

Asia. A self-conscious, anti-West, combative posture is struck; although in the case of Davies, a British Muslim, this may simply mean the zeal of a convert. Both books suggest the breaking of new ground, indeed Davies promises to “shape” the discipline of anthropology.

Islam and Society in Southeast Asia attempts to fill an important gap in the study of Islam in an area which contains the world's most populous country-Indonesia. The 13 chapters have been contributed by distinguished professors, mostly indigenous; and some are very distinguished, indeed, like Professor Kamal Hassan of Malaysia and Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia. The subjects, too, are topical and compelling: the modernization of women and the problems of the Nahdhatul Ulama in Indonesia.

We are told why the Muslim masses reject Westernization: “Thus, the life-styles of Muslim elites, socialism, capitalism and Western civilization are all interrelated. Of the three factors, it is perhaps the life-styles of the elites that has had the greatest impact upon the Muslim mind. It provides “tangible proof” to the masses of the “evil” of Western civilization and foreign ideologies... It is expressed at the level of the houses the elites own, the cars they drive, the clothes they wear, the food they eat, the parties they attend. Whether it is true or not, tales about these elites are almost always inter-woven with lurid lore about their decadent habits with the emphasis upon their sexual misdemeanors. That is why, if Islamic groups opposed to existing regimes ever succeed in mobilizing the people on behalf of their puritanical concept of Islam it would have been partly because of their condemnation of the alleged moral decadence, the materialistic life-style of the elites—since it is an issue that has so much potential mass appeal” (“Islamic Resurgence: Global View” by Chandra Muzaffar, p. 15).

The elements of Islamic revivalism as seen from Southeast Asia are summarized thus: “Islamic resurgence has been inspired by the following factors: (a) disillusionment with Western civilization as a whole among a new Muslim generation (b) the failings of social systems based on capitalism or socialism (c) the life-style of secular elites in Muslim states (d) the desire for power among a segment of an expanding middle class that cannot be accommodated politically (e) the search for psychological security among new urban migrants (f) the city environment (g) the economic strength of certain Muslim states as a result of their new oil wealth; and (h) a sense of confidence about the future in the wake of the 1973 Egyptian victory, the 1979 Iranian revolution and the dawn of the fifteenth century in the Muslim calendar” (ibid, p. 21-22).

The role of the *ulama* is highlighted in Islamic revivalism and the checking of Westernization in the concluding chapter: “The continuity of religious traditions and their fortification against Western onslaught was largely the work of ‘ulama and other orthodox functionaries who ran Muslim educational institutions— *maktabs* and *madrassahs* (Muslim educational institu-

tions). Despite the cost it entailed, it was no mean achievement" ("Islamic Resurgence" by Obaid ul Haq, p. 338).

There is useful material in this book and some harsh commentary on the present teachings of Islamic studies: "Teaching materials are of poor quality and textbooks are outdated" ("Dimensions of Islamic Education" by Kamal Hassan, p. 47). Equally important—and more telling—"Many Muslims feel the need to obtain Islamic education, but the social reality shows that only products of secular education are assured of a better future" (ibid).

It is therefore a pity that the excellent material which could have filled a gap in Islamic studies has been so poorly edited and shaped for this volume. Chapters are not numbered and errors abound. Curious omissions are noted: for example, the debate with the Japanese anthropologist Nakamura regarding Indonesian society is conducted by Wahid without reference to the standard literature on Indonesia by Clifford Geertz. The book has no index and its binding is unsatisfactory, the pages tending to become unglued. Most of the papers are written years ago and appear dated (Wahid's paper is an answer to the analysis of the Nahdhatul Ulama's Congress of June 1979 by the Japanese anthropologist Nakamura). More important, there is no theme or frame for the contents of the book. Neither the foreword nor the introduction discuss the individual papers and nor do they attempt to relate the papers to each other. Some of the excellent material, so ideally placed to fill an important gap in Islamic studies, is therefore lost in the confused and loose editing.

In *Knowing One Another* Davies attempts to contribute to "a movement that seeks to ground the quest for knowledge in the eternal principles of Islam." This book is an attempt to contribute to that movement by offering a definition of Islamic anthropology" (p. ix). The late Isma'īl al Farūqī's seminal work, as indeed the title of his work, "Islamization of Knowledge", is reflected, though not acknowledged, in much of the argument. The book maintains "The essence of Islam is universal, and anthropology will equip Muslims with both self-knowledge and the understanding to treat non-Muslims with tolerance" (inside flap). An admirable ideal; but perhaps the author should have included Muslims also in her sphere of tolerance. For she condemns and rejects the entire gamut of Muslim scholars in a list that reads like a Muslim United Nations, a *Who's Who* of Muslim social scientists: Nur Yalman (Turk), the Harvard Professor, at the one end and Khurshid Ahmad (Pakistani), a Deputy Amir of the Jamaat-i-Islami, at the other; also included are Isma'īl al Farūqī (Palestinian), Ilyas Ba-Yunus (USA), Talal Asad (British), Soraya Altorki (Arab), Abdullah Laroui (Moroccan) and Aziz Azmeh (Syrian).

The rejection is based on misquotes and grossly incorrect representations. K. Ahmad and N. Naqvi, the two most active Islamic economists, are attacked: "Islamic economists, who are anxious to produce a body of work, fall back upon a system such as Western economics to fill their con-

ceptual void" (p. 79). Their position is vociferously the opposite of where Davies places them. Altorki and Laroui are also criticized, again unfairly, for exactly similar failings. (p. 164-6).

While the above may wish to comment upon Davies' interpretation of their work let me record a response to her comments on mine by taking just one example. I am accused of defending "Western Anthropology" which [her quotes] "promotes an enabling tolerance and openness to other people" and this "is most demeaning" (p. 49). But this is yet another gross misrepresentation, as the title of my book *Toward Islamic Anthropology* (1986) suggests. Well, before Davies' concern with the subject, I was involved in raising the issue of an Islamic anthropology (*Defining Islamic Anthropology*) Royal Anthropological Institute News, No. 65, 1984). While acknowledging the undisputed contributions of Western anthropologists I had concluded "The emergence of an Islamic anthropology . . . will act as a corrective to the notorious ethnocentricity of much of Western anthropology" (*Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society*, 1988: 214).

Indeed Western anthropologists have warned me of the consequences of challenging the metropolitan academic culture of the West: "Given the power of the dominant academic discourse, Ahmed simply runs the risk of alienating his erstwhile tutors and being marginalized by their superior position in their own world" ("Orientalist Discourses" by B. Street in *Localizing Strategies*, ed. R. Fardon, 1989, p. 253. Also see the attempt at "marginalization" by an "alienated" tutor, R. Tapper in *MAN*, Vol. 23, No. 3, September 1988 and my reply in *MAN*, forthcoming). So Davies' general and deliberately misleading condemnation of Muslim social scientists does not make apparent sense. But there is a certain method in the madness.

The book appears as a paean, a tribute, to the author's "friend and mentor, Ziauddin Sardar, without whom nothing would be as it is" (p. x). The Guru has already acknowledged the disciple in his own book, *Islamic Futures* (1985), as the one "who prepared the index" (p. xi). Her book, moreover, is published by Mansell in the "Islamic Futures and Policy Studies" series, the editor of which is Sardar. This coziness is touching. But there is an element of over-kill: Of the six books advertised on the back jacket three are by Sardar, so are eleven references in the bibliography and, proving that a disciple is rarely bound by the conventions of subtlety, Davies promises yet another Sardar publication in her last footnote in her last chapter. Sardar quotes stud her book. Davies appears to have embarked on the task of propagating the Guru; the strategy of attacking other potential Gurus to clear the way thus makes sense.

The tone fluctuates from high-sounding academic references to popular Western television programmes. The title of the introduction, "To Boldly Go Where No Man Has Gone Before", is from *Star Trek*; so is the subtitle, "The

Anthropological Enterprise". James T. Kirk finds honorable mention in the text and index. This reflects both the substance and style of Davies. The content is as vacuous as *Star Trek* and the results far less amusing. This is *karma*-anthropology (note the title, *Knowing One Another*, Chapter 2 is "Enchained in Being" and so on). Indeed an appropriate title for the book could have been adapted from another *Star Trek* film, "The Wrath of the Guru".

For a book claiming to discuss Islamic Anthropology the absence of Elkholy and Mahroof, both writing on Islamic anthropology, are strange omissions in the bibliography (Sardar, we noted, although not an anthropologist, has eleven references). Incorrect criticism is backed by poor editing (my surname, "Ahmed" is "ad" in the text and index and "ed" in the bibliography, "Ernest" Gellner in the bibliography and "Ernst" in the text and index, "Khurshid" Ahmad in the text and bibliography and "Kurshid" in the index, "Naquib" in the text and "Naqvib" in the index, for examples). This is a crude exercise in cult-building, a clumsy demolition job, with no concrete suggestions, no theoretical frames, for a way of looking at or analyzing Muslim societies.

Within a few years of his death Farūqī's venture, the "Islamization of Knowledge", appears to be in shambles. For the most part confusion and lack of direction mark the work of Muslim scholars. But perhaps the spirit of debate and enquiry that his work has generated is what he wanted; it is the first step on the path to knowledge.

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