

Islam, a Profound Civilization (part 2 of 2): More Statements

Description: Statements of various non-Muslim scholars and intellectuals about the profoundness of the religion of Islam as a civilization. Part 2: More statements.

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A.J. Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial*, New York, 1948, p. 205:

"The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islam and in the contemporary world. There is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue."

A.M.L. Stoddard, quoted in *Islam - The Religion of All Prophets*, Begum Bawani Waqf, Karachi, Pakistan, p. 56:

"The rise of Islam is perhaps the most amazing event in human history. Springing from a land and a people alike previously negligible, Islam spread within a century over half the earth, shattering great empires, overthrowing long established religions, remolding the souls of races, and building up a whole new world - world of Islam.

"The closer we examine this development the more extraordinary does it appear. The other great religions won their way slowly, by painful struggle and finally triumphed with the aid of powerful monarchs converted to the new faith. Christianity had its Constantine, Buddhism its Asoka, and Zoroastrianism its Cyrus, each lending to his chosen cult the mighty force of secular authority. Not so Islam. Arising in a desert land sparsely inhabited by a nomad race previously undistinguished in human annals, Islam sallied forth on its great adventure with the slenderest human backing and against the heaviest material odds. Yet Islam triumphed with seemingly miraculous ease, and a couple of generations saw the Fiery Crescent borne victorious from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas and from the desert of Central Asia to the deserts of Central Africa."

Edward Montet, "La Propaganda Chretienne et Adversaries Musulmans", Paris, 1890, quoted by T.W. Arnold in *The Preaching of Islam*, London, 1913, pp. 413-414:

"Islam is a religion that is essentially rationalistic in the widest sense of this term considered etymologically and historically. The definition of rationalism as a system that bases religious belief on principles furnished by the reason applies to it exactly... It cannot be denied that many doctrines and systems of theology and also many superstitions, from the worship of saints to the use of rosaries and amulets, have become grafted on the main trunk of Muslim creed. But in spite of the rich development, in every sense of the term, of the teachings of the prophet, the Quran has invariably kept its place as the fundamental starting point, and the dogma of unity of God has always been proclaimed therein with a grandeur, a majesty, an invariable purity and with a note of sure conviction, which it is hard to find surpassed outside the pale of Islam. This fidelity to the fundamental dogma of the religion, the elemental simplicity of the formula in which it is enunciated, the proof that it gains from the fervid conviction of the missionaries who

propagate it, are so many causes to explain the success of Mohammedan missionary efforts. A creed so precise, so stripped of all theological complexities and consequently so accessible to the ordinary understanding might be expected to possess and does indeed possess a marvelous power of winning its way into the consciences of men."

W. Montgomery Watt, *Islam and Christianity Today*, London, 1983, p.IX:

"I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I hope I am a "Muslim" as "one surrendered to God", but I believe that embedded in the Quran and other expressions of the Islamic vision are vast stores of divine truth from which I and other occidentals have still much to learn, and 'Islam is certainly a strong contender for the supplying of the basic framework of the one religion of the future.'"

Paul Varo Martinson (editor), *ISLAM, An Introduction for Christians*, Augsburg, Minneapolis, 1994, p. 205:

"Islam is an authentic faith that shapes our Muslim neighbors' innermost being and determines their attitude in life. And the Islamic faith is generally more tradition oriented than the recent Western shape of Christian faith, which has experienced considerable secularization. Yet we are only fair to the Islamic population when we understand them from their religious core and respect them as a faith community. Muslims have become important partners in faith conversation."

John Alden Williams (editor), *ISLAM*, George Braziller, New York, 1962, inside dust cover:

"Islam is much more than a formal religion: it is an integral way of life. In many ways it is a more determining factor in the experience of its followers than any other world religion. The Muslim ("One who submits") lives face to face with God at all times and will introduce no separation between his life and his religion, his politics and his faith. With its strong emphasis on the brotherhood of men cooperating to fulfill the will of God, Islam has become one of the most influential religions in the world today."

John L. Esposito, *ISLAM, The Straight Path*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1988, pp. 3-4:

"Islam stands in a long line of Semitic, prophetic religious traditions that share an uncompromising monotheism, and belief in God's revelation, His prophets, ethical responsibility and accountability, and the Day of Judgement. Indeed, Muslims, like Christians and Jews, are the Children of Abraham, since all trace their communities back to him. Islam's historic religious and political relationship to Christendom and Judaism has remained strong throughout history. This interaction has been the source of mutual benefit and borrowing as well as misunderstanding and conflict."

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