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Thought for the Month

And they (sometimes) say:
 "There is nothing except
 Our life on this earth,
 And never shall we be
 Raised up again."
 If thou couldst but see
 When they shall be mad to stand
 Before their Lord!
 He will say:
 "Is not this the truth?"
 They will say:
 "Yea, by our Lord!"
 He will say:
 "Taste ye then the Chastisement
 Because ye rejected Faith"

Al-Quran- VI: 29-30

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FOCUS

Besides beliefs, virtues and rules, there is a fourth aspect of the Shari'ah: its vision of the good life. What is the good life which the Shari'ah envisages? What are its constituents? How do the goods of the body stand with the goods of the spirit? How far does the good of society constitute the good of the individual, and how does the good of this life compare with the good of the next life? Similarly, what are the principles that determine the degree of obligation, define what is obligatory, what is highly commended, and what is less commended, and what is left to our discretion? In short, what is the overall ideal of the Shari'ah, what are its values and priorities?

To raise some specific questions: What is the ultimate goal of man: knowledge of God (*ma'rifah*), union with Him (*jam*) or fulfilment of His will (*'ubudiyah*)? Have the other components of the good life a value in themselves? How are they related to the ultimate good? Another question about the relation between this life and the next: In order to make the life-hereafter good, should one concentrate on some aspects of life neglecting the others, or should one work for the fulfilment of the whole life in the way the Shari'ah wants? How does the Shari'ah value exclusive devotion to God, *dhikr* and meditation in comparison to a life in which these things are reduced and combined with an active involvement in the overall happiness of human beings?

The Qur'an refers along with beliefs, virtues and rules, to these matters also; tells what is the ideal life; what are its constituents; how they compare with each other; and who are the embodiments of that good life. The Sunnah of the Prophet further elaborates Islamic values and priorities. But Islamic thought has done little to carry the task further. *Fiqh* has been more concerned with particular aspects of life, with various forms of worship, with social, political, economic activities separately, and has defined what is right or wrong, obligatory or commended in each and every field. There are various schools of *fiqh*; and in each there are hundreds of books that discuss rules down to the minutest details; there are also many books that deal with the principles of these schools. But there are not half a dozen works which address some of the questions we have raised.

Philosophical works on ethics (*akhlaq*) in Arabic and Persian which should have discussed these questions, unfortunately rehearse Greek ethics, and hardly attempt to explicate the Shari'ah. They do introduce changes and modifications into the inherited system, but that does not affect its basic character. They hardly attempt to give Islamic answers to fundamental questions of ethics in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah and explain the Islamic Shari'ah.

Sufis had, therefore, nothing to check their understanding and interpretation of Islamic values and priorities in the light of their *kashf* and experience, demands of the *tariqah* or philosophical beliefs. Shaykh Ibn I-'Arabi, for instance, discovered in his experience that unity is the fundamental truth, and the difference between God and man is relative and secondary. He, therefore, concluded that what promotes unity is superior to what emphasises difference, and on that principle extolled fasting over *salat*, Sirhindi observes:

Some *wujudis* (i.e. the believers in *wahdat 'l-wujud*) hold that prayer (*salat*) does not avail (*dur az kar ast*), because it is based, in their view, on the assumption of another (*ghayr*) and his otherness. They consequently extol fasting over *salat*. The author of the *Futuh al-Makkiyah* says that in fasting, which is abstaining from eating and drinking, one participates in the holiness (*samadiyat*) of God, whereas in the *salat* one comes down to the other and otherness, and distinguishes between the worshipper and the worshipped. This statement is based, as you know, on the doctrine of *tawhid wujudi* which is the lot of the intoxicated people.

From *Shariah and Sufism* by Abdul Haq Ansari, pp. 80-81

Activities of the IOS Headquarters

Seminar on Al-Zahrawi (Concept Note)

The IOS will organize three-day international seminar on Al-Zahrawi from 13 to 15 December 2013. The concept note is as follows:

The seminal and wide-ranging contributions of Islamic civilization to science, medicine, technology, philosophy, architecture and arts have been amply documented and widely acknowledged by historians. A significant aspect of the intellectual history of Islamic civilization is the role of Muslims as intermediaries and interlocutors between different cultures and traditions and as synthesizers, catalysts and disseminators of scientific knowledge and technology. When Muslims came in contact with the legacy of the ancients, including Greek science and philosophy, Indian mathematics and medicine, Egyptian and Roman technology and Persian literary sensibility and political wisdom, they critically sifted it, imbibed its spirit, supplemented it with their own reflections, researches and innovations, and raised the level of knowledge in wide-ranging fields to unprecedented heights. Furthermore, they did not keep the fruits of their researches and innovations to themselves but made them available to large parts of the world.

It has widely been recognised that one of the most important contributions of Muslims to Western civilization was the transmission of the scientific and philosophical legacy of the ancient world to medieval Europe. A movement for the globalisation of science, medicine and philosophy was set in motion in Baghdad during the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Mansur (754-775) and his great grandson al-Mamun (d. 833). This movement was marked by extensive translations of scientific, medical and philosophical works from ancient Rome, India, Persia and Egypt, a creative synthesis of the researches of Muslim scholars and scientists and those of the ancients, the establishment of scientific institutions, the employment of Arabic as the lingua franca of scientific communication, and the creation of a

multiethnic, multi-religious community of scientists and scholars. From 622 to 1492 Arabic replaced Greek as the international language of science and medicine. Roger Bacon (d. 1293) acknowledged that almost all of Aristotle's works were available only in Arabic translations and that without Arabic, Greek knowledge would have never reached Europe. The Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen has remarked that "as leaders of innovative thought in that period in history, Muslim intellectuals were among the most committed globalisers of science and mathematics."

For more than five centuries, from 750 to 1258 AD – which is often described as the Golden Age of Islamic science -- the teaching and practice of medicine in Europe was heavily influenced by the works of Al-Razi (d. 925), Al-Zahrawi (d. 1013) and Ibn Sina (d. 1037).

Abul Qasim Khalaf ibn al-Abbas al-Zahrawi (940-1013), known as Albucasis in the West, devoted his entire life, in Madinat al-Zahra, near Cordoba, in Muslim Spain, to medical research and practice. He made an outstanding and original contribution to medicine, surgery, orthopaedics, gynaecology and obstetrics, pharmacology and dentistry. He has been described as the father of modern surgery. More than a thousand years ago, Al-Zahrawi diagnosed and treated many diseases, which came to be rediscovered and confirmed in later centuries. He described what later came to be known as "Kocher's method" for treating a dislocated shoulder, and the "Walcher position" in obstetrics. He described the method of ligaturing blood vessels almost six centuries before the French surgeon Ambroise Pare (1510-1590). He described tuberculosis of the spine, which is now known as Pott's disease (named after the English physician Percivall Pott, 1714-1788). He prescribed mastectomy for breast cancer.

Al-Zahrawi described, for the first time in medical history, a genetic disease transmitted by an unaffected woman to her male children, which is today known as haemophilia. The first description of haemophilia in the West was made by an American physician, Dr John Conrad Otto, in 1803. Al-Zahrawi advised the use of catgut, a thread made from the inner intestinal lining of animals that is

capable of dissolving and is acceptable by the body, which is still used in modern surgical procedures. He was the first to use silk sutures to close wounds. He was also the first to use forceps in vaginal delivery, which greatly reduced the incidence of maternal and child mortality. He recommended the use of cotton in surgical dressings, in the control of haemorrhage, and as a padding in the splinting of fractures. Al-Zahrawi was the first to prescribe a surgical procedure for migraine.

A significant aspect of Al-Zahrawi's multifaceted contributions to medicine and surgery relates to the diagnosis and treatment of women's problems and diseases. He instructed and trained midwives and wrote a section on midwifery in his magnum opus, *Al-Tasrif*. Some of the clinical and surgical devices and instruments designed by him were meant to be used for women.

Al-Zahrawi's classic treatise *Kitab al-Tasrif liman ajiza al al-talif* is universally acknowledged as the first systematic, comprehensive and illustrated textbook of surgery. The book, which was the result of 50 years of clinical research and practice and runs into 30 volumes, is a veritable encyclopaedia of medicine and surgery. A major part of the book deals with materia medica and the remaining parts with wide-ranging subjects such as anatomy, clinical medicine, dentistry, midwifery and childbirth, bloodletting, the bearing of temperament on disease, the relationship between diet and disease, and the naming and compounding of drugs. Al-Zahrawi described more than 300 diseases and their treatment. The last part of the book --the 30th treatise--deals with surgery.

Al-Zahrawi is credited with having invented a number of clinical and surgical instruments, including the finely pointed scalpel to cut up a swollen foreign body in the ear, eye speculum, fine conjunctival hooks, ophthalmic scissors, respiratory for lachrymal fistulae, fine couching needles, scrappers for teeth, forceps for the removal of broken roots of teeth and for the wiring of teeth, and the use of ox bone for artificial teeth. The operative removal of a ranula and the use of a tonsil guillotine and mouth gag in a tonsillectomy are among the original discoveries of Al-Zahrawi. *Al-Tasrif* contains more than

200 illustrations and drawings of clinical and surgical devices and instruments, and many of them were designed by him. These include scalpels, probe syringes, obstetric forceps, curettes, hooks, rods, specula, the surgical needle and forceps. These devices and instruments were meant to serve a wide variety of clinical and surgical purposes.

Al-Tasrif was translated into Latin, as *Liber al-Sahrawi de Chirurgia*, by Gerard of Cremona at Toledo in the 12th century. This translation was printed in Venice in 1497. In 1778 Johnnes Channing brought out an Oxford edition of *Al-Tasrif*, and a French translation of the book, *La Chirurgie d'Albucasis*, by Lucien Leclerc was published from Paris in 1961. A lithographic Arabic edition with stylized figures was printed in Lucknow in 1908. An English translation of the book together with the original text, drawings of surgical instruments, footnotes and commentary, edited by M. S. Spink and G. L. Lewis, was published by the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in 1973.

For nearly five centuries, from the 11th to the 16th, al-Zahrawi was the most cited medical authority in Europe and his work on surgery had a profound impact on European physicians and surgeons. Almost all European writers of surgery in the Middle Ages made extensive references to Al-Zahrawi's work and drew upon his clinical insights and surgical innovations. The celebrated French surgeon Guy de Chauliac (d. 1368) made repeated references to Al-Zahrawi in his writings and even appended the Latin translation of his surgical treatise to his book *Chirurgia magna*. He ranked al-Zahrawi alongside Hippocrates and Galen. Al-Zahrawi was hailed by the eminent Italian surgeon Pietro Argellata (d. 1423) as "the chief of all surgeons". The renowned French surgeon Jaques Delchamps (d. 1588) made frequent references to al-Zahrawi's work in his writings. Al-Zahrawi's surgical treatise remained a standard textbook on the subject in all leading European universities from the 15th to

the 18th century. Many of the towering figures in modern science and medicines, including Fallopius, Vesalius, Cardan and Harvey, drew upon the works of al-Zahrawi, al-Razi and Ibn Sina. The renowned historian of science George Sarton, in his monumental *An Introduction to the History of Science*, has remarked that no single book, other than *Al-Tasrif*, influenced and revolutionised the art of surgery from the 11th to the 14th century.

W. S. Halsted (1852-1922), the doyen of modern American surgery, credited Al-Zahrawi for performing the first successful thyroidectomy, and remarked, "The extirpation of the thyroid gland for goiter typifies, perhaps better than any other operation, the supreme triumph of the surgeon's art -- which is indeed a very great attribute".

Four aspects of al-Zahrawi's



Prof. Alparslan Acikgenc delivering his lecture

enduring legacy in medicine and surgery are particularly note-worthy. First, he anticipated and pioneered the diagnosis and treatment of several diseases, through highly innovative clinical and surgical methods, centuries before they were rediscovered by European physicians. Second, many of his clinical methods and surgical procedures and instruments continue to be followed, albeit in more sophisticated forms, in modern clinical and surgical practices. Third, there is a growing worldwide recognition of the holistic view of health and disease, which was espoused by al-Zahrawi, in modern medical discourse. Fourth, there is a revival of interest in modern times of some of the novel surgical procedures recommended by al-Zahrawi, such as the treatment of migraine through surgical procedures.

Lecture on Urf

Prof. Alparslan Acikgenc, Director, Graduate School for Social Sciences and Humanities, Yildiz Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey, delivered a lecture on Urf in Islamic Law at the IOS Headquarters on March 7, 2013. The Turkish intellectual was part of a delegation currently visiting Delhi. He said that Urf occupies an important place in Islamic legal system especially with reference to local cultures and their conservation or preservation. Urf is a part of Islamic law or it operates within the large Islamic legal framework as enshrined in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah. We all know that the Holy Quran is the divine source of Islamic law. Similarly the Sunnah of the Prophet (Pbuh) is also a major source of Islamic law. After Quran and the Sunnah, Ijma and Qiyas are two other important sources of Islamic law and Urf is associated with them. Urf is a device or methodology to adopt or adapt to Islam the best parts of a local culture. Islam is a universal religion which accepts cultural diversity. Islam protects cultural diversity provided it does not include *Bidaa*, unislamic innovations, said Prof Alparslan Acikgenc.

Explaining Urf further

Prof Alparslan Acikgenc said that Islam did not seek to finish to end the local Arab culture after its emergence on the Arab scene. It sought to eliminate only ignorance, not the local culture which in fact, it always protected. To explain the subject at hand further, he cited some examples. Fasting is obligatory in Islam which people observe by keeping fast from dawn to dusk. Some people break the fast immediately after sunset whereas others do it after 10 to 15 minutes later. This is due to variations in local cultures which Islam promotes and preserves. He also gave the example *Namaz*. Some people offer *Namaz* while putting their two hands on their stomach whereas others don't do it. Islam does not object such small differences because the original obligation is fasting or praying, not one or another aspect of Islam/local culture.

He said that Turkey's culture is contradictory with the Islamic culture. We do not call it Turkey's Islamic culture, rather we call it Islamic Turkish culture, which in our view is right. Because Urf may differ from place to place but Islam is one which many be common among various *Urfs*. For instance the architecture of mosques may vary from place to place, which is permissible according to Islamic Urf, but everyone can offer Namaz in it. So the shapes of mosques may differ but Namaz will remain intact and will be offered the way it has been offered all through history.

Speaking on the occasion the IOS Chairman, Dr. Mohammad Manzoor Alam compared the arrival of Islam in Spain with that of India. That the Muslims adopted two different approaches in the two places. In Spain they focused mainly on establishing governments whereas in India, they also focused on spreading Islam through *Dawah*. This is the reason that when the Islamic government ended in Europe, the Muslims also disappeared from it whereas in India Islam has survived because of its *Dawah* activities. Dr. Alam also touched on the opportunities that globalization offers to Islam and urged to take advantage of them for spreading Islam.

The Turkish delegation, besides the speaker, consisted of Choi Woo-Won from Korea, Prof. Dr. Mustafa Bayram, Dean of Chemical and Metallurgical Faculty, Uildiz Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey and Prof. Ulvi Avcia, Dean of Science and literature Faculty, Yildiz Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey.

The programme was conducted by Prof. M. Afzal Wani.

Activities of the IOS Chapters

ALIGARH CHAPTER

One-Day Workshop on "RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: FUNDAMENTALS AND PRACTICES"

A SUMMARY REPORT

One-day methodology workshop on "research methodology: fundamentals and practices" was organised on 21 Jan 2013 at Arts Faculty Lounge, Aligarh Muslim University at Aligarh Muslim University with the financial support of the Institute of Objective Studies and the collaborative efforts of departments like CEPECAMI, Political Science, Sociology, Social Work, Linguistic and philosophy for building research capacity of research scholars in social science. This was organized keeping in view the dilemma that many students face to carry out a research in a more systematic manner because of lack of understanding of 'fundamentals of research' despite the course work on research methodology during graduation and post graduation levels. The workshop basically focused on helping



L-R: Prof. M. Akhtar Siddiqui, Mr. Mohd. Serajuddin Khan and Dr. Arshi Khan

participants to understand basics of research methodology with special focus on writing a research proposal. This programme was attended by 157 registered participants belonging to different disciplines and categories like few undergraduates and more from Masters, M.Phil, Ph.D, including scholars from foreign countries. The workshop continued between 9:30 am to 5:00 pm with lunch and tea breaks.

The session commenced with an introductory remark of the basic purpose of the workshop by Dr. Arshi Khan, the organizing faculty member. He brought to notice of all presented in the workshop about the practical problems of research scholars in doing a research. He talked about the importance of education and knowledge which can be further improved by useful research by

scholars. He introduced the contributions made by the Institute of Objective Studies to the field of education and knowledge. In his introductory remarks, Dr. Khan welcomed the financial support of the IOS for holding this workshop. The technical session started with the inaugural address of Professor Akhtar Siddiqui of Jamia Milli Islamia, New Delhi. The technical sessions included four segments—Fundamentals of Research, Survey, Research Project Proposal and Islamic epistemological paradigm.

Prof. Akhtar Siddique, former head of NCTE (one of the Regulatory bodies of the Government of India) in his inaugural lecture talked about the importance of education and how education is understood from different perspectives by scholars from different disciplines. While speaking on the

linkage between the progress in society and research, he emphasised that knowledge exploration is possible only through scientific research. Prof. Mirza Asmer Beg from the Department of Political Science, AMU shared his experience of how many research scholars complete their research work without an understanding of the fundamentals of doing a research. However, he recognized that research

methodology has been a neglected area in the discourse of teaching at higher education levels. As a result, students are not much confident of carrying out research and fall into a trap of adopting a convenient approach of completing a research work rather than seriously exploring new areas of research.

The technical session on Research Methodology started with a discussion on fundamentals of doing a research by Dr. G. C. Pal. First of all, he pointed that the quest for understanding social reality and human behavior is at the root of methodological concerns. He explained the importance of two key concepts such as 'research', and 'methodology' to enable participants to understand the basics of any research in social science. It was pointed that research is more than an understanding of set of skills; it is a way of thinking. It is about questioning

something to find answers that would add to the advancement of a profession and also solution of practical problems in life. However, in order to reach at answers, there is a need to understand some guiding principles to govern research questions- both theoretical and practical. While speaking on essentials of a research, he pointed that researcher should take into consideration key issues such as 'importance and usefulness of research' and 'contexts of research' and 'processes of doing a research'.

Before focusing on the research process, the speaker highlighted on important characteristics of a social science research. It is nothing but exploring relationship and causality between two or more factors in a systematic manner. Further, it is verifiable, evidenced-base, critical and cyclic in nature. While drawing attention towards the cyclic nature of the research, he emphasized that majority of social science research are evolved from a theory or knowledge base or social experiences; and the outcomes of a research very often lead to further research. In the process of repeated research, the research questions are systematically studied and various methods of doing research are also reexamined and refined.

The speaker elaborated on important operational steps of doing a research such as formulating a research problem, specifying objectives, conceptualizing research design, collecting information from target groups, analyzing data and writing report. As each step requires some basic knowledge which researchers should acquire for successful completion of their research work, the speaker rightly raised a relevant question before the participants such as "How much they are well-versed with the required knowledge that each step involves?", This question in fact again brought the basic purposes of the workshop into the floor. Against this backdrop, the speaker explained various issues which included- 'formulate research problems/questions and objectives'; 'designing a research, methods of data collection, various types of sampling design, processing and

analyzing information and principles of scientific writing of a report.

The discussion in fact evoked a lot of questions among participants to which the speaker tried to explain with research based evidences. Relevant academic interventions were also made from other experts and academicians. Participants were also provided with opportunities to respond to each other's queries. This question-answer session in fact enabled clarifying some of the misunderstandings of various methodological issues.

Following the mid-day break, second session of the workshop focused on quantitative and qualitative research with a special focus on survey research. Dr. Pal spoke about the quantitative and qualitative research as two broad methodological approaches for 'doing research'. He covered basic differences



L-R: Prof. Z.M. Khan delivering his speech

between these two approaches on various methodological parameters. It was concluded by saying, although it is true that there are disciplines that lend themselves predominantly either to qualitative or to quantitative research, neither one is markedly superior to the other in all respects; and one research cannot be solely a quantitative or qualitative. In recent years, there has been an increasing recognition by most disciplines in the social science that both types of research are important for a good research study. In several researches, we need to combine both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The research problem itself determines whether the study is classified as quantitative or qualitative.

As a part of quantitative research, the importance of survey method in the

contemporary research and its implications were discussed in detail. The speaker pointed that the basic survey procedure as used in the social science is made up of a combination of techniques borrowed from various disciplines. The survey approach has been one of the more popular and dominant social research methods mainly due to the development of sampling techniques as they enabled inferences to be made about a population from the sample of population. However, survey could be conducted on topics where respondents would be willing and able to respond the research questions.

The speaker talked about the essentials for doing survey such as designing the research instrument in whatever form it may be, selecting a sample, collection information using a variety of techniques, coding of large scale data and its analysis.

In this context designing a survey instrument, considerations must be given to accuracy of questions in content and comprehension, and its formatting, reliability and validity. Besides the traditional face-to face interview, surveys can also be conducted using method of mailing interview schedules, telephonic contact and

internet websites. Survey analysis mainly involves observation of independent and dependent variables and explaining their relationship if any. Inferences are drawn indirectly from already existing variances in population by rigorous process of comparison.

Survey analysis also involves the process of elaborating the relationship among variables. Elaboration helps to answer the questions of why and under what circumstances. Accordingly, the speaker discussed on two types of surveys such as descriptive and analytical; commonly used in survey research. Finally, he highlighted on some advantages of survey research such as flexibility, generalisability and usefulness in verifying theories; and also some disadvantages such as time consuming in nature, low internal validity, limitation in establishing causal

relations, inappropriateness in longitudinal studies etc.

The last session of the workshop focused on the important issue of writing a research proposal. As pointed out, research proposal is 'operational plan' to assure supervisors or funding agencies of the validity of the methodology used to obtain answers to research questions more accurately and objectively. Despite different requirements in writing a research proposals depending on time length, discipline, level of education of student researchers, supervisors or experts, funding agencies etc. there are some general guidelines in preparing research proposals, which to a large extent corroborate with the various steps involved in research process.

The speaker emphasized on some key issues those involve in these guidelines to enable participants to consider seriously while writing a proposal in a systematic manner. While drawing attention towards some variations in the guidelines of Ministry and other international agencies the speaker emphasized that any proposal has to consider some of the basic methodological considerations. This was highlighted through examination of various formats of writing research proposal as adopted by funding agencies. In order to make the participants more sensitive to proposal writing, the speaker pointed towards things expected by a reviewer of a research proposal. In order to provide a more concrete experience of writing a research proposal, he presented an illustration of a research proposal on a particular topic that was prepared based on important guidelines.

Dr. Ehtesham Khan from Magadh University chaired the last technical-cum-vaedictory Session. He also played the role of moderator in previous sessions on survey methods and research techniques. He requested Prof. Z. M. Khan, representing the IOS to give his concluding remarks. He highlighted the importance of the workshop in the context of the emerging issues in

national and international arenas. He also spoke about the importance of Islamic principles which need to be understood while research needs.

The workshop was closed with a vote of thanks by the organizer to the participants for their active participation in the workshop, institutions/departments whose support made it possible to organize the workshop, speakers who made all efforts to help participants to have a learning experience on research methodology, and others who assisted in making the workshop an eventful experience.

Arshi Khan, Organizing Faculty
Member of the One-Day Workshop,
Aligarh Muslim University.

Book Review



A view of the audience

Suicide of a Superpower, *Patrick J. Buchanan*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2011, 488 pages.

Both a book of lamentation about the presumably collapsing American way of life and a populist right-wing anti-establishment agenda of ethno-nationalist xenophobia, euphemistically referred to as "ethno-pluralism," author Patrick Buchanan presents an alarmist message of doom and gloom about the fate of his country. He adopts this "master frame," which allows him and the current he represents to mobilize anti-immigrant sentiments as well as political protest in ways that limit vulnerabilities to accusations of racism

or of being antidemocratic (Rydgren 2004).

Buchanan starts his book by asserting that this generation of Americans is witnessing "one of the most stunning declines of a great power in the history of the world" (p. 10). His thesis is that "America is disintegrating" and that the "centrifugal forces puling [it] apart are growing inexorably. What once united us is dissolving. And this is true of Western civilization" (p. 7; my emphasis). The explanation he offers for this is framed within the context of the United States losing its Christian character, implying that non-Christians do not belong there; the breakdown of society's moral, cultural, and social fabric, read as opposition to multiculturalism as well as to liberal values and policies; and the dying of the people who created this nation, which is now being overwhelmed by a rapidly increasing flow of immigrants and members of other races and ethnicities. Having rung the alarm, whether true or false, Buchanan proceeds in the following eleven chapters to make this case, addressing sensitive issues of religion, race and ethnicity, demography, multi-culturalism, expansive government, values of equality, and foreign relations – all of which he has something to say about in what appears to be some kind of an ideological tract.

Buchanan's passion is admirable, but sometimes seems to get in the way of his argument. He starts the first chapter by lamenting the "passing of a superpower" and putting much of the blame mainly at the feet of free trade and globalization, among other factors (p. 12ff). He argues that every nation that rose to power has achieved this by protecting its industry and not through free trade – except for one: the Soviet Union did try to do this and it failed. He offers several explanations for the triumph of the United States and the

West: (1) they were free, not only politically but economically and trade-wise as well; (2) much of Great Britain's historical prosperity has been explained in terms of free trade protected by a powerful navy created for just that purpose; (3) the United States sought to maintain its hegemony through free trade and globalization, probably recognizing that such hegemony could no longer be sustained by military might. After all, if the United States adopts a protective policy and China decides to retaliate, it is unlikely that the former could force the latter to open its markets like it did with Japan in the mid-nineteenth century. The balance of relative power would no longer allow for this. It is not free trade and globalization that caused the United States' decline, for after all both of these were its own baby, but the fact that other players learned how to beat it at its own game or, at least, could level the playing field. The country's waning, therefore, may be the cause for difficult choices made and policies pursued rather than their effect. Buchanan here acts more like a sore loser than a perceptive observer.

But he does not stop there. Insinuating that ethnic communities (read "the barbarians") threaten democracy, he points out that while free markets lend to concentrate a nation's wealth among ethnic minorities, democracy gives power to impoverished ethnic majorities. This, according to him, "has proven a combustible and lethal cocktail" (p. 318). The implication is that power and wealth should remain in the hands of the same ethnic minority. As far as the United States is concerned, this means the whites who must be and have both. Buchanan here is not necessarily criticizing democracy, but rather saying that it should remain a white ethnic monopoly, while espousing the separation of races rather than multiculturalism. Through such separation, non-Europeans would have no access to the system's democratic privileges and would be left to their own devices. In essence, he is suggesting that what the United State inflicts on many less-developed

countries in the international system should be replicated domestically.

Buchanan laments the loss of religious values; however, part of such values requires one to recognize that the inevitable rise and fall of nations is a matter of the Divine Will. The United States is no exception to this. It is a nation that came into existence by destroying an entire continent with tens of millions of indigenous inhabitants, has seen its heyday of grandeur – perhaps still does – and will eventually decline, inevitably so. One may surmise about the causes and reasons, as Buchanan has done, and try to reverse them, but rarely does this happen. It also neither changes the course of events nor stymies the inexorable. Whether accepted with grace or with dismay, treading the same path is ordained. Where the sun rises, it is fated to set.

Reviewed by Amr Sabet

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Shame on Delhi

by Ishtiyaque Danish

The views expressed in the article do not necessarily reflect the editorial policy of the Newsletter (editor)

A five year old girl is raped in Delhi. Then a girl protesting against the rape is slapped repeatedly by a police officer. Do we deserve to be called civilized?

We have just watched picture of the girl being slapped by a police officer. Apparently it is not clear what transpired between them or why the police officer felt so provoked? Whatever the reason, it is indeed disgraceful to slap a girl. The police officer has rightly been suspended. We just hope that the matter is fully investigated and, if found guilty, the officer is punished.

The rape of five year old girl must compel us to do some real soul searching. The victim cannot be blamed from any angle. The good news is that she has shown sign of recovery. We pray that she fully recovers and lives a long normal life without being haunted by the trauma she has undergone.

The alleged culprit is a 22 year old married person. He is being alleged to have committed a grave crime and if found guilty must be punished severely. But this incident is not a simple matter of crime and punishment. It deserves to be thoroughly probed.

The alleged culprit is one of the millions of faceless youngmen who come to Delhi for a variety of reasons. There are students who come for study. As they have come with a purpose and mostly live in an educated environment, they remain, by and large, focused on their mission. But a great majority of the youngmen coming to Delhi and other megacities consists of youth, educated, semi-educated and dropouts who leave their houses in

search of jobs. These youngmen come from villages, towns and small cities where they have no employment. Our policy-makers must find reasons that why our fast developing economy is not creating job opportunities in small cities and rural India. I am sure that by creating opportunities of employment all over the country and thus preventing population migration from rural areas and small cities to metros the rate of crime will be dramatically reduced.

Have a look at these youngmen and their living conditions in Delhi. A great majority of them works in unorganized sector where they earn anything from three-four to six-seven thousand. Understandably they can not afford to live with their families. Moreover, they have to save some money to support the family back home. Thus they are compelled to share accommodation available mostly in unauthorized colonies of Delhi. Some of these youngmen are married at an early age and their poverty compels them to live in Delhi without their wives. These men occasionally fail to control their sexual desire and rape women including girls when they get hold of them.

Among the youth in Delhi is a sizeable number of those who are upwardly mobile. They are from villages, small cities and also from Delhi. They have received from average to good education, earn reasonably good salary which, however, is not enough to enable them to marry in families of their status. As a result they take a longer period to settle and marry at 35 or even 40. Officially these youngmen become adult at 18 but

most of them attain puberty at 15. Many of these youngmen live alone, away from the sobering and civilizing influence of their elders, and as a result a few of them commit crimes including rape.

There are also youngmen from Delhi and the NCR who have become super rich for a variety of reasons. Some have genuinely acquired wealth and many have money earned through unfair means. Some of these are well-educated and again a vast majority is not so educated. But they all have cars and flats in Delhi, roam on the city's roads aimlessly and commit crimes of all kinds including rape.

The disturbing male-female ratio in Delhi's neighbourhood is another reason for increased cases of rape in the city. There are educated and rich youngmen travelling in big cars who think that girls of status families should marry them as they too have attained status. But status families, citing some bitter experiences, refuse to give their daughters to such youngmen. Outraged by rejection they roam around flashing their wealth; sometimes they find willing girls and some time they force women to share bed with them. These and other such social problems are quite acute and they deserve the collective attention of the society. We should not look at rape or crime against women as a law and order problem only; rather we need to study the problem thoroughly in order to find out a real and viable solution. The piecemeal approach has not worked in the past and will not deliver in future as well.