

9. The covenant of the great God-Allah: "Honor they [sic] father and they [sic] mother that thy days may be longer upon the earth land, which the Lord thy God, Allah hath given thee."

10. Come all ye Asiatics of America and hear the truth about your nationality and birthrights, because you are not negroes. Learn of your forefathers' ancient and divine Creed. That you will learn to love instead of hate.

11. We are trying to uplift fallen humanity. Come and link yourselves with the families of nations. We honor all the true and divine prophets.

4. Shaikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal, *Al-Islam:
The Religion of Humanity* (1950)

Shaikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal (d. 1980) was an African American Muslim missionary devoted to converting all Americans to what he considered to be the only true religion of humankind. This spiritual head and founder of the Islamic Mission of America successfully converted perhaps thousands of African Americans to a Sunni interpretation of Islam. His publications, which often borrowed, with acknowledgement, from other Muslim missionary tracts, sought to inform the American public on the basics of Islamic religion. His books described the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, reproduced large excerpts from the Qur'an, taught believers how to make the salat, or daily prayers, and detailed and praised contemporary Muslim heads of state. While his adventuresome spirit led him to establish a short-lived Muslim village in rural New York state, he achieved his greatest success as leader of the State Street mosque in Brooklyn. As a New Yorker, Sheikh Daoud came to know Muslims who traveled to the city from various countries. In *Al-Islam: The Religion of Humanity* (1950), he acknowledged the assistance not only of his wife, Khadijah, but also M. A. Faridi of Iran, Bashir Ahmed Khan of Pakistan, and others from Afro-Eurasia. The sheikh was also pictured in this volume wearing light-colored Arab robes, sitting cross-legged on a prayer rug or oriental carpet. In his hands he held the Qur'an, deeply contemplating its contents in the manner of an Old World Islamic scholar. In the excerpts below, he argues that for the sake of their own salvation, Jews and Christians must convert to Islam. His criticism of Jews and Christians is grounded both in an Islamic critique of Jewish and Christian religious claims and in his experience as an African American in New York. Shaikh Daoud's religious

thought is both local and international. He simultaneously asserts the truth of basic Sunni Islamic doctrines while also criticizing white supremacy, discrimination against blacks among some American Jews, and the violent history of European Christian expansion and imperialism.

For the assurance of everlasting *Peace* and *Security*, the people and the nations of the world must accept "Al-Islam," the *Religion of humanity*, revealed by "Allah," the "Almighty God," unto His chosen Prophets, as the *Religion of humanity* in which to worship Him as their *Religion*. And they must also adopt and put in execution its Principles and its Laws as revealed by "Allah," the Lord of the worlds, unto His Holy Apostle Mohammed, for the one world government of the *brotherhood* of all humanity, as decreed by God, so that all men shall worship and be of one *God*, one *Religion* and one *Law*.

For *The Benefit Of Humanity*, "Al-Islam" is the Religion of the Peace of God, the Reward or the Attributes of obedience to the Commandments and the Laws of "Allah," the "Almighty God." "Al-Islam" is the *Religion of humanity*. It is the reward, the gift from "Allah" to all who bowed down their will in *submission* to the (*Will*) of "Allah," the (one) God, in obedience to His Laws, His Commandments, His Prophets and what He hath revealed for the government and guidance of humanity, and as the *Religion* and the *Faith* in which to worship Him.

All the people and the nations of the world should know that "*Islam*," the *Religion* of "Allah," the "Almighty God" is the *only* Religion of humanity. They should also know that "*Islam*" is the Religion of all the *Prophets* and *Messengers* of God, including Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, the Tribes, Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammed, and the Prophets of God were not Jews but *Muslims*. No one has Religion, and neither can any one worship God, unless he bows down his will in submission to the *Will* of "Allah," the "Almighty God," the Lord of the worlds, in obedience to His Laws, His Commandments, His Prophets and what He hath revealed for the benefit of humanity.

The Islamic Mission of America, Mosque and Institute, established in the name of "Allah," the "Almighty God" according to His own Divine revealed laws in the promotion of the highest human interest in the worship of "Allah," the (one) true God, designed especially for the propagation, teaching and defending "Al-Islam," the Religion of humanity, which "Allah," the Lord of the worlds, hath revealed unto His Chosen Prophets, as the Religion and the Faith in which all humanity shall worship Him. It

appears to me as though the people of the Western parts of this world have no knowledge of the Religion of their Lord. Their constant *laughing* and *mocking* the *Muslims'* manner of worshipping God clearly proves this, because it is only fools who laugh and mock at things of which they have no knowledge. They have never been made to know that prostration is the proper manner of worshipping God. Prostration signifies humility and meekness of oneself before his or her creator. Muslims are the true believers who have never deviated in the slightest degree from "Islam," the Religion of God and His Prophets and mankind. We are in strict accordance and obedience with the laws of our Lord as revealed and as prescribed by His Holy Prophets.

It is deceiving and shameful on the part of the leaders of the Jews, the Catholics and the Protestants, to proclaim the so-called three Faiths at a time like this, to an enlightened and troubled world, to people who are seeking for the truth, peace, security and the brotherhood of man.

Faith is to believe in the oneness of God, obedience to His Commandments, His Laws, His Prophets and what He hath revealed. All who believe in the oneness of God, Who created the universe, His commandments and His Laws are of (one) Faith. The Jews know better because their religion is of the religion of Abraham. They are only leading the Christians on who are using the books of Moses, the law giver, and, a prophet of the Israelites. This is no way to establish brotherhood. Human brotherhood is a reality, because we are one human family. The brotherhood of man must be established in obedience to the Commandments and the laws of the (one) God of Abraham, which is a different thing all together. "Islam," our religion, mine and yours, is the Religion of humanity. The so-called three Faiths must find a different name for unification. But to call yourselves the three faiths when you believe in the one and the same God is deception in the highest degree. The Jews must return to "Islam," the religion of Abraham, and the Christians must accept "Islam," the Religion of humanity; that is if they hope to bring about peace and the one universal brotherhood of man.

It is my desire that the Christian people should know that I am not an enemy of theirs, but a friend of humanity, a lover of truth and humanity, and a herald of the truth as revealed by the "Almighty God." And should you find knowledge, guidance, peace, the blessings and the forgiveness of God through the pages of this book then I will have accomplished more than my object. I beg of you to read this book very carefully and then make a fair comparison of what you read and what you have been taught

to believe. However, there are certain things you must know in relationship with your God before you die.

Christianity is not your Religion, and it is not the Religion of God, and it has no relationship with God, because its teachings and its philosophy are contrary to the revelations and the laws of the Almighty God and the teachings of His Holy Prophets. But "Islam" is your Religion, and unless you surrender your will to the WILL of "Allah," the Unity in the one God, in obedience to His commandments and His laws and observe the teachings of His Prophets, which will automatically make you a Muslim, the gates of Heaven and Paradise will be closed to you, because none goes to Heaven but Muslims who observe the Commandments and the Laws of their Lord.

We are asking the Christian people to stop making fools of themselves, because it is only fools who laugh and mock at things of which they have no knowledge. Why laugh at the Muslims, when the Muslims are the only true believers whose Religion has always been the Religion of God and His Prophets. The religious laws, habits and culture of the Muslims are in true accord with the revealed laws of God.

"They Were Not Jews but Israelites"

For over nineteen hundred years, the so-called Christians with the aid of the Jews and the Scripture of the Israelites' Prophet Moses, have falsified to humanity, misled and misguided them in the name of Jesus, misrepresenting God's Holy Scripture and His Holy Prophets. According to the Holy Quran, a lie is sometimes more dangerous than murder. The greatest injustice that has been committed to humanity, was the willful withholding of the true and most important Revelations of God from the people by both the Jews and the Christian leaders.

Every Jewish and Christian leader knows or should know that "Obedience" to the Holy Laws of "God," as Revealed unto His Holy and chosen Prophets is "Islam," the Religion of humanity. From Genesis to Revelation, the Books Revealed by our Lord unto Moses and David, never once was the name Jews mentioned, because there were no Jews during the Advent of the Holy Prophet Moses, David and Solomon. They also know that the word Jew does not apply to a nationality, but a religious cult, whose followers worshipped idols-gods and they also know that the idol-worshipping cult of Judea was not established until after the death of Solomon by Jereboam,

who rebelled against Rehoboam Solomon's son and rightful heir and ruler over the Kingdom of his father whom he succeeded because he refused to recall the exile of his wise father from Egypt. Why do the Jews and the Christians withhold this most important revelation of God from the people and why do they not teach their children to know who the children of Israel are and what their Religion is and what the Religion of the Prophets of God was? Why are they withholding these facts from humanity if they were of the true God?

Moses and the children of Israel were Muslims and not Jews and so were all the Prophets and Messengers of God. There were no Jews during the Advent of the Prophets Moses, David and Solomon and the people of God whom Moses helped to escape from Egypt by the Will and the help of God, known as the Flight or the Exodus, were not Jews but Israelites, of the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and of their generations. The Jews were not God's chosen people but the Israelites. Anyone can become a Jew, but anyone can not become an Israelite. Israelites as I stated before are the seed of Abraham, the descendents of the generations of Isaac and Jacob and their nationality was known as Hebrew and they spoke Hebrew and they were dark skinned, their skin was like polished bronze and their hair was like lambs' wool.

The Hebrews more or less are the dark skinned people of the world and they are not proud because they are people of God. Righteous and wise people are not proud because they know that they are servants of God in the service of humanity. The Jews of America are the proudest of all the people, if by chance a man of colour would move into their neighborhood they would raise such a rumpus which would give one cause to believe that that one person had committed murder, although that coloured person is supposed to be of their own Religious Faith. This proves that the American and European Jews of today are not related by blood with the Israelites and the Hebrew of the Scripture of Moses.

Do you desire to see the original Jews who had turned away from the Religion of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon and Rehoboam of the Holy House of David, the keeper of the Covenant of God who are the true seed of Jacob, Isaac and their father Abraham. Then take a trip to the Sahara to East and North Africa to Yemen, to Ethiopia and you will see dark Jews by the hundreds of millions, they are of all shades and colors, but they are not proud of the color of their skin. The only member of the human family who are proud of the color of their skin is the White-man, known as the Northern Barbarians; the Gentiles who now call

themselves Christians and who during the Advent of the Prophet Jesus, whom they now worship as their personal God and saviour, was not even recognized nor considered other than a crazy harmless man. These African and Arabian Jews today called themselves Orthodox Jews, instead of Israelites because they have changed their Religion from "Islam," the Religion of Abraham to Idol worshipping.

It must also be remembered that it was not until after the flight from Egypt, that God Revealed unto Moses the Holy Scripture with the Laws for the government and guidance of the children of Israel and as a protection for them from evil. They were abandoned at the hands of the Philistines for forty years, due to their disobedience to God and His Holy Prophets. There were not Jews even then. These people were Israelites and their tongue was Hebrew and their Religion was "Islam," the Religion of Abraham, which is "Obedience" to the Holy Laws of God.

He who disclosed the truth as revealed by God in His Holy Books unto the people has none to fear but his Lord and he is a true friend of humanity and his Lord "Allah", is his inspiration, his protector, provider, and guide and his friend. But he who withheld and concealed the Truth, which is the Word of God and as Revealed by Him for the benefit of humanity is the real aggressor, a true agent of evil, an enemy of God and humanity. The aggressors call out aloud, murder, murder even before he is hurt because he serves no good purpose and therefore he expects nothing good in return and he tries to involve everyone in his aggressiveness, his evil experiences and miseries. Such is the enemy of humanity, yours and mine.

They shall continue to write, to speak and to teach falsehood until they learn to know the truth and no one knows the truth but the Muslims and the true believers who accept all the Prophets of God as equal and all the true Books Revealed by God in the Holy Quran, which contains the complete Revelations of "Allah," the "Almighty God," the Lord of the worlds with the complete Laws for the government and guidance of humanity and as a protection for us from evil. The Criterion of all Laws is enclosed in the Holy Quran.

"Those Who Laugh and Mock"

It is only fools who laugh and mock at things of which they have no knowledge, they were never taught to love and respect their human brothers,

other than those of their own tribes. Truth is something they know nothing about. Fools as a rule are slaves to the ideology of their influential leaders, they were made to believe certain things and deny and hate certain things and certain people. They were never given the chance to think and reason for themselves. That is why we have slaves. It is not the body that is enslaved, but the spirit, the mind and the will by subjective means. The spirit is broken, the mind is subdued, and the will to do is denied. There are other kinds of fools; they are the ones who know that you are right and they are wrong, but they cannot afford to let their followers know, for fear of losing prestige which would hurt their pride. But they have no fear of God and the loss of their souls. They would laugh and encourage others to laugh and mock at people who are doing the right thing merely to cover up their own wrong doings.

Christianity is not the religion of God nor humanity, yet the Christian leaders who know that Christianity is not the Religion of God nor of humanity, but a society trying their best to make the people of the world believe otherwise. This in itself is transgression against God, because the Religion of our Lord is "Islam," the Religion of the Prophets, the Laws and the commandments of the one God of Abraham. It is submission to the Will of God, in obedience to His Laws and His commandments, and in obedience to His Prophets. Christianity is not the Religion of humanity, but "Islam." Christianity is but a social order, a philosophy, based on certain principles of White Supremacy, that White people are superior to their human brethren who are not White.

Originally Christianity was not intended to be a religion in which to worship God. It was a society for the unification of the followers of the teachings of Jesus, not a Religion nor the Religion of Jesus because the Religion of Jesus was the Religion of Moses whose laws he came to confirm. Jesus' Religion was "Islam," the Religion of the Prophets and humanity; Christianity was advocated by the Emperor Nero and other European rulers as a social and political organization, as an instrument of conquest.

Their motives were to conquer, subjugate, suppress and oppress all people and nations other than their own Tribes and Christian nations. Christianity, as a European organization, was designed especially to conquer and enslave the people and the nations of the East; especially Africa, Arabia, India and China, and as a matter of fact they were more than successful. They did not only conquer, suppress and oppress the unfortunate people, but they also sold them in public markets for a price, bidding for

them as they would bid for horses or dogs. Could you consider these people civilized or righteous? Are they worthy to be considered as leaders of humanity, after considering the treatment they have inflicted upon their unfortunate suppressed and conquered slaves? Christianity as a social and political organization served well the purpose of the European Kings, Emperors, Czars, Queens, Dukes, Princes, Counts and other Christian rulers. The religious lives of the people were influenced by those of their ruler; for instance if a certain King happened to be a Catholic, all of his subjects had to be Catholics; if he happened to be a Protestant who disliked the Catholics, his subjects had to be Protestants. This was by force of law and not by choice of faith. In those early days the Christian people did not worship God, for they knew not God, nor His Religion, nor His Laws, nor His commandments, they could neither read nor write. They were not only subjects to their Kings and Lords, but their slaves; they worshipped their rulers as something sacred and holy as though they were gods, even up to these enlightened times some of them still worship their rulers as their God. Christianity did not help the people to know and to worship God; it made them believe that Jesus, son of Mary, the Messenger of God, was God and the son of God and his mother, Mary was the mother of the Almighty God. People became so bewildered and confused that they decided not to believe in any kind of God but to get all that life can afford. This is what brought on communism in Russia, Spain, France, Rome and all over the wide world today: falsification and deception. Every Christian leader knows today that Jesus is not God nor the son of God, and they also know that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is not the mother of God, but a woman just like your mother and mine. Nevertheless, they have kept up their pretense. In the early days of Christianity the European rulers did not worship God, they worshipped their power and glory, while pretending to be worshipping God, which they knew not, selling the name of God or a conquered slave for whatever price it would bring.

Christianity must make way for "Islam," the Religion of Humanity.

Thanks to Mohammed and other inspired good and faithful servants today, through the propagation of "Islam," the true Religion of humanity has reached the four corners of the earth; its knowledge and its wisdom are now driving the enemies of God, truth, peace, love and justice into the open where they must give a true, just and fair account of all their deceptive practices. The Christian social organizations have served their usefulness, and now they must make way for the true Religion of "Allah," His prophets and

mankind to serve humanity. The Christian leaders are now in frantic despair; they are trying to find a way to make Christianity, which is only an organization, serve as the Religion of humanity. But they are too late; they have falsified too long and have fooled too many too long. The time has come that truth has revealed itself. "Islam," the Religion of humanity, shall now be the Religion in which to worship god, not Jesus nor his mother, but "Allah," the Almighty God, the Lord of the worlds, the God of Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammed.

5. Imam Vehby Isma'il, "Our Prophet, Muhammad" (1959)

The first Albanian mosque in the United States was organized in Detroit in 1949. In addition to functioning as a place for the performance of prayers, the mosque served as a space for the making of Albanian American social networks and the celebration of Albanian nationalism. Many of those Albanian Americans associated with the mosque were anticommunists who had fled Albania for political reasons after World War II. While they embraced their newfound American identities, they also worried that their children might forget about Islam, or even worse, become atheists. In 1949, the Albanian American Moslem Society invited Imam Vehby Isma'il (b. 1919), an Albanian religious leader who had received training in Egypt, to come to the Detroit area. The imam conducted funerals and weddings for the community, oversaw the Friday prayers, and encouraged the participation of community members in the two Islamic holidays marking the end of Ramadan and the Hajj. He also edited the journal Albanian Moslem Life, which contained articles in both English and Albanian. The children's story by Imam Vehby excerpted below depicts an Old World encounter with a friend and the friend's daughter. The story conveys nostalgia for the old country while also expressing hope that a strong Muslim identity will be forged among the community's American children.

Fatima was the only daughter of Hasan and Nadira.

Nadira had graduated from girls' high school in Scutari, Albania. Later she became a nurse. She worked in the largest hospital in Tirana, the capital of Albania.

Hasan had finished his high school studies in General Medrese in Tirana. This was the only Moslem Seminary in Albania. He was a religious teacher in one of the elementary schools of Tirana.

mausoleum of the Holy Prophet, Muhammed—peace and blessings of God be upon Him—in Medina.

Arabia is noted for its camels and horses. Camels are used mostly as they are good desert travelers. They can live a long time without water; because, as you know, in the Sahara it is difficult to find water. Therefore, camels are used for riding and burden. Camels are adaptable for their hoofs are flat so they walk lightly on the sands of the Sahara. Camels are a necessity in all places similar to Arabia, sandy and without water. Many writers have called them “Boats of the Sahara.” Arabs enjoy eating camel meat, with its fur they make clothes. Camel fur is very soft, but the clothes made from it are very durable and of high quality.

Arabs love horses very much; perhaps as much as their children. Arab horses, even though of small stature, are world famous for their speed. For this reason, most racing horses in modern times are selected from the Arab breed and are costly.

Arabs take great care in horse breeding. Before he buys one, the Arab must know every little detail about it. For example, he must know its pedigree and the reputation to tell the history for its parents and its parents' ancestors. He is proud of his distinguished horses.

Long ago, horses played an important part in the wars, because then wars were fought with swords. Perhaps this is one of the important reasons why Arabs are so fond of their horses; as most of their time, before Prophet Muhammed, was spent in battle. I will tell you more of this later.

“That is enough for tonight, Fatima,” Hasan said to his daughter. “It is time for bed. Next week I will tell you about a few of their customs. Good night and God bless you.”

“Thank you father. Good night.” Fatima left and went to sleep as it was nearing midnight.

6. Abdo Elkholy, *The Arab Moslems in the United States* (1966)

Abdo Elkholy, an Egyptian Muslim sociologist who taught at Northern Illinois University, penned one of the classic ethnographies of Arab American Muslim life. Comparing Muslims in Detroit and Toledo, Elkholy argued that there was a strong correlation between Muslim religiosity and “Americanization.” His research, conducted in 1959 and supported by the Dodge Founda-

tion, showed that those Muslims who participated actively in the life of their mosques were more likely to assimilate into mainstream (white) American culture than those who did not participate in mosque life. Such findings challenged the assumptions of some social scientists, who believed that identification with a "foreign" religion might prevent strong identification with American values and beliefs. The following excerpts from his book focus only on the Toledo community, which he viewed as more successfully integrated than the Detroit community. Elkholy saw the practice of Islam in Toledo as a vibrant response to the exigencies of American life, and he heralded the participation of Toledo's Muslims in the city's economy and culture.

The first Moslem family settled in Toledo in 1915, after eight years of wandering in the United States. There were two waves of migration to Toledo: from 1945 to 1949, and from 1952 to 1955. The great majority of the Toledo members did not come directly from the old country, as was the case in Detroit, but from within the United States itself. They were mainly attracted to the city by the liquor business which one Moslem family was said to have entered. This family imported relatives from other states and employed them to meet the business expansion, securing maximum profit with minimum cost in paying wages. But those business-minded relatives very quickly realized the attractive net profits, and thus branched out in the same business direction, helped by the first family. The relatives brought others with them to start the same cycle; the news was spread, and in less than twenty years the Moslems owned 127 of the city's 420 bars, or about 30 per cent, in addition to liquor stores, carry-out businesses, and restaurants with liquor licenses. Some Moslems today have two or three bars. Many retire but keep the bars, either running them through hired workers or subletting them with the reservation of license ownership. Some with high status occupations also indulge in bar ownership, hire help, and invest their outside working hours in the business.

It has become well known in and around Toledo that the city's liquor business is almost monopolized by the Moslems who had actually started this trend by chance, and continued it by profit-orientation, cohesive relationships, and natural jealousy among the relatives to imitate the successful members. The cost of a liquor license has risen in the last ten years from \$600 to \$20,000 and more on the black market. One of the interviewees said: "Liquor is the most profitable business we have ever experienced. You never lose on it or bear any waste by contamination. To give

you just one example, last year I sold in my restaurant whiskey for \$11,000. The net profit was \$9,000."

The Toledo community represents a pattern of selectivity: its members, due to their long period of exposure to the American culture before establishing the community, had internalized to a high degree the American values, and they planned Toledo as an American-Moslem community.

The members did not come directly from the old country to gather haphazardly in one area where the traditional values are preserved: they migrated to the community from other American states where they had lived among Americans. The occupational pattern of liquor is strong evidence of such Americanization. The purpose of establishing the community was to preserve the Islamic religious identification in support of their social status as American middle class. That social-religious decision was taken after realizing the psychological commitment of establishing their life permanently in America.

Thus the intention to settle permanently in America was made early by the Toledo first generation because of their economic success. This decision helped them to adjust to the new environment. The deceptive attitude of, "when we go back to the old country, our children will learn a lot about their religion" did not emerge among them. The Toledo first-generation members realized their new minority status in the new environment. Having committed themselves to a permanent settlement, they accepted and welcomed the inevitable associate factor of being American. But being American, they saw, does not mean being without religion; rather, good Americans are in favor of religious affiliation. The first-generation members conveyed to the second the common ethical values of America and the old country in terms of religion and they accepted from the second generation the new American norms, mores, and social habits. This reciprocity between the two generations permitted the joining of the two cultural streams and resulted in an integral American Moslem community. The traditionalistic sectarian values which separated Sunnis from Shi'as in the old country disappeared, at least from public view.

Many secular elements have penetrated religion in the Toledo community. On Sunday, when the first- and second-generation parents bring their children to Sunday school at the mosque, most of them pray without ablution. This habit is not institutionalized, however, for the parents do

not proclaim it as a principle that ablution must be avoided; they explain the practice this way:

Ablution was introduced to the nomadic communities in the absence of hygienic habits and instructions. But now, under the sanitary conditions of our day in this country, everyone is supposed to be clean—thus ablution has lost its function as a precondition for prayer.

Also, among the second generation in both communities, 82 per cent do not even know that a bath is religiously required after sexual intercourse. Rationalizations of these changes encourage the congregation to participate fully in the religious practices without hidden restrictions. This kind of secularization conforms to the American religious patterns in which tradition often gives way to rationalization.

Leadership in the Toledo community's social activities as well as the religious teachings is held mainly by the American-oriented, second-generation females. In their relations with the other religious groups as well as teaching their younger generation, they stress the social and religious ethics and religious tolerance of Islam. "To be a good Moslem you have to be a good American and vice versa," this writer heard a young woman tell her Sunday school class. "Islam acknowledges and respects the other heavenly religions. It came to abolish human inequality on the basis of language, nation or race. It preaches human brotherhood."

This religious moderation and orientation of the Toledo second generation has Islamic self-identification compatible with Americanism. The social changes in the family and community relations between the Toledo first and second generations have taken the American direction, where the older generation plays a guiding, but not a leading role. The Toledo first-generation parents adjusted themselves to the more American role of providing affection in a conjugal family rather than of acting as the authority. This adjustment in the family has made it possible to build community solidarity with a minimum of revolt or deviation by the younger generation. . . .

The social religious role of the Toledo community is played so much by the women that the fine Toledo mosque may be attributed to the efforts of the women of the community.

These women participate in a variety of activities to support the mosque institution. One of their more popular fund-raising activities is selling

tickets and serving dinners of Middle Eastern dishes in the basement of the mosque. Another activity is baking Middle Eastern pastries, which they sell for maintaining the mosque. They also arrange picnics during the summer for the families of the community, and they have joint activities with the Youth Club. Their branch, called the American Moslem Society Ladies Auxiliary, has 60 active members who meet frequently at the mosque to discuss social affairs. Many decisions of the main American Moslem Societies are delegated to this Ladies Auxiliary. The women are the sole teachers in Sunday school. Even in their religious lectures at the mosque and at other churches and social organizations, the women are very active and speak with authority and intelligence about Islam.

Had it not been for the activities of the women of Moslem communities, it may be truly said that the Moslem religious movement in America would not be as steady and strong as it is now. The social religious activities of these women is the product of the Western influence and of their assimilation achieved by the women in both communities. More assimilated to the Western environment, the women in the Toledo community are more active in the mosque affairs than the women in the Detroit community who still hold the tradition that the mosque is the community of males. . . .

In contrast to Detroit, Toledo second-generation members have [also] played an active role in promoting their children's religious status and in teaching them to be good Moslems and good Americans. Despite the large number of Toledo's first-generation immigrants, these elders have yielded the position of social and religious leadership to the second-generation members who have carried over moderately and very skillfully. After all, they know the different conditions of their present environment and the universal characteristics of their religious heritage. "Islam is not a national religion," said a young second-generation social leader. "It is, rather, international by its unique principles which coincide with general human morals and stress the welfare of society. And," he added, "its details and applications are left to be shaped and reshaped to suit the particular time and place. Islam in America, with its principles, has to take into account the particular features of the American culture, it has to be a living thing in our everyday life and it has to contribute its shares to the culture surrounding us." Right or wrong in his philosophical religious view, he represents the view of his generation.

Having felt the psychological problems of their children who are looking for something to identify themselves with, the small Moslem

community of Toledo in 1955 contributed \$80,000 to build one of the newest and most beautiful mosques in the United States. The second generation started the campaign to which the first generation generously contributed.

Since 1955, many second-generation Moslems have moved with their families to Toledo because of the mosque. A young second-generation member bore a heavy loss to move with his family from Virginia to Ohio after the mosque was erected. He said that he wanted his children to be religious and used to send them to church every Sunday in Virginia. Religion to him, springing from a psychological need, helps to solve many everyday problems that are beyond the individual's capacity to solve. In addition, as said before, religion in Toledo is one of the most cherished social values of the middle class, to which the majority of the community belong. The erection of the mosque solved many problems of the second-generation members, especially in providing the necessary religious training for their children.

Being merchants and having wandered through so many states before permanently settling in Toledo, the old-generation members developed a moderate attitude toward sharing the responsibility of community affairs with the second generation. They also accepted the principle of religious coexistence which turned out to work for the best of their interest. As their children expressed the desire to marry Americans, they first advised them to marry from their own people. But when they saw the persistence of their children, they accepted the mixed marriages on the condition that the spouses familiarize themselves with the community affairs, customs, and religion. By this means, the spouse was introduced to the community and studied its religion objectively; and the community, besides keeping its own children, gained new members. It often happened that the American spouses, observing the community's tolerant attitude, converted to Islam and became very active members. By this attitude, the community seems to have violated the traditional religious doctrines which forbid a Moslem girl to marry a non-Moslem. However, there is no explicit prohibition in either the Quran or true tradition against a Moslem girl marrying a follower of a "heavenly Book." It is, however, against the traditions and customs of the old countries that a Moslem girl marry a non-Moslem. The reserved acceptance of Toledo community, therefore, represents a deviation from tradition, tending toward assimilation of the American culture.

The most religiously active members in the Toledo community married outside the faith. They and their spouses have contributed a great deal to the social and religious life of the community. It may be that they have wanted to show the good will and true faith which an ordinary born-Moslem does not need to show. It is also worth mentioning that the Islamic Associations in the United States and Canada, are the product of the mixed-marriage children.

In conversation with a score of those Moslems who adopted Christianity in both communities, the writer was told that the majority of those who became Christians were mostly women in Detroit. They converted out of frustration, having been slighted by the Moslem men who left them to marry Americans. Thus they were forced to marry outside their community and found themselves rejected by their relatives and the entire community. Because of that rejection, they moved away spiritually as well as physically. The Toledo community overcame this problem by absorbing the outsiders into the community.

The high degree of religiosity of the Toledo third generation supports the sociological theory of religious regression. But this regression should not be taken as a general condition for all third generations. Rather, it should be looked at in the light of Merton's "middle range theories," which provide that when the second-generation members carry out the social and religious leadership to bridge the gap between the third and first generations, the third generation then develops a favorable regressional attitude toward the religion of the old generation. Despite this regression, however, the religion of the third generation differs in kind and degree from that of the first.

The religion of the first generation is also associated with nationalistic sentiments. This is the case in Detroit. For this reason, the non-Arab Moslems are not accepted in the community as fully as they are in Toledo. The president of the Youth Organization in Toledo is an Indian Moslem student who is treated and looked upon as a full member of the community. The religious leader is a Yugoslav graduate of al-Azhar University. He is highly respected and fully accepted as a member of the community.

Having searched a very long time for a scholarly religious leader, Detroit was offered the services of that highly educated Toledo religious leader. He was rejected on the grounds of being non-Arab. In his correspondence with the writer, the president of the Detroit community said, "The colony here is trying to contact the Toledo community's sheikh [after he left

Toledo]. But the majority, and I am one of them, would rather have a sheikh from Cairo for reasons one of which is [Arab] nationalism."

The Toledo community is, first of all, a *Moslem-American* community. Moslem-oriented, the community recognizes that Islam means more than Arab. It encloses many nations. The religious leader is a non-Arab Moslem. Some Indian students are accepted as full members of the community. The community's sentiment for Egypt or Libya is not a religious sentiment, equal to their feeling toward Indonesia and Pakistan. The horizon of the Toledo community has become as international as Islam itself and not, as in Detroit, confined to Arab nationalism. Being more assimilated into their new environment and farther removed from their old traditions, the members of the Toledo community differentiate between Islam as an international religion and Arab nationalism as a regional political ideology. . . .

At a formal meeting of the American Muslim Society of Toledo, held at the new mosque, the president proposed to the committee the introduction of the bingo game at the mosque as a possible source of support. Although the proposal did not pass, its very introduction indicates the direction in which the community is moving as well as its degree of assimilation of certain values of the host culture.

That most of the Toledo male members are owners of bars, alcoholic beverage stores, and liquor-licensed restaurants is another evidence of assimilation. Although within the realm of religious practice the people are firm on abstinence from drinking, they have made an occupational shift from traditional values to a new set of values. During Ramadan, the writer often had interviews with members of the community at their bars while he found them fasting. The beautiful mosque, the most striking religious institution in the community, is built from liquor money. Paradoxically, the shift in occupational values has helped to sustain the religious institution.

Could it be that the subconscious religious guilt is sublimated by generous material support to the religious institutions? While satisfying their religious conscience, the Toledo members also show the surrounding Moslem communities how religiously well the liquor trader's community is. As businessmen have no limited ceiling on their earnings, the members of the Moslem community in Toledo believe that the more they give for the support of their religious institutions, the more they will earn and their earning will become blessed and purified from the sin of its means.

It is a kind of religious reconciliation with the deity, in which flourishing social functions are associated with the process of assimilation. Religious movements throughout history have owed a great deal to the consciousness of sin, perhaps even more than to the feeling of piety. The pious man very often lives on the secular contribution offered by the sinner. . . .

Sunday is not the only active day in the Toledo mosque. There are many activities every day: at least one religious group comes daily from different religious faiths and institutions to acquaint themselves with their Moslem fellow citizens; there are occasional meetings and parties; certain times one is always sure to meet the religious leader of the community in the mosque. Nevertheless, Sunday is the most active day of the week in the regular life of the mosque. It is the day of Sunday school and practically every family brings its children to the school to learn about their religion. There are about 150 students enlisted in the school, ranging in age from 4 to over 15. . . .

The curriculum is very well organized and harmonized by the religious leader who arranges the lessons weekly and meets with the teachers beforehand to instruct them on how to conduct the lessons. Toward the end of the year, these lessons are collected to be followed in Sunday school in the years to come. The teachers are exclusively second-generation young women, some of whom are the product of mixed marriages.

The four small classes start in the basement from 10:00 am until 11:30; the fifth, conducted by the sheikh, is held upstairs from 11:30 to noon. This arrangement is to give the religious leader a chance to supervise the classes. In return, it gives the teachers and older children a chance to hear lectures about Islamic ethics. All the classes and lectures are given in English. About noon, all the attendants, from three generations, are engaged in the Sunday noon prayer, lining up behind the religious leader in a traditional way; females are at the end of the group. After the classes and lecture, there is a collection. This collection has the function of teaching the youth how to support their mosque. It is also a borrowed element from the American churches.

Chanting the prayer loudly at Sunday noon is a kind of adjustment to the American environment. Its practical function is to teach the youth how to perform prayer. Sunday noon prayer itself, as it is done in the Toledo community, represents a kind of over-all religious integration with the American environment. It fills the religious vacuum in the spirit of those youths who see their friends and schoolmates belonging and going

to a church of which they are proud. Now, they too have a God to fill their entity, to Whom they bow and kneel, and from Whose unlimited power they derive their power to conquer problems of everyday life. The mosque institution plays a vital role in the life of the entire community, for religion's vital psychological functions integrate the individual personality with that of the surrounding society.

7. Piri Thomas, "God, Ain't You for Everybody?" from
Down These Mean Streets (1967).

Born in 1928 in Spanish Harlem, writer and poet Piri Thomas was the son of Puerto Rican and Cuban parents. After becoming involved in a life of drugs and gang warfare, he was convicted of assault and attempted robbery in 1950 and served over five years in prison. In 1967, Alfred A. Knopf published his first book, a memoir entitled *Down These Mean Streets*, which subsequently received critical acclaim. In addition to describing his life on the streets of Spanish Harlem, the memoir depicted the harsh realities of Comstock Prison, where Thomas met followers of Elijah Muhammad during a formative decade for the Nation of Islam. These Muslim believers repeated Elijah Muhammad's teachings about the white devil and the need for clean living. But they also read at least parts of the Qur'an and the hadith, the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad and an important source of Islamic religious traditions. Eventually, these Muslims taught him the salat, or prescribed Islamic prayers, they instructed Thomas on how to say the adhan, or call to prayer, and insisted that he learn the wudu, or the ablutions to be performed before prayer. Thomas became a convert to Islam and learned at least some of the prayers in Arabic, although he did not continue to practice Islam once released from prison.

One night I was sprawled out on my bed in my cell hearing something that I had been hearing for a long time every night. But tonight I just listened to it harder:

Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar,
Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar,
Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar,
Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar.