

ISLAM AND THE MUSLIMS  
IN EUROPE TODAY

---

**EUROPEAN JUDAISM**

Villiers Publications, Volume 9, No. 1, London

Winter 1974/75

PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD



## ISLAM AND THE MUSLIMS IN EUROPE TODAY

Prof. khurshid Ahmad\*

Islam is the second largest religion in Europe today; but it is also the most misunderstood. The need for a better understanding of Islam and the Muslims in Europe has never been as pressing as it is now.

The common man in Europe has very false notions of Islam and the Muslims: the popular image is still cast in moulds forged in the Middle Ages to arouse passions against Islam, which was generally looked upon, not as a world religion and civilization, but merely as a 'rival political power'. The popular image of the world of Islam continues to linger under that shadow: an image either of a 'marauding horde of the Anti-Christ' or that of an 'exotic world of Arabian Nights', abounding in mystery, lust, and extravagance and un-realism. These images were blown into existence to serve specific purposes; they were inflated or deflated to suit the shifting sands of politico- religious relationships between the world of Islam and the West. Although these images are now beginning to fade (the present-day Arab-bashing oiled by the so-called energy crisis notwithstanding) and no serious student would subscribe to them, they continue to pollute the public mind and constitute an obstacle to the growth of a correct and sympathetic understanding of Islam and Muslim life<sup>1</sup>. This paper attempts to study some important aspects of the Muslim presence in Europe today.

### II

Although a number of sizeable Muslim communities have recently emerged on the socio- religious map of Europe, Islam is not a newcomer to this part of the world. There has been some, often significant, Islamic presence in Europe from the beginning of the eighth century of the Christian era,

Muslims entered Spain in 711 C.E.<sup>2</sup> and established an illustrious civilization over a large part of the Iberian Peninsula that lasted until 1492 C.E.—that is for about eight centuries. They came to Sicily in the Mediterranean in 831 C.E. and had a distinguished innings lasting over 260 years. Both these centers of Islamic civilization exerted continuous and lasting influence on the intellectual, cultural and religious life of Europe.

The second phase of Islamic penetration began in the eleventh century when Muslim saints and scholars came to Eastern Europe and won large populations over to Islam<sup>3</sup>.

---

• Khurshid Ahmad is Director General, The Islamic Foundation, Leicester, U.K.; Asst. Professor of Economics, University of Karachi; and a member of the Executive Committee of the Islamic Council of Europe. The views expressed in this paper are his personal opinions and do not necessarily represent the official views of the organization with which he is associated.

Islam in Eastern Europe did not have any political umbrella for some three centuries. It was only in the fourteenth century that Ottoman rule over the Balkans began. This lasted till the 19th century. During this period, the Ottoman Caliphate was a leading European power. At the height of its power in the seventeenth century, its suzerainty extended over most of Eastern and South Eastern Europe, from Greece on one side, to the gates of Vienna on the other, and deep into Kazakhstan in Southern Russia.

The third phase began with Western inroads into the Muslim world, represented, among others, by the conquest of vast Muslim lands by different European powers, roughly from the eighteenth to the twentieth century's. With the retreat of Western colonialism and the rise of over forty Muslim states after World War II, this phase has come to an end, although its shadow is still cast on political, economic and cultural structures that lie at the root of relationships between Europe and the Muslim world. Things are, however, changing and a new beginning is being made in the relations between Europe and the world of Islam.

The three phases we have referred to above were all characterized by political rivalries, wars and bad blood. But that is not the whole of the story. Throughout this period, a number of other factors were also in operation. Islamic thought and culture continued to influence almost every branch of knowledge and every field of activity in Europe<sup>4</sup>. The new awakening represented by the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment were, in various degrees, products of the Islamic impact. Philosophy, science and technology, even language and literature derived new life from the values and contributions of Islamic culture. In the realm of knowledge and science and culture and commerce, Islam and Europe were in unceasing contact with each other. Scientific method was developed by the Muslims and the West acquired its new technology from the Muslims. The light which illumined Europe's dark medieval age and enabled it to enter its modern phase came from Spain and the Muslim East. The Universities of Paris, Oxford and Cambridge came into existence under the influence of the Universities of Spain. Muslims failed to maintain that momentum, but the new upsurge of Europe had its inspiration and early push from its contact with the world of Islam<sup>5</sup>.

Islamic teachings were also being introduced at the grass root level and large numbers of people were embracing Islam. Strong Muslim communities were developing in different parts of Europe. Present day Spain, Portugal and Sicily once had Muslim majorities. In Eastern Europe, large Muslim communities have existed over the last nine centuries. Cyprus had a Muslim majority till the first quarter of the nineteenth century; so had Bosnia-Herzegovina in Yugoslavia till the beginning of the twentieth century.

Rev. Samuel M. Zwemer puts the Muslim population of South Eastern Europe (excluding Russia) at the turn of the century<sup>6</sup> at 3.41 million. In a later work, *Across the World of Islam*, the same author describes some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Muslim communities of South Eastern Europe in the mid-twenties. The Muslims, he says, constituted 18% of the total population of

Bulgaria, 71% of Albania, 12% of Yugoslavia and 12% of Rhodes and Dodecanese. Rumania and Greece, according to his estimate, had 200,000 and 180,000 Muslims respectively.<sup>7</sup> Muslim authorities regard these estimates of Muslim population in this part of Europe as being on the low side. In certain cases, they regard Zwemer's estimates to be only half of the real Muslim population.<sup>8</sup> Small Muslim communities have existed in France, Italy, Great Britain and the Netherlands over the last two centuries. The position has, however, significantly changed during the last fifteen years because of Muslim immigration in most of the European countries. It is disappointing that there is very little consciousness of the new position the Muslims now occupy in Europe. Most of the reference works have failed to take note of this development. To take only two instances, The World Christian Handbook, 1968, which tries to present the numerical strength of different religions in different parts of the world, puts the Muslim population of Europe at 13.3 million and assumes that Muslims do not exist in any non-communist European country except Greece.<sup>9</sup> The Statesman's Yearbook 1974/1975 acknowledges a Muslim presence only in five Communist countries of Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Rumania, Russia and Yugoslavia) and two non-Communist countries (Cyprus and Greece). Of these seven countries the Muslim population is given only for five countries.<sup>10</sup> The fact that a large Muslim minority of over one million exists in the country where the book was written and produced fails to get any mention in the book. This irritates Muslims, who find it difficult to believe that such a black-out is simply a matter of oversight!

### III

In most European countries, census figures do not reveal the religious composition of the society. As such one has to depend on secondary sources to calculate the total Muslim population in Europe. On the basis of the available information and evidence, we estimate that the Muslim population in Europe is a little over 24 million, between 3 to 4% of the total population of Europe.<sup>11</sup> The position in Communist and non- Communist Europe is as follows:

	<b>Muslim population Millions</b>	<b>Muslims as % of total population</b>
<b>A.</b> Russia (European parts Only)	10.000	
<b>B.</b> East Europe (Communist) Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Rumania And Yugoslavia (except German Democratic-Republic)	8.458	6.75
<b>C.</b> Europe (the rest) Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland France, W. Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Rhodes, Spain, Switzer-Land,		

Sweden and United Kingdom	5.618	1.64
Total Europe	24.076	

In the U.K., West Germany and France, the number of Muslims is approximately 1 million, 1.5 million and 2 million respectively. For Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Netherlands and Italy, the figures are between one hundred thousand to half a million. This makes it evident that Muslims constitute the largest religious minority after Christianity in Europe.

The Muslim communities in Europe reflect in full measure a distinct feature of Islam: unity in the context of variety. The communities consist of local Muslims and immigrants who have come from all parts of the Muslim world. In France, the local Muslims constitute about 25% of the community; their number is significant in other parts of Europe as well although not in the same proportion. It would be safe to suggest that generally speaking the local Muslims make up between 5 and 10% of the Muslim community. Muslim immigrants from Turkey and Yugoslavia are concentrated in West Germany, although there are sizeable Turkish groups in France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland. Immigrants from North Africa are concentrated in France, Belgium and Italy and to a lesser extent in W. Germany, Switzerland, and the U.K. and Scandinavian countries. The Netherlands have large Muslim communities from Indonesia, Malaysia and Central America. Muslims from India and Pakistan are concentrated in the U.K., although there are sizeable groups in the Netherlands, West Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Almost all major Muslim traditions have found new homes in different parts of Europe and a cross- fertilization of cultures is taking place.

Demographic analysis of the Muslim communities shows that between 15 to 20% of the Community in the U.K. and between 10 to 15% in the rest of Europe is less than 21 years. Males far exceed the females and are generally in the most productive part of their life—between 25-45 years. Among the main reasons for this male preponderance is the fact that most of these people have come to these countries in search of jobs and their wives and families usually join them only after some time. In certain countries, there are a number of restrictions on bringing in the families. Some immigrant workers regard their stay as temporary and as such prefer to visit their families back home once or twice a year, instead of bringing them to their places of work for settlement. An overwhelming majority of the immigrant Muslims are engaged in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. The number of those engaged in skilled or highly professional occupations is somewhere between 3 to 10% of the total population of the community. Students engaged in higher education are also a significant sector of the Muslim community. Although many of the immigrant workers intended to stay on a temporary basis, gradually they are settling in Europe and all indicators suggest that these large Muslim communities will be a permanent feature of life in Europe.

#### IV

There is no priesthood in Islam. It does not have any central organization to which all its members must belong. The community is free to organise its religious and social life as it deems fit. In an Islamic state the state takes care of certain collective responsibilities. Where Muslims are in a minority, they organise their cultural and religious activities through a number of institutions, most important being the mosque, the madrasah (school), and cultural centers.

Muslims pray five times a day. Although the daily prayers can be offered individually, it is strongly recommended that they would be offered in congregation. One prayer, the Friday (mid-day) prayer must be offered in congregation. Similarly the Bid prayers are offered collectively. Establishment of proper mosques is the first major problem that the new Muslim communities face in Europe. There are very few properly built mosques, although their number is increasing. A Central Mosque is being built in London and one each has been built in Manchester and Birmingham. Similar efforts are being made in a number of major cities. In the meantime, temporary arrangements have been made everywhere. Where- ever there is a Muslim community, however small, it has some improvised mosque, usually in a converted house. There are over 300 such mosques in the U.K. and several thousand all over Europe.

Excepting two countries—Belgium and Austria —Islam has nowhere been officially acknowledged as one of the religions of the country. This shying away is difficult to understand. There is no denying that these states are secular states. But whatever rights and facilities are given to one or two religions, there is no reason why the same should not be the case with other religious communities.

Muslims have made arrangements for the Islamic education of their children in mosques and other places, by means of week-end schools. This education is, however, insufficient to initiate the new generations properly into Islamic faith and culture. In the U.K. and Belgium, experiments are being made to provide Islamic instruction in State schools. This opportunity arises from the fact that in these countries religious instruction is provided in schools and the law provides that other religious groups can, with the co-operation of the school authorities and at their own expense, make arrangements for the religious education of child- rent belonging to their own faith. The Muslim Educational Trust, U.K., is providing Islamic education to Muslim children in fifty-seven state schools in major British cities.<sup>12</sup> There are plans to establish Grammar Schools with an Islamic orientation. This problem has assumed importance because of the planned switch over in some countries from single-sex schools to coeducational schools, a development which Muslims do not approve of.

In Europe, there exist a number of active Muslim organizations. Cultural Centers, youth clubs, students' associations and hostels, research foundations, etc. There is also a Muslim press and new Islamic literature has begun to be produced. Efforts are also being made to develop national organizations and co-coordinating councils for different countries, and for the whole of Europe.<sup>13</sup>

The number of Muslim journals and magazines published in different languages from different parts of Europe is increasing. Leading journals are Impact International Fortnightly, London; The Muslim (bi-monthly), London; al-Ghuraba (Arabic), London; Paigham (Urdu), monthly; Jang International Daily (Urdu); Akhbara-i-Watan (Urdu), weekly, London; Islamic Quarterly, London; ar-Raid (Arabic), Aachen; Le Monde Islamique, Paris; Le Musulman, Paris. Many smaller magazines, bulletins and newsletters are also produced.

## V

Muslims face a number of problems. The most important one is the threat of losing their distinct religious and cultural identity. They are unhappy over efforts at so-called assimilation and integration. They went to live in Europe as Muslims, and not as a culturally uprooted people. They believe that modern society will have to be multi-religious and multi-cultural. Democracy in the West has primarily been a political concept. The idea of social and cultural democracy with all its ramifications has yet to be learned and practiced. Muslim society has always been multi-religious and multi-cultural.<sup>14</sup> If Europe is prepared to develop this new dimension of democracy, the Muslim presence can make a significant contribution to the future growth of human society in this part of the world.

Democracy is not a political concept only. It does not achieve fulfillment merely by the assurance of political freedom and the establishment of the ballot-box. These conditions are necessary for democracy, but are not sufficient for its full flowering. The social and cultural dimensions of democracy are undeveloped. Political rights of the individual and of minority groups are acknowledged, but not their cultural and religious rights. Multiplicity of political opinions is welcome, but plurality of cultures is still an anathema. Differences in personal outlooks are tolerated, but differences in colors of the skin or in personal tastes and ways of living are frowned at. This is not a new phenomenon. Intolerance towards minority cultures, languages, modes of behaviour, education, social norms and even religions have persisted over the years.<sup>15</sup> Democracy has yet to embrace the concept of cultural diversity.

The idea of healthy cultural pluralism will add a new and richer dimension to democracy. What this concept implies for the rights and duties of the state, the individual and the community organizations will have to be spelled out. Right to hold any belief is only a negative right—pleading nonconformity one is not forced to abandon one's belief. Its positive aspects have been neglected: the right of an individual to live and act in the light of his religious beliefs even if his religious community is in a minority.<sup>16</sup> Once the concept of a multi-cultural and multi-religious society is accepted it will revolutionize social relations in the society. New sets of religious and cultural rights—including the rights to have religious education, to use non-conformist dress in schools, facilities for diet and sanitation, religious holidays, prayer facilities, etc., would be acknowledged by

the society and by the State and institutions would be developed to implement and safeguard them.

In certain parts of Europe, Muslims are facing religious persecution and gross cultural, even political discrimination. This is generally true of Communist Europe, but the situation is worst in Albania and Bulgaria. Several thousand mosques have been closed in Albania during the last ten years. In Bulgaria, the Communist Party and Government are pursuing a callous policy of forced assimilation of the Muslims in what they call the 'Bulgarian Slav Nation. Muslims are being forced to change their Islamic names and those who refuse to do so are dismissed from their jobs. During July, 1970 and December, 1972, 48,073 Muslims were dismissed from their jobs in six districts of Bulgaria for resisting 'Bulgarian Slav Nation.<sup>17</sup> They was subjected to different forms of persecution, arrest and torture. Six thousand of them are said to have attempted to flee to Greece and Yugoslavia and the number of those killed by the border forces of Bulgaria is given at 765.<sup>18</sup>

In Albania and Bulgaria, mosques and religious week-end schools are being closed. There is lack of freedom of worship and religious education. Muslims have been denied burial and circumcision facilities according to their religion. There are constraints on Muslim dress and the privacy of the Muslim home. Emigration (for which there is an old Treaty of 1925 between Bulgaria and Turkey) is being heavily curbed. In other Communist countries also, similar constraints exist, although the ferocity with which they are enforced differs from place to place. Yugoslavia is the only communist country where prospects of religious freedom have improved a bit recently.

In Cyprus, the Muslim community had been a haunted community. Only recently has the situation begun to change. But conditions in Greece are deteriorating. There are over 200,000 Muslims in Greece. The community is 400 years old. Discrimination against it has recently increased. Even in some non-Communist countries, there are cases of discrimination based on religious, cultural or racial factors. These aberrations are symptoms of a disease which deserves to be properly diagnosed and cured. We feel that the rediscovery of the spiritual and moral foundations of life and society and the concept of socio-cultural democracy can be key-ideas in the solution of this problem.

One of the greatest problems that confront the Muslims at the religio-cultural level is that of proper religious education of their children. The facilities that are available are far short of the need. Tremendous effort and much more cooperative response from the majority community and the Governments are needed to strike at the heart of the problem.

Distortion and misrepresentation of Islam and Islamic culture are major irritants to the Muslims. They are always prepared for scholarly discussion, informed disagreement, constructive criticism and meaningful dialogue. But the way Islamic religion and values have been distorted by a large number of western writers, often in the name of scholarship, is a different story.<sup>19</sup> Is it too much to



expect our European friends to try to understand Islam as it is understood and believed by Muslims, and then form their own opinions about it.

The large numbers of Muslims in Europe are not here just to sell their labour. They want to live in European countries as equal citizens, sharing their achievements and contributing in a humble way towards the solution of their problems. Muslims believe in a universal religion which stands for Unity of God and oneness of mankind. There is a supra-national community— a fraternity of faith. They believe that the values and principles of Islam have something to offer to the Modern Man whom the contemporary systems have failed and who is looking for a system that can simultaneously fulfill the material and moral needs of human society. The scientific and technological revolution of our times has annihilated a number of barriers of space and time that were raised and sanctified by the political and economic ideologies of the recent past. The world is now becoming one society and one unit, but ideologies and political systems continue to divide man from man and nation from nation. Muslims look forward to a vision of future where mankind would choose to live as one family of God, as His vicegerents on earth. Changes that are taking place in the economic and political balance of power in the modern world, the phenomenon of increasing contact and unceasing communication between peoples all over the world— through ever-increasing tourism, expanding trade relations, educational exchanges, transfer of labour, unskilled, semi-skilled and professional, revolution in news and communication media, etc.— and the emergence of multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural societies in different parts of the world provide a new challenge and a new opportunity to man today. If we are prepared to respond to this challenge and seize this opportunity, mankind may enter a new millennium; if we fail in this, those very factors which present new openings may turn into explosive cracks. We, however, believe that man's capacity to learn and experiment is far greater than his tendency to stick to the status quo. This inspires hope that the emergence of strong Muslim communities in Europe, with healthy links with the Muslim world, will act as bridges between the East and the West.

The twain are no longer separated from each other, they are meeting and embracing one another in every part of the world. In this context, resurgence of Islam in Europe would be a blessing for mankind.

- 
- (1) It is distressing to record that reprints and adaptations from earlier popular readings like Marco Polo's book of Travels and stories of Father Brown, wherein Islam is brazenly maligned, continue to circulate. In a recent I.T.V. series of the Father Brown stories, the prophet of Islam was dubbed by one of the cast as 'dirty old humbug'. Literature produced in the aftermath of the 1967 war also depicts a very distorted and unreal picture of the Arabs. All these add fuel to the fire. See also: B. P. Smith, *Islam in English Literature*, Beirut, 1939; S. C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, New York, 1937; E. E. Calverley, *Islam: An Introduction*, Cairo; American Unity, 1958, particularly Chapter 1: 'Mistaken Ideas about Islam'.
  - (2) C.E. stands for the Christian Era. We prefer the use of C.E. to A.D.
  - (3) T. W. Arnold writes in an article in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*: 'The first introduction of Islam into Eastern Europe was the work of a Muslim Jurisconsult who was taken prisoner . . . and was brought to the country of the Pechenegs (between

the lower Danube and the Don) in the beginning of the 11th Century; before the end of the century the whole nation had become Muhammadan'. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Edinburgh, 1915, Vol. VIII p. 748.

- (4) Cf. Sanchez-Albornoz says in *L'Espagne et l'Islam* (Spain and Islam): 'Without a doubt, one can no longer talk today about "the dark Middle Ages". One must rather bear in mind that side by side with a Europe languishing in misery and decay, there existed the resplendent civilization of Muslim Spain. The leaders of Arab Studies in Spain today are opening up new horizons as far as the dissemination, effect and brilliance of this Hispano-Moorish culture are concerned. They have re-established the fact that it played a decisive role in the development of philosophy, science, poetry, indeed of every aspect of culture in Christian Europe. They have proved that its influence reached right to the heights of medieval thought, even to St. Thomas and Dante. Undoubtedly there are still many people who refuse to admit its supremacy and the formative role that it played. However, there is already more than ample proof of this, and every day still more comes to hand. Several centuries before the Renaissance set springs that had half "dried up flowing again, the stream of civilization that flowed from Cordova preserved and transmitted to the modern world the essence of ancient thought.' Quoted from Haider Bammate, *Muslim Contribution to Civilization*, Geneva, 1962, p. 12.
- (5) See: William Draper, *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, London, 1891 (2 vols.); Robert Briffault, *The Making of Humanity*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1928; Joseph Schacht and C. E. Bosworth, *The Legacy of Islam*, 2nd edition, Oxford Unity Press, 1974; *The Cambridge History of Islam*, Cambridge: C.U.P., 1970, Vol. II, Chapter 13.
- (6) S. M. Zwemer et al (ed.). *The Muhammadan World of Today*, London: Fleming H. Revell Co., p. 290.
- (7) Samuel M. Zwemer, *Across the World of Islam*, London: Fleming H. Revell Co., Chapter XVII, pp. 343-363.
- (8) See: Amir Shakib Arsalan, *Hadir Al-Alam al- Islami* (Comments on Lothrop Stoddard's *New World of Islam*), 4 Volumes. Beirut: not dated but published between 1930 and 1936.
- (9) *The World Christian Handbook*, 1968, London: Lutterworth Press, 1968, pp. 235-236.
- (10) *The Statesman's Year Book, 1974-1975* (Editor John Paxton). London: Macmillan, 1974.
- (11) These figures are taken from an unpublished research study prepared by the writer for the Islamic Council of Europe. Details about every country and sources of information are given in the report. A detailed summary with sources is also given in a paper 'Muslims in Europe' to be published in a forthcoming volume. *Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honor of Mawlana Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi*. This study avails itself of Muslim and other sources and also utilizes information procured directly from different Islamic Centers of Europe. Those who want to see other studies on Muslim population (available in English) are requested to refer to Ahmad Abdullah al-Masdoosi, *Living Religions of the World: a Socio-Political Study* (Tr. Z.I. Ansari). Karachi: Begum Aisha Bawany Wakf, 1962; *World Muslim Gazetteer*, Karachi: World Muslim Congress, 1964; Abbas Khan, *An Estimate of the Muslim population of the World*, Gary, Indiana: Muslim Students' Association of U.S.A. and Canada, 1969.
- (12) See Report of the Muslim Educational Trust, London, 1974, and M.E.T. Memorandum to the Ministry of Education, 1970.
- (13) For proceedings, see *Impact International*, London, May, June, July, 1973. See also Salem Azzam, 'Islamic Council of Europe', in *Impact International*, London, 22nd November-12th December, 1974; and Dr. M. M. Ahsan, 'Islamic Council of Europe', *The Criterion*, Karachi, 1973.
- (14) John B. Taylor writes in a recent booklet: 'we have already seen how early Islam spread without forcing conversion upon Christians and Jews. Indeed those communities sometimes welcomed the guaranteed tolerance of other monotheistic religions which Islam offered. Even in the context of animist tribesmen in North Africa and of the Hindus in India, Muslims showed themselves ready to co-exist with non-Muslims provided those non-Muslims were not hostile to Islam. It is significant that when the Jews were driven out of Christian Spain, they fled for protection to the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire, where their legal and social rights as Jews could be preserved. John B. Taylor, *Thinking About Islam*, London: Lutterworth Educational, 1971, p. 43.
- (15) See: C. A. Macartney, *National States and National Minorities*. Prof. Macartney was Secretary to the Minorities Committee of the League of Nations and his fully documented book is a lament for the lack of cultural democracy. The League of Nations received hundreds of petitions from cultural and national minorities protesting against the cultural imperialism which prevails within the nation state. The problem remains unsolved.

- (16) This may be illustrated by reference to a report published in The Daily Telegraph, London, and some time ago. It throws light on the much neglected problem of positive religious rights. 'An employee at F.....'s factory faces dismissal from his £33 a week job because he has to keep leaving the assembly line to pray. He is Mr. R., 30. Mr. R. was found by his factory chiefs kneeling on his prayer mat in a corner of the shop floor. He claims the Personnel Officer warned him he would be sacked if it happened again.

Mr. R. said: "I have to pray five times a day; usually I can manage it during my meal breaks. But there are times, depending on the position of the sun, when this is not possible and I have to down tools and kneel in a quiet corner. It does not take more than five minutes. I am prepared to have time deducted from my wages. My prayers are compulsory."

A F.....spokesman said yesterday, "Mr. R. insists on keeping to a rigid prayer timetable. Every time he leaves the assembly line another man must relieve him. We just cannot work this way". (The Daily Telegraph, May 4th, 1973)

Our purpose here is not to go into the details of any individual case. That is why we have omitted the names. The question at issue is that of general attitude towards positive religious rights. If a person goes to the toilet and 'wastes' even more than five minutes in the process it is not regarded as a violation of work discipline. This is accepted as one of his personal rights. But if he wants to have five minutes off for religious prayers, the question of religious rights is not considered with any seriousness. We want to focus attention on this attitude and suggest that it should be reformed. Tolerance and acceptance have yet to develop some of their neglected dimensions.

- (17) Resolution of the Bulgarian Communist Party (Resolution No. 549, issued on July 17th, 1970).
- (18) See Impact International, London, August 10th- 23rd, 1973.
- (19) See Khurshid Ahmad, Islam and the West, Lahore, 1963; A. Tibawi, English-Speaking Orientalists, London, 1967. See also Maxime Rodinson, 'The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam', The Legacy of Islam (ed. by Schacht and Bosworth), Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 1974, pp. 9-62.
-