she passed away at a time of intense heat. We did not want to cause you any trouble. The Prophet responded with going to her tomb, praying and invoking blessing upon her, saying, "Allah has built a mosque for her in the paradise. I see her sitting in it now". If a simple woman-worker in the palace of a king or a president in the most democratic country today died, would he have asked about her himself, or even paid attention or offered condolence?

The Prophet declared in his famous speech during his pilgrimage the first worldwide petition for human rights: "Your blood and money are inviolable as this very day and this very month. We you meet Allah, He will ask you about your works. I have told you. If you have a trust in due, pay it back to its owner. Muslims are brothers; nothing owned is legitimate for anyone, unless his brother gives it without hard feelings. Do no do yourselves injustice".²⁸

Giants were graduated from the school of the Prophet, such as Abi Bakr who delivered a speech when he was appointed a *Khalifa* saying, "O people, I am appointed a ruler over you, yet I am not the best of you.... I consider the weakest is the strongest, till he gets his right. The strongest is the weakest, till I make him pay the right claimed back. O people, I am a follower, not an innovator. Help me if I do well, and correct me if I go astray".²⁹

He was followed by Umar. The Islamic state was extended during his rule, yet he was satisfied with very little and wore hard cloth.³⁰ He treated the camels specified for charity himself. When a messenger for Kisra (Emperor of Persia) found him asleep under the shade of a tree, he said

27- *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra (The Supreme Ranks)*, Ibn Sa'd. Beirut: Beirut Publishing House, 1978, Vol. 4, p. 83.

28- *Sirat Ibn Hisham (The Biography of Ibn Hisham)*. Edited by Muhammad Muhyi al-Din Abdul Hamid. Cairo: Subeih Press, 1971, p. 1022-1023.

29- *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, Ibn Sa'd. Beirut: Beirut Publishing House, 1978, Vol. 4, pp. 182-183.

30- It was narrated that he was seen in pilgrimage wearing a dress with twelve patches, though he was the Prince of Muslims (*Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, Vol. 3, p. 328).

soldiers and provoking energies for an unavoidable war, with no purpose but defending against aggressors".²¹

"Then fight in Allah's cause - thou art held responsible only for thyself - and rouse the Believers. It may be that Allah will restrain the fury of the unbelievers; for Allah is the strongest in might and in punishment"²², "Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors"²³, "If then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him. But fear Allah, and know that Allah is with those who restrain themselves"²⁴, "And if ye do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out: but if ye show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient".²⁵ The *Qur'an* goes far than this, opening the way for making good relations with non-Muslims, as long as they do not resort to aggression or drive Muslims out of their home: "Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just (8). Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out, of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection)."²⁶

The Prophet provides a good example; he was driven out of Mekka by its people. His followers were tortured and driven out as well. Yet what did he do when he entered it victorious, after leaving secretly chased by them? He did not intern them, treat them badly or take revenge. He said his famous statement, "Go, you are free".

The world has never known a ruling system more just than Islam, or a democracy like that of Islam. If we provide example, we would need hours and hours. It suffices now to mention a drop of that sea of democracy. Islam cancelled partisanship and rebuked racism, including Ali bn Abi Talib the Quraish was equal to Bilal the Abyssinian, Suhaib the Roman and Salman the Persian. The Prophet's companions competed in welcoming Salman; the Emigrants said, "Salman is one of us". The Supporters (al-Ansar) said, "Salman is one of us". The Prophet responded

21- *Haqa'iq al-Islam wa Apatil khusumih (The Truth about Islam and the Forgeries of its Enemies)*, Abbas al-Aqqad. Cairo: The Islamic Conference, 1957, p. 235.

22- Surat "al-Nisa", Verse 84.

23- Surat "al-Baqara", Verse 190.

24- Surat "al-Baqara", Verse 194.

25- Surat "al-Nahl", Verse 126.

26- Surat "al-Mumtahina", Verses 8-9.

*“Let him who will believe, and let him who will reject“ It even orders the Muslim who has pagan parents to obey and do them well: ““But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (And consideration)”¹⁶.

The *Qur'an* orders the Prophet to tell Allah's message to people, and define a certain way which should be followed in doing this: “Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious”¹⁷, And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation)”¹⁸.

Those verses are a direct invitation for Islam by kindness and affection, and for arguing with other religions “with means better than mere disputation”. Yet Islam is accused of permitting bloodshed; it is a charge refuted by many verses, such as “Say: “Come, I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) prohibited you from”: join not anything as equal with Him... take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom”¹⁸, “If a man kills a Believer intentionally, his recompense is Hell, to abide therein (forever): and the wrath and the curse of Allah are upon him, and a dreadful penalty is prepared for him”¹⁹, “And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, “Peace!” (63)... Those who invoke not, with Allah any other god, nor slay such life as Allah has made sacred, except for just cause, nor commit fornication, and any that does this (not only) meets punishment (68). (But) the Penalty on the Day of Judgment will be doubled to him, and he will dwell therein in ignominy (69).”²⁰

Islam approved the *Jihad* only to face aggression and to guarantee the freedom of belief. War is to defend ourselves or to avoid an expected attack. A Muslim is required to “be satisfied from war with what pushes harm back. He is ordered to delay it if there is a way to patience and peace and every order for Jihad in the *Qur'an* concerned recruiting

16- Surat “Luqman”, Verse 15.

17- Surat “al-Nahl”, Verse 125.

18- Surat “al-An‘am”, Verses 151.

19- Surat “al-Nisa”, Verse 93.

20- Surat “al-Furqan”, Verses 63- 69.

There is no need to affirm that the Prophet is our ideal: the *Qur'an* says, "Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day".⁸ His sayings and deeds are our torch which guides us to the path. The Prophet was not only a messenger from Allah or an explainer of the *Qur'an*, but also a legislator. Times of prayers – pinnacle of our religion – were not set by the *Qur'an*. It did not also explain how to perform them or define the number of *rak'at*. The Prophet showed us; he said, "Pray the way I pray". Some penalties (considered as the criminal law of Islam), such as stoning, were not mentioned in the *Qur'an*, but applied by the Prophet.

This is in response to some people who express doubts about the *hadith*, and claim that the *Qur'an* is enough. The *Qur'an* itself describes the Prophet saying, "Nor does he say (ought) of (his own) Desire (3). It is no less than inspiration sent down to him (4)".⁹ It also follows Allah's obedience with the Prophets obedience: "O ye who believe! obey Allah, and obey the Messenger"¹⁰, "And obey Allah and the Messenger; that ye may obtain mercy"¹¹, "Say: "If ye do love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (31). Say: "Obey Allah and His Messenger": but if they turn back, Allah loveth not those who reject Faith (32)"¹², "But no, by thy Lord, they can have no (real) Faith, until they make thee judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction".¹³

The deeds of the Prophet and his companions who were taught and enriched by him, are complementary to their sayings. Both (sayings and deeds) confirm the greatness of Islam and its benevolence, and they make us proud of being Muslims. They unit our nation and its thought, and organize its relations with other nations.

In the past, Islam was accused of being spread by sword. Today, Islam is accused that it is a religion of violence, injustice and terrorism. But our *Qur'an* states frankly the freedom of belief, that "Let there be no compulsion in religion"¹⁴ and "To you be your Way, and to me mine".¹⁵

8- Surat "al-Ahzab", Verse 21.

9- Surat "al-Nagm", Verses 3-4.

10- Surat "al-Nisa", Verse 59, and Surat "Muhammad", Verse 33.

11- Surat "al-Umran", Verse 132.

12- Surat "al-Umran", Verses 31-32.

13- Surat "al-Nisaa", Verse 65.

14- Surat "al-Baqara", Verse 256.

15- Surat "al-Kafirun", Verse 6.

*Surat al-Kahf, Verse 29.

Umar kept him. When he was murdered, Hafsa bnt Umar, Mother of Believers kept them. At the time of opening Armenia and Azearbijan during the rule of 'Uthman Ibn 'Affan, some controversy concerning the recital of the *Qur'an* broke out. Uthman asked for the parchments of Hafsa, summoned Zaid Ibn Thabit and three Quraishis (Abdullah bn al-Zubair, Said bn al-As and Abdul Rahman bn al-Harith), and ordered them to agree on one *mushaf*. Several copies were made; one remained in al-Madina and the others were distributed.⁶ Uthman's *mushaf* is the one agreed upon by all Muslims since then.

The second source is the Prophet's *hadith*. It was narrated orally till 'Umar Ibn 'Abdul 'Aziz ordered its documentation in 100 A. H. The Prophet forbade writing anything he says except the *Qur'an*, because it was not completed yet; he did not want Muslims to mix between his words and Allah's, especially during that early stage of Islam.⁷

It is natural that during all that long period some *ahadith* were forgotten or added, and some weak souls ascribed to the Prophet false sayings. Muslim scholars faced this problem early; they originated the science of *Mustalah al-hadith* which set accurate rules for verifying the *ahadith* as well as the methodology for studying the narrators. Many books of *tagrih* (wounding) and *ta'dil* (adjusting) appeared, sifting the *ahadith* from the weak or doubted. *The authenticated Bukhari* is a wonderful example of the minute accuracy in determining the right *ahadith*, so it was described that it is the second precise book after the *Qur'an*.

Other works of language, literature, history, geography, natural sciences, mathematics, etc. come next in importance. Most of them were influenced by the *hadith* scholars in documentation, so many sayings and news were narrated preceded by long series of references or what we call today "citation".

Deeds mean the deeds of the Prophet and his companions. The *Sunna* (Tradition) of the Prophet is sayings, deeds and approvals. Sayings are represented by the *ahadith*. Deeds are explained by the Prophet's conducts. Approvals (meaning that the Prophet sees a certain behaviour and approves of it) are distributed between the *ahadith* books and the Prophet's *sira*. (biography).

⁶ *Al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an (Mastering the Qur'an Sciences)*, al-Siyuti. Cairo: Uthman Abdul Raziq Press, 1306 H., Part I, p. 63.

⁷ See *Taqyid al-Im*, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi. Edited by Yussef al-Ush. Damascus: The French Institute for Arabic Studies, 1949, p. 57.

under the Arabic flag; their God is One with one religion, one Prophet, one *qibla*, one language and one culture.

The Islamic Heritage, with its Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Greek fabrics, forms the consciousness of our nation. Al-Bukhari, for example, is the *sheikh* (master) of *hadith* tellers, and his book, *Al-Gami' Al-Sahih* (*The Correct Collection*) is the most authenticated source of *hadith*. We all hear about al-Bukhari, but has anyone ever asked about his nationality, or knew that he was from Uzbekistan? No Muslim differentiates between an Uzbekistani or Tagikistani scholar and another from Mekka or al-Madina.

Al-Bukhari was not an exception; al-Tabari, al-Khawarizmi, ibn Sina, al-Farabi and al-Bairouni were all from central Asia. They travelled to East and West seeking knowledge, without distinguishing between a Shami, Moroccan or Yemeni scholar.

All were combined under the flag of Islam, each one presents a dear value and a brick in the Islamic culture which flourished several centuries and led the mankind from the darkness of medieval ages to the Renaissance age. During the late 12th century AD, Europe established schools for teaching Arabic language in Spain³ and Siqilya, and translated Islamic Heritage from Arabic (the language of culture then) to Latin. They even translated back the Greek Heritage from Arabic to Latin, through Arabic translations. The Greek origins of the writings of Aristotle and Plato were not discovered, until Constantinopol was conquered in the middle of the 15th century.

Islamic Heritage consists of two main categories: Speech and Deeds. The two main sources of Speech are the *Qur'an* and *hadith*. The *Qur'an* is a text "No falsehood can approach it from before or behind it: it is sent down by One Full of Wisdom, Worthy of all Praise".⁴ It is the only heavenly Book without distortion or alternation. Prophet Muhammad transmitted it to his companions. They, in turn, learnt it by heart and wrote it down. It was not collected in one book until the *khilafate* of Abi Bakr the Believer, when many reciters were killed in the battle of al-Yamama (12 H.), Umar suggested collecting the *Qur'an* lest its keepers and reciters should have been killed. Abu Bakr summoned Zaid Ibn Thabet, the writer of The Holy Spirit (Wahy), and charged him with collecting the *Qur'an*⁵ in parchments. He kept them till his death, then

³- Rimond, the Bishop of Toledo (1126-1151) established a school for translation.

⁴ Surat "Fussilat", Verse 42.

⁵ *Authenticated al-Bukhari*, Cairo: Bulaq Press, 1311-1312 H., Part VI, p. 183.

best who wrote about Islam, and their writings were the main source guiding other Muslims and non-Muslims. It is of course a superficial look, because "Islamic" here is an adjective for "heritage" and not a subject-matter. Islamic sciences are a field of Islamic Heritage, even its backbone, but the meaning of the word is much broader. It covers all what Muslim scholars left in all fields of knowledge, written in any language, and in any place reached by Islam.

According to the subject-matter, the writings of Gaber bn Hayan in chemistry, al-Khuwarazmi's in mathematics, al-Razi's and ibn Sina's in medicine, Ibn Yunis al-Misri's and Nasir al-Din al-Tusi's in astronomy, al-Idrisi's and al-Maqdisi's in geography, etc., all belong to the Islamic heritage. According to language, the writings of al-Firdawsi, Umar al-Khayyam and Galal al-Din al-Rumi are Islamic Heritage, though they were written in Persian. The writings of ibn Kamal Pasha, Aashq Pasha and Fuduli are Islamic Heritage as well, though they were written in Turkish. According to the place, the writings of Muslims in Spain, Persia and Africa, even in Soviet republics, are shining bricks in this heritage.

I should like to point out that most of the items of this Heritage is written in Arabic, not only because its authors were Arabs, but because the Arabic language accompanied Islam in its spreading and overtook all native languages of speech and writing, be it Persian, Turkish, Spanish, African or Egyptian. It is the language of the *Qur'an* and performing prayers for all people, no matter what their nationality or language is. The English Christian prays in English, the French in French, the Chinese in Chinese, but Muslims must pray in Arabic. It is an honour for this language, before it is for Arabs. Islam did not prefer Arabs to others: Allah says, "Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you".¹ Prophet Muhammad said in his pilgrimage, "Your Allah is One. Your Father is one. All of you are descended from Adam, and Adam is from dust. The most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. No Arab is distinguished from a foreigner, except by his righteousness".²

Perhaps, it is surprising that the greatest scholar of Arabic grammar was Sibawea, the Persian, the greatest four tellers of *hadith* (al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Nisa'I and al-Turmuzi) came from the Soviet republics, and the greatest Abbasid poets, such as ibn al-Rumi, Abi al-Atahiya, Abi Tammam and Abi Nuwas, were all non-Arabs. However, all of them were

¹ Surat "Al-Hugurat", Verse 13.

² *Gamharat Khutab al-Arab (A Collection of Arabs' Speeches)*, compiled by Ahmed Zaki Safwat. Cairo: Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi Library, 1993, Part I, p. 59.

Islamic Heritage and its Role in the Nation Unity and Breaking Barriers among Countries

Abdul Sattar al-Halwagi

Islam and Muslims are facing a severe campaign which equals Islam with terrorism. Eastern and Western countries agreed on their hostile attitude towards Islam. They spread fabrications, and try breaking the unity of Muslims and instigating them against each other to exhaust their strength and dominating their destinies; what happened and still happening in Afghanistan and Iraq is a clear example.

This severe campaign against Islam and Muslims is not the first, and it will not be the last; the struggle between good and evil is immortal, and history is the best witness. Attacks on Islam should not terrify or frighten us. They indicate the awareness of the East and West of its danger, because it is extending and not shading away. It has the capacity of survival and everlasting through its abilities on persuasion, tranquility and spreading, even in their territories without miracles or oppression. Its principles and values make it suitable for every time and place, and confront all attempts of suspicion and deception.

During this hard time there should be a pause with ourselves, and we should gather all the different characteristics which form our Islamic identity. We are required, now more than before, to discover ourselves and recognize the essence of our religion. It is the way out of this turbulent sea with all waves of falsehood coming from everywhere. Our Islamic Heritage is the fuel which keeps the flame of our life kindled. If we leave our religion or deny our Heritage, we lose our identity and all grounds of survival.

Before commencing on our journey with Islamic Heritage, let us define what is meant by it.

The term (heritage) means mental and spiritual things such as the creativity and ideas of our ancestors and traditions and values planted by fathers into their children.

But what does Islamic Heritage mean? Is it writings about Islam or what Muslims wrote in all branches of knowledge?

The general look may apply the meaning of the term only to Islamic sciences such as *tafsir*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, etc., because our ancestors were the



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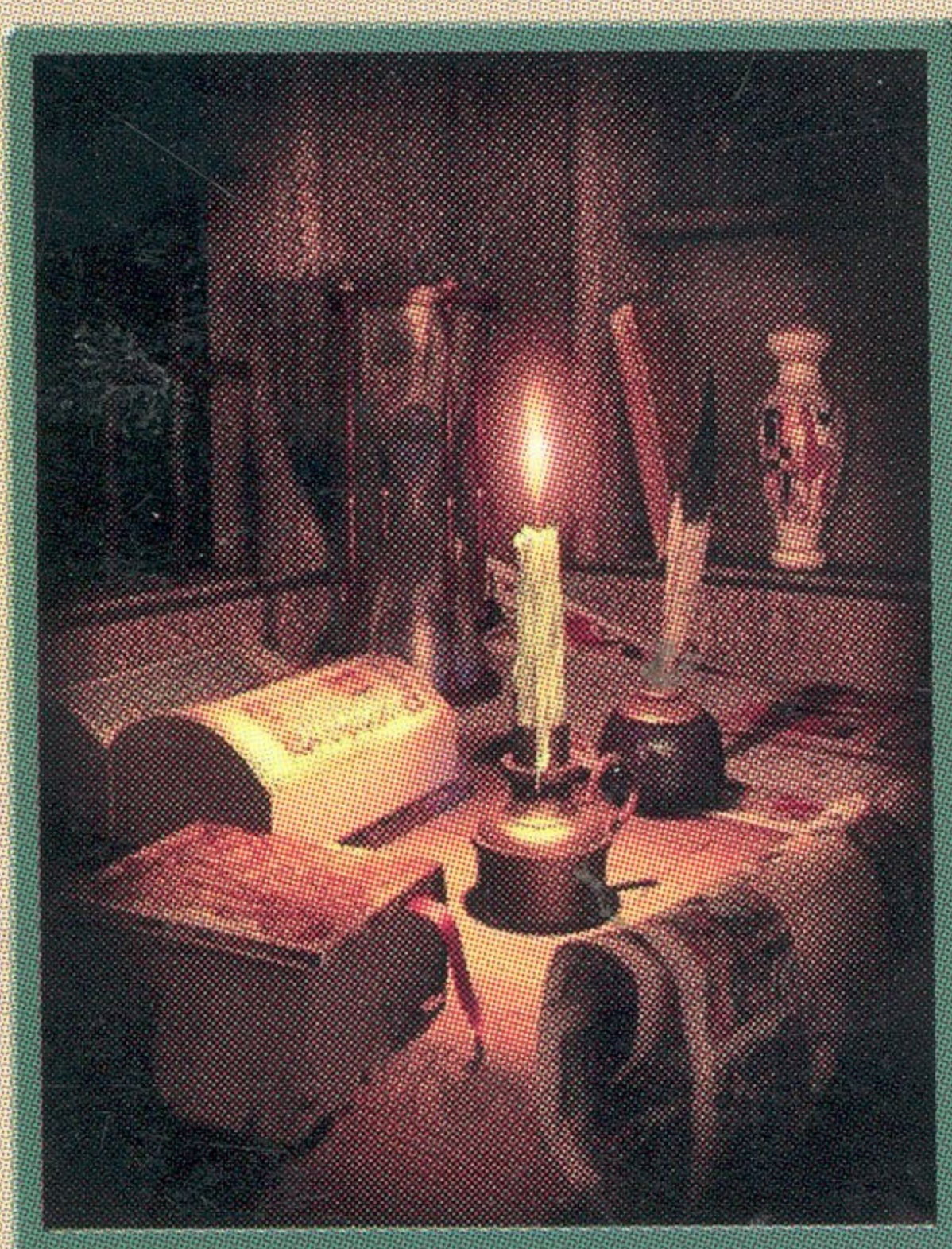
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