



# IOS NEWSLETTER

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## Thought for the Month

And verily the Hour will come:  
 There can be no doubt  
 About it, or about (the fact)  
 That Allah will raise up  
 All who are in the graves.  
 Yet there is among men  
 Such a one as disputes  
 About Allah, without knowledge,  
 Without guidance and without  
 A Book of Enlightenment,-  
 (Disdainfully) bending his side,  
 In order to lead (men) astray  
 From the Path of Allah:  
 For him there is disgrace  
 In this life, and on the Day  
 Of Judgment We shall  
 Make him taste the chastisement  
 Of burning (fire).

Al-Ouran- 22: 7-9

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## FOCUS

A plural society priceless human wisdom, determination, policies and actions to engineer ethnic balance for erecting the windows of opportunities for power-sharing and human relationships at two levels: territorial-regional and community levels. Territorial and community considerations reflected secular, civic and moral purpose of the State as a political force to protect territorial boundaries and the rights of the constituent elements, the latter being the backbone of the legal sovereignty. Therefore, political sovereignty belongs to the constituent elements in which minorities have significant shares and stakes. Purpose of this kind of political exercise is to maintain regional balance and to avoid the institutionalization of one or some ethnic groups or communities over other groups. India is one of the rarest countries in the world which carries over the political wisdom of symmetrical and asymmetrical federalism in its lengthiest Constitution. Moreover, it also requires the equality of outcomes and not merely promises and legal entries.

At the seven decades of its Independence, India has achieved peaceful elective representative system based on one person one vote, coalitional exercise at the federal and constituent levels, expansive local self-government system and many others but it has lost the constitutional goal of 'equality and democracy' (in economic, social and political terms) to win over the confidence of minorities who are dispersed in the areas dominated by the majority community all over the country with the exception of Jammu and Kashmir and Lakshadweep. It is important to mention here that most of the scholars have referred to the factor of the 'rule of law' for the success of federal democracy. In fact, the very purpose of federalism is not only to build a creative relationship between the federal and constituent governments but also to find the roots of such relationship in preventing the ethnicisation in the structures of power, thereby translating the objectives of the *Hindutva* force into political gains. Moreover, federalism obliges political institutions and enforcement agencies to remain committed to the principles of the rule of law. This further signifies the priority of protecting the Fundamental Rights of minority communities from the respective state government in which the federal authority has the larger role to play.

So-called riots (basically organized anti-Muslim violence) in different parts of the country have regularly exposed the mind-set, intentions and the purpose of the anti-Muslim forces including the enforcement agencies. Anti-Muslim violence violates the basic norms and principles of the rule of law which are the foundational political values for federal democracy. Riots, in which several actors play roles before and after the crimes against humanity, poison many minds beyond boundaries of the rule of law. The term 'riot' is quite commonly used to state the matter related to all kinds of violence that take place at the inter-community level. For example, Gujarat riots of 2002 have been termed by many, who visited the affected sites, as 'genocide' and 'state-sponsored crime against the Muslims' and not ordinary riots. However, it is a fact that communal riots (in fact anti-Muslim violence and terror) have become biggest threat to the country in which the members of the Muslim minority, in almost all parts of the country, have become the victims of organized crimes. In all the major communal riots since Independence, state governments, ruled by several political parties, have delayed in controlling the situation for weeks. In most of these riots, minorities have suffered disproportionately.

From *Exclusion of Muslims in India* by (ed.) Arshi Khan, pp. 4-5

**Activities of the IOS Headquarters**

**International Conference on  
“Rethinking Education of Religions  
in the Modern World: Prospects and  
Challenges”**

Department of Religious Studies, Central University of Kashmir (CUK) in collaboration with Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi (IOS) organised a two-day international conference titled *Rethinking Education of Religions in the Modern World: Prospects and Challenges* on 30th and 31st July at EMMRC, University of Kashmir, Srinagar.

The programme started with recitation of the holy Quran by Prof. Hamidullah Marazi welcomed the guests.

He laid special emphasis on the importance of knowledge-seeking and said that “in real sense it is only knowledge that makes us humans”.

The Secretary General of IOS Prof. Z. M. Khan, discussed at large the role of IOS in the empowerment of Muslims across India.

In his presidential address, vice-chancellor, University of Kashmir, Prof. Talat Ahmad, said that modern education was more materialistic and less value-oriented but it was religious education which gave peace to our soul. Stating that modern education had both advantages and disadvantages, he was of the opinion that this conference was important considering the present situation in the world as a whole.

The keynote address was given by Dr Mahmood Chandia, faculty, School of Humanities and Social Sciences,

Lancashire, United Kingdom. In his address, he mainly focused on the relationship between the fast growing technology and the spiritual crises of the modern world.

Calling the current times an era of acceleration, disruption, intolerance and *jahaliya*, Dr Chandia highlighted through graphic representation how artificial intelligence was making humans irrelevant and useless. “Humans are out of the job market due to the ever-increasing growth of technology,” he said.

During his thought-provoking session, he also spoke at large about the economic, social and political impact of technology on humans. Dr Chandia also discussed various

books, *Muslims of Kashmir* by Dr Mehbooba Akhtar and *Aayina Madaris* by Dr Nisar Ahmad Bhat, were released by the dignitaries on the dais.

Asserting the role of technology in religious education, Dr Mohammad Manzoor Alam, Chairman, IOS, who was also the chief guest of the conference, stated that technology was fundamental in religious studies in this era. Further, focusing on the social challenges faced by modern education, he was of the opinion that religion could play a crucial role in helping us to impart moral education in our educational institutions.

“We are more concerned about the marginalised sections of the society.

IOS is concentrating on carving out models of development for future generations of the country including regions, sections of society, particularly professional groups,” he said.

The inaugural ceremony was followed by a panel discussion. Scholars from different faiths presented their perspectives during the two-hour long session.

Maulana Rahmatullah Qasmi, Jeremiah Graham, Dr Kuruvella Pandikattu, Prof. Madhu Khanna, Prof. Himmat Singh, Prof. R.N. Singh, Prof. Fahim Akhtar, Mufti Muhammad Ayub, Mufti Muhammad Yaqub Baba al-Madani, Mufti Mohd. Raza Misbahi, Mufti Abdur Rashid, Mufti Nazir Ahmad Qasmi, Maulana Bashir Uddin Qasmi were members of the panel. The session was chaired by Prof. Hamidullah Marazi.

The panel discussion session was followed by technical sessions. Two parallel technical sessions were conducted under the supervision of



L-R: Prof. Hamidullah Marazi (on the podium), Prof. Z.M. Khan, Dr. Mehmood Chandia, Prof. Talat Ahmad, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam, Dr. Kuruvella Pandikattu and Prof. Himmat Singh

paradigms, theories and approaches of learning and corroborated those methods of learning with religious education pedagogy. Talking about the relevance of the topic of the conference, he was of the opinion that both religious education and modern world were as relevant as ever.

For their contribution to religious education, three religious scholars of the valley - Kalimullah Khan, Haji Manzoor Ahmad and Dr Nisar Ahmad Bhat - were awarded certificates of appreciation during the inaugural ceremony. The certificate distribution was followed by a book release ceremony in which two

experts. In total, 15 research papers were presented on the first day of the two-day international conference.

A brainstorming session was held thereafter. Maulana Mohd Adam presented the lead paper and Jeremiah Graham, Dr. Kuruvella Pandikattu.

Maulana Mustafa Rifai Nadwi participated in the session.

The first technical session was presided over by Dr Madhu Khanna while Mr A.R. Bhat was moderator. In his welcome remarks, Mr. A.R. Bhat delineated the rules and regulations of the technical session.

Prof. Himmat Singh (Patiala, Punjab) presented his paper on academics towards the excellence in religious studies.

Dr Ismail Thamaressiri (Assistant Professor, Central University of Kashmir) presented a paper on “Religious education in secular India: Issues and concerns”. Keeping in mind India’s diversity, he impressed upon the fact that the spirit of equality is a must in this multi-religious country.

Dr. Anayatullah Khan (J&K) spoke on Religious educational institutions in a secular nation

Mr Javeed Qayoom (J&K) discussed Secular and sacred branches of knowledge in Nursi’s works

Ishtiyag Ahmad Mir and Tariq Ahmad (J&K) in their paper highlighted Sociological approach of religious education and 3-point formula of centralising education

Dr Sajad Mir (J&K) said that Religious education was only solution for peace in the world.

In her presidential address Dr Madhu Khanna, former head, department of comparative religion, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, said that the need of the hour was to rethink religious education themes and not to specify what is going on and what has happened in the past.

Underlining that all the presentations were normative, Dr. Madhu Khanna stressed upon the need to bridge the gap between thinking and doing.

A parallel session was chaired by Prof. Ishtiyaque Danish and the theme was Religious Education and Modern Techniques.

Nelofer Habib spoke on “Role of Information Technology in Religious

religious education could be shared worldwide.

Mufti Ishaq spoke on “Knowledge and Islam”. He said that knowledge is the basis of everything in Islam because the first revelation was about knowledge.

Qurat-ul-Ain discussed a vital topic: “Revisiting Institutions of Religious Knowledge in an Age of Post-Modern World”.

She focused on the concept of Islamisation of knowledge and said that in Islam all knowledge is Divine.

Mufti Muhammad Raza Qadri Misbahi said that society is based on our religion. Islamic education should produce good citizens, who would lead society.



A view of the audience

Mushtaq-ul-Haq Ahmad Sikander discussed the Demand for Change in Madrasa Educational System and Curriculum in India”.

The session ended with the remarks of Prof. Ishtiyaque Danish the efforts of paper-presenters.

In the first session of the second day, the first paper

was presented by Dr. Paramveer Singh.

Dr. Paramveer Singh presented a paper: “Religion studies in higher education of India”. He said that several movements in India like Aligarh, Arya Samaj, etc. were influenced by Sikh education.

Prof. Fahim Akhtar Nadwi (MANUU) presented a paper: “Islamic Education for Students of Modern Education”. He stressed to introduce an education system which truly provides Islamic knowledge in madrasas and at higher education

Education”. She paid special attention to relevance of information technology (IT) in religious institutions.

Irfan Hussain Wani presented a paper “Role of IT in Religious Education”. He stressed that IT would help to share religious knowledge across the world.

Mubashir Ahmad Shah spoke on “Role of Information and Communication Technology in Religious Education”. After defining what religious education means, he said that through “Information and Communication Technology (ICT)”

levels. He further said that graduates of madrasas in India are conforming to the British-designed syllabus and are not able to imbibe the teachings of Islam.

Ms. Sukhwant Kaur (assistant professor, Govt. College for Women, Srinagar) discussed the "Role of Education in Social Change in Sikhism". She said that only that education is relevant which is meant for the welfare of the society.

Ms. Bilques Aslam Shah (assistant professor Govt. College for Women, Srinagar) spoke on "Religion in Inclusive Education - Channels and Strategies". The core idea of her research paper was the introduction of religious studies in multicultural and multi-religious institutions.

Nazar Mohammad Rather and Aijaz Ahmad Lone (research scholars) discussed in detail the beliefs of different thinkers like Maulana Maududi, Sir Mohammad Iqbal and others. The researchers also talked about self-emancipation through Islamic studies by quoting the thoughts of Maududi and Iqbal.

Suhail Ahmad Parray and Sartaj Ahmad Sofi (research scholars) discussed in their paper "Modernising Madrasa Education" and "Religion Education in the Digital and ICT Age". They emphasised the need for madrasa and other Islamic institutions for adopting new technology to cater to the need for knowledge and information more easily and cheaply.

Dr Zeenat Shaukat Ali and Dr Maddhu Khanna. They enlightened the gathering with their insights on pursuing religious studies. They suggested amendments in the present form of religious teachings. Dr Maddhu Khanna emphasised decolonisation of education system and the need to create an Indian notion of secularism. On the other hand, Dr Zeenat Shaukat Ali at the beginning of the paper expressed her incomprehension of the word education in both secular and religious

worlds and briefed participants about its meaning as per Oxford Dictionary.

The first session of Day Two discussed: "Challenges to Religious Education"

Ms. Bilques Aslam Shah while discussing "Religion in Inclusive Education-Challenges and Strategies" said that religion and education were compatible. According to her, the purpose of education is career and enlightenment and No discrimination on the basis of religion.

Sartaj Ahmad Sofi presented a paper entitled "Religious Education in the Age of Digitisation: The Role ICT". He said that ICT has an important role to play in education.

Prof. Madhu Khanna spoke on "The Study of World Religions in India: A Road Map for the Decolonisation of Religious Studies in the 21st Century". She said that India is a road map for religious studies. While talking about Vedic period, she mentioned about Gurukuls. The role of Nalanda University which attracted scholars from different lands. She was of the opinion that by denying religious studies in academics, India is giving way to colonisation.

Bikramjeet Singh discussed the "Impact of Colonial Disorder of Religious Studies as an Academic Discipline". He started with the impact of colonial discourse on all subjects, viz, history, sociology, anthropology etc. and then said that Western ideology wants Christianity as the central identity. This ideology divided religion on geo-graphical lines. When scientific study is introduced it creates the problem. Religious clash is going on and to overcome this clash, religious unity is important.

Dr Ajaz Ahmad Lone discussed "Ali Shariati's Iqbal and the reconstruction of traditional Islamic educational philosophy". He said that Ali Shariati was an Iranian revolutionary influenced by Iqbal. Iqbal was a multi-dimensional personality. He mentioned about

Iqbal's concept of Khudi. He believed that education philosophy revolves around that concept.

Manvinder Singh discussed "Guru Nanak's Vision towards Education" and discussed Guru Nanak's view on education. Education for freedom. Religion relates to God and man, spirituality with both.

### Valedictory Session

Like the inaugural, the valedictory session of the conference started with the recitation of holy Quran and naat by two students of Bilaliyah Educational Institute. After welcoming speakers on the dais, head, department of religious studies, Central University of Kashmir, Prof. Hamidullah Marazi, read the report of first day of the conference in front of the dignitaries, including vice-chancellor, Central University of Kashmir, Prof. Mehraj-ud-Din Mir.

In his report, Prof. Marazi said that a brainstorming session was followed by two parallel technical sessions which were conducted under the supervision of experts. Prof. Marazi said that about 15 research papers were presented by scholars from various institutions and states on the first day of the conference.

The welcome remark was followed by an interesting session in which the dissertations of the 4th semester students of the department of religious studies were screened in the form of videos and short films. The idea of converting dissertation in visual form and then exhibiting them in front of experts of the subject was lauded by all dignitaries and participants.

Highly impressed with the dissertations work of the 4th semester students of the department of religious studies, Chairman, IOS, New Delhi, Dr Mohammad Manzoor Alam, said that they had potential to be future experts of the field. Further, he acknowledged that the two-day conference was successful in disseminating the message of respect for all faiths of the world. Stating that IOS works on the

same lines, Dr Alam left the dias with a three-fold message.

- Sit together
- Think together
- Work together

Dr Alam's address was followed by Prof. Ishtiyaque Danish's who also has been associated with IOS in the capacity of finance secretary. Praising the efforts of the department for organising the conference, he had a long-list of suggestions for research scholars and students working on such topics. He was of the opinion that experts and research scholars should work together for the welfare of humanity.

Prof. Abdur Rashid Bhat, former head, department of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, acknowledged that this conference was quite successful in achieving its goals. Praising Dr. Mehmood Chandia's keynote address on the first day of the conference, he said that the lecture was outstanding. He also proposed that documentary of this conference should be shared throughout the world. Prof. Madhu Khanna, former Director, Centre for Study of Comparative Religion and Civilisations, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, also thanked Department of Religious Studies, Central University of Kashmir for organising a conference which was need of the hour. Calling it an extraordinary seminar, she stated that this conference had sent a very important message across the world. Religious education should integrate both realms, materialistic as well as spiritual, she concluded.

In his concluding remarks, Dr Mehmood Chandia, faculty, School of Humanities and Social Sciences Lancashire, United Kingdom, declared that papers presented in this conference showed the richness of knowledge that could be created within two days. Stating that the production of knowledge needed action, he insisted upon the requirement of some sort of action on these two days of

thinking and learning for the betterment of society.

Observing that as witnessed in last two days knowledge was being appreciated, Dr Chandia believed that knowledge was being brought to a common forum where different ways of learning could be put on the table for further discussions in the interest of all races and faiths.

He also deliberated upon the need for a model of education that should morally, intellectually and spiritually equip students so that they are prepared to interact with each other in the modern society. Reacting to the video dissertation of students, Dr Chandia said that every religious tradition has institutes to preserve its knowledge. "Religious institutions like madrasahs, gurukuls, taksals, Christian seminaries etc., preserve classical learning of their religion. There is an urgent need to integrate the religious and other academic institutions. So that a united picture of religion is presented to the whole world," he concluded.

Stating that the purpose of this conference was not to impose our ideas but to share our theme, Dr. Paramvir Singh of department of Encyclopedia of Sikhism, Punjab University, Patiala, thanked the vice-chancellor of the Central University of Kashmir, Prof. Mehraj-ud-Din Mir, and Prof. Hamidullah Marazi for organising such an important conference. "Prof Hamidullah Marazi is considered to be an eminent scholar in the academic circles of the country. He conducts conferences, seminars, talks and other academic activities day in, day out. He has such an influence that no one rejects his invitation," he concluded.

Mufti Omar Abedeen Qasmi, deputy director, Al-Mahd al Aali al-Islamia, Hyderabad, said that Islam is not against learning other religions. Rather the Quran says, "Say, O People of the Scripture, come towards that is equitable between us and you". (3:64).

Stressing the need of such conferences, GN Var, president of Private Schools Association of Jammu & Kashmir, pointed out that such conferences where moral education is taught help our young generation to live peacefully.

In his presidential address, the vice-chancellor, Central University of Kashmir, Prof. Mehraj-ud-Din Mir, laid special emphasis on the need for holding interfaith dialogue for solving issues faced by society at large. Emphasising the role parents can play in one's life, he opined that parents should instil the essentials of their faith in their children at an earlier stage.

"There is a dire need for providing moral education with religious education to our children. So, that they can learn about humanity and tolerance from their early childhood," he said.

Prof. Mir also expressed his dismay on the growing discord between members of various religious communities, asserting that "it is all because of the lack of religious knowledge".

Asserting that fundamentals of religious ethos should be inculcated in letter and spirit, he said that the deliberations during the conference should be consolidated and sent to the quarters concerned for implementation.

Stating that the presence of people from different faiths in the conference per se determined the success of the conference, The vice-chancellor hailed Prof. Hamidullah Marazi for his efforts and also encouraged him to organise such conferences in near future.

Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies, Dr Nazir Ahmad Zargar conducted the proceedings while Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies, Mr. Harpal Singh proposed a vote of thanks.

In total, around 50 research papers and articles covering various areas in the domain of religion, education, technology, science and other

important disciplines were presented by the scholars from diverse backgrounds and faiths coming from different parts of India and Jammu & Kashmir during the two-day international conference.

An 8-point resolution unanimously adopted at the concluding session, was read out by Prof. Z.M. Khan, Secretary General of the IOS. The resolution read:

**Resolution**

It is a matter of great satisfaction that a two-day International Conference on “Rethinking Education of Religions in Modern World: Prospects and Challenges” has been organised by the Department of Religious Studies, Central University of Kashmir, in collaboration with Institute of Objective Studies, New Delhi, on 30th and 31st July 2019 at University of Kashmir, Srinagar. The programme could be termed as a highly successful event from the point of view of participation, level of deliberations, attendance and floor engagement. Delegates from within and outside India could enjoy the weather and cuisine of Kashmir.

The house in its final deliberations has adopted the following resolutions:

1. The present-day world is faced with situations of disruption, chaos and confusion, which demand rethinking about education of religions in modern world afresh and at all levels. The present conference has been an important initiative, that needs more and more serious engagement on the theme.
2. A new Spirituo-moral consciousness may be devised through initiating a process of dialogue and mutual interaction. It would create an environment of peaceful coexistence.
3. Religious and constitutional characteristics of Indian philosophy, culture and heritage

must be highlighted to create environment of peace and progress.

4. The present crisis situations demand all efforts for saving the planet through trusteeship, harmony, balance and social justice.
5. There may be new initiatives to study other religions and there should be strong opposition to misuse and abuse of religions for ulterior motives.
6. Efforts should be made to re-visit positive elements in civilisational and historical march of humankind. Full help may be taken by application of technology.
7. Universities, research organisations and well-placed NGOs may come forward to rethink about education of religions in modern world and make religion relevant in present context.
8. There is an urgent need for interaction among *deeni madaris*, other religion’s teaching institutions, and modern education institutions so that a unified worldview may be projected.

The conference came to a close with a vote of thanks.

**IOS Lecture on the book *The Cultural Atlas of Islam***

A lecture based on the review of the book “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” (Part-I Chapters: Arabia, the Crucible, Language and History, Religion and Culture) by Prof. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi and Ms Lamyā al-Faruqi was organised by the Institute of Objective Studies (IOS) at its conference hall on July 27, 2019. The lecture was delivered by the former professor of history, Jamia Millia Islamia and currently the director, IOS centre for

historical research, Prof. Syed Jamaluddin.

In his lecture, Prof. Syed Jamaluddin said that Prof. Faruqi spoke of phenomenology which, was based on philosophy and psychology. As against most Western and Muslim scholars who had treated their study of Islam either territorially or chronologically, in the Cultural Atlas of Islam the subject had been dealt with according to phenomenological methodology, which required that the observer let the phenomena speak for themselves, rather than force them into any predominant idea national framework. Explaining the phenomenological method, he said that it had its roots in a 20th century philosophical movement based on the work of the philosopher Edmund Husserl.

Referring to Chapter-I, “Arabia: The Crucible”, he said that it explained the topography and demography of Arabia, internal and external population, movements and Semitic invasions of outside (Egypt, Phoenicia and Islam). The name Arabia was applied in this book to both the Arabian Peninsula and the Fertile Crescent since each was the continuation of the other and was inconceivable without it. Talking about demography of the region, it was said that the people who inhabited the geographic theatre of Arabia belonged to one race of humans, the Caucasian or West Asian, also known as the Semite. Al-Faruqi was critical of western view of Semites. According to him, none of the peoples called Semite had ever perceived themselves as the biological descendants of Shem, son of Noah, except the Christians and Jews of the modern West. He considered it as ethnocentric which was a creation of Romantic Europe. He argued that the peoples of the ancient near east certainly perceived themselves as peoples in terms of the languages they spoke, the religions and cultures they adhered to or the political regime

under which they lived, not their biological descendants or race. He said that except for the Hebrews, the perception of race was absent from Arabia.

Commenting on Chapter-2 which dealt with “Language and History”, Prof. Jamaluddin observed that Al-Faruqi discussed the linguistic integrity or unity of Arabian peninsula. In this regard, the author looked upon the Semites as a linguistic family. Almost all of the Semitic languages were now defunct with Arabic as the only language with real life. In the seventh century C.E., with the approach of Islam, Arabic displaced Aramaic throughout West Asia. Under the influence of Islam, it had influenced the Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay, Hausa and Sawahili languages, giving them 40-60 percent of their vocabularies and affecting their grammar, syntax and literatures. It was now the religious language of a billion Muslims across the world.

Prof. Jamaluddin touched upon Chapter-3, “Religion and Culture”, which opened with a discussion on a question of method to treat the topic of Mesopotamian Religion. The author suggested that Mesopotamian religion might be distilled out of the thousands of texts, literary, historical, mythical as well as legal sources. Talking about the essence of the Mesopotamian religion, Al-Faruqi compared it with the Egyptian and Indian religion. He said that in contrast to both, Mesopotamia maintained a dualistic doctrine in which God was divine, and the creature, the otherwise.

Prof. Jamaluddin said that the contribution of Judaism and Christianity to Islam was numerous

indicated by the co-existence in both of identical religious personalities, events, ideas and principles. But, in the opinion of Al-Faruqi, co-existence was not a contribution. He also rejected the view of western scholars affirming such contribution as “borrowings”. The author continued that Islam was the oldest religion, being the eternal religion of God, of Adam, of Noah and his progeny. It saw itself as the religion of Abraham and his descendants, of Moses, of Jesus and of all the prophets God had sent. Al-Faruqi emphasised that Islam accepted the religious legacy of Mesopotamia as its own, since the Mesopotamian civilisation was the product of Arab migrants from the peninsula as they

consolidated that tradition in peninsular Arabia which came to be known as Hanifiyyah. Its adherents, the Hanif (s), resisted every association of other gods with God, refused to participate in pagan rituals, and maintained a life of ethical purity. The Prophet (PBUH) knew the *Hunafa* well enough to say: “Islam is identical with Hanifiyyah,” and above him stood the Quran’s authoritative identification of Abraham as *Hanif*.

In his presidential address, Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Languages, Jamia Millia Islamia, Prof. Wahajuddin Alvi, held that all the

three chapters of the book formed the subject that was being discussed in the world today. He said that civilisations neither came into existence nor died so often as might be believed. Mesopotamian civilisation was very old and existed even today. He said that there was a difference between religion and civilisation and the concept of Khuda came to India as Allah from Iran, he added.

Earlier, the lecture began with the recitation of a Quranic verse by Hafiz Athar Husain Nadwi. Shah Ajmal Farooq Nadwi introduced the subject and conducted the proceedings. He also proposed a vote of thanks. The lecture was attended by scholars, university teachers, researchers and prominent citizens, including the chairman, IOS, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam, secretary general, IOS, Prof. Z.M. Khan, assistant secretary general, IOS, Prof. Haseena Hashia.



L-R: Prof. Syed Jamaluddin, Prof. Wahajuddin Alvi, Dr. M. Manzoor Alam and Prof. Z.M. Khan

settled in Mesopotamia and were reinforced by the continuous flow of humans from the desert into the Fertile Crescent, from the thirtieth to the thirteenth century B.C.E. like the Mesopotamian tradition, the religious tradition of the peninsula came to be influenced by Abraham’s reformative ideas which came into it through Ishmael whom Abraham chose to bring back to the peninsula and settle in Makkah (Paran or Faran) and who became the ancestor of many great peoples.

He said that both Jews and Christians were welcomed by those Arabs who upheld the Mesopotamian-Abrahamic tradition. Together, they

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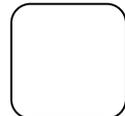
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