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Teaching Islam in England

Islam in the secondary curriculum

A review of filmstrips & slides about Islam

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Islam in the secondary curriculum

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This paper examines the place of Islam in the curriculum of English secondary schools. It focuses on the area in which current developments can most readily be monitored - religious education - but it also indicates the scope for wider consideration in other areas of the curriculum which does potentially exist. The primary concern of this paper is to examine the constraints within which any secondary school teacher must work. It, therefore, relates to situations in which the teacher is not likely to be a Muslim and in which there are either no or few Muslims in his class.

That the concept of a curriculum does not admit of easy and unambiguous definition the large number of works which have appeared on 'curriculum theory' in recent years adequately testifies. (1) That there are discrepancies between the formal content and objectives of a course of study ('the curriculum as proclaimed'), the way such content and objectives are understood by teachers ('the curriculum as perceived'), taught in the classroom ('the curriculum as presented') and imbibed by the learner ('the curriculum as possessed') must be obvious. The implications of these discrepancies cannot be examined here, but they must be borne in mind.

In comparison with most other countries English teachers enjoy a considerable degree of freedom in determining what they will teach. Formal control over the curriculum is delegated to Local Education Authorities and, in practice, sub-delegated further still to the level of the individual school and department. Religious Education differs, however, from other subjects in being subject to the limitations of an official 'Agreed Syllabus'; there seems, however, to be less and less reason for regarding this as unduly restrictive. (2)

The preface to Hampshire Education Authority's "Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education" (1978) reveals the extent to which teacher autonomy is not merely recognized but positively encouraged and diversity of detail in content regarded as desirable.

"At a time of unprecedented increase in knowledge when local conditions and needs differ widely, it would be unrealistic to prescribe the detailed content of the curriculum. However, some suggestions as to appropriate content have been added to help the non-specialist teacher and to illustrate the objectives. This mode of presentation is designed to give teachers the opportunity to exercise their proper responsibility in developing schemes of work. Teachers are urged to approach the document without preconceived ideas about what constitutes Religious Education."

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The Advisory Panel for Religious Education and their colleagues on the Working Parties have taken a broad view of the subject. They see Religious Education as involving the personal quest for meaning and the search for values as well as the encounter with Christianity and other living faiths. In order to take full advantage of the developmental approach which has been adopted, the Syllabus must be considered as a whole". (Emphases added)

Change, flexibility and experimentation have become increasingly characteristic of religious education.

The factors which have led to continuing re-appraisal in this field in the post-war period have been concisely summarized in "Stand Points", a working paper issued by Essex L.E.A.'s Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education:-

"The Honest-to-God debate, Vatican II, new liturgies, Buddhist monks in London, sizeable Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities in England, the reaction against religion of a vocal humanist movement, and the cheerful rejection of religion by a great number of people are but a few of the factors that affect our attitude to religion. Changes in our educational system, new insights on learning skills, new approaches to other subjects in the curriculum

The major constraints facing the teacher are:

- (a) the time-table
- (b) pupil interest
- (c) examination syllabuses
- (d) resources
- (e) the teacher's own competence

(a) and (b) are constraints whose definition and importance rest in large part upon the preferences and perceptions of the individual teacher. (c) is a constraint which is far more open to challenge than many teachers seem to imagine, though change does take time. Indeed, many of the examining boards can fairly claim to have played a significant innovatory role, introducing new syllabuses in advance of teacher demand. The range of examination options relating to Islam will be dealt with below. (d) might fairly have seemed a constraint a decade ago, but, although there are obvious areas of deficiency, in terms both of content and format, the major difficulties in this area are probably ones of finance. (3) (e) represents the legacy of past patterns of teacher education and, indirectly, a reflection of the previous state of the relevant academic disciplines, their boundaries and priorities. In the view of this writer, teacher competence - and teacher confidence - represent the most significant single source of limitation on the further diffusion of teaching about Islam in English secondary schools.

In his invaluable survey of "Teaching World Religions in England and Wales" Brian Gates notes that "less than 40% of the Religious Education teachers in secondary schools have specialist qualifications and of these only a minority have had world religions courses in colleges or universities". He goes on to observe that "the competence and motivation of those who have sought to introduce world religions in their schools is not always above reproach. It is not unknown for a teacher to set about teaching world religions with no more background understanding than that acquired from an introductory school text intended for 12-15 year olds. The risk of superficiality and distortion is enormous anyway - even for the specialist - but in such instances as this, 'good intentions' are almost bound to be counter-productive" (4)

When teachers do teach about Islam in English schools, how do they go about it, what difficulties do they feel that they face and what strategies do they adopt? The following paragraphs are based on reports from a dozen or so teachers in different parts of the country whose approaches were recommended to the writer by LEA advisers as examples of 'good practice'. (5)

Teachers often manifest considerable self-doubt in approaching Islam:-

"Years of Christian theology at university never remotely touched on comparative religion so anything I do now is entirely instinctive and self-taught."

Apart from the teacher's lack of confidence in his or her own knowledge and training there is, of course, also the problem of personal commitment - "what is always most difficult is trying to see things through the eye of a believer. I have enough problems teaching about Christianity where I am aware that my own personal views might upset the more fundamental believers."

And, as another teacher admitted, "it is so easy to fall into the trap of being patronising, gimmicky or superficial".

More than one teacher put the blame squarely on the overcrowding of the syllabus - "There are many exciting things going on in Religious Education but because the amount of 'knowledge to get over' has increased so much a process of selection has to take place. This is where the danger of superficiality arises." "I stress that we can only learn a little of the complexities of Islam in the time available".

But Islam does have a positive attraction for some teachers - "I open the batting with Islam. Firstly, to spark off interest and secondly because I am convinced that the crucible of world politics in the 1980's will be the Islamic world".

The same teacher invites Muslim students from a nearby language school to come in as visiting speakers and encourages individual project work on such subjects as "Islamic Decorative Art", "Twentieth Century Mosques" and "The Koran". He also, like a number of schools in the same area, uses materials borrowed from a local Religious Education resources centre so that "for a couple of weeks my room becomes a mosque complete with taped calls to prayer, prayer mats, incense, etc."

A Midlands teacher organizes visits to Birmingham Central Mosque and a "nearby house-mosque" and is "at present exploring the possibility of some of the pupils going out in pairs to visit Muslim families in order to eat with them and get to know the lived faith 'from the inside'".

A premature introduction to Islam can be counterproductive. A north Yorkshire teacher noted that:-

"The more able first-formers seemed interested in the subject because it was new to them and they responded well. Some of the less able seemed lost though simply confused by matters so far outside their normal 'ken'. This was rather tellingly demonstrated by one who wrote, as an exam answer, that Mohammed was an Irish saint. The child in question was not 'trying it on' ! "

Another teacher from the same area reported that work on Islam (together with "Hinduism, Shinto, Sikhism and Buddhism, very much on an introductory basis") "is done in the third year with pupils of mixed ability - mainly pupils with learning difficulties."

The third year appears to be favoured in many schools, though the reasons for this are not necessarily adequate ones. As one teacher put it "if you argue that this is possibly too young, I would agree. It is simply a case of trying to fit a quart into a pint pot".

The variety of learning activities employed by teachers can be seen in the following account by a Midlands teacher of his approach to Islam with third year pupils.

1. Islam - an introduction. (General filmstrip shown. Examinations of some key words such as 'Islam', 'Muslim', 'Allah', 'Monotheism' etc.)
2. The distribution of Islam in the world today. (Map drawn).
3. Islam in Iran today. (The present-day happenings in Iran are looked at, the two-fold division within Islam explained, etc.)
4. The 'Five Pillars of Islam' - general introduction. (A chart showing the pillars is drawn, the Arabic terms learnt, etc.)
5. The first pillar of Islam. (Great emphasis is placed on Islamic Art as an avenue of understanding. (6) its non-representational tradition and the role of calligraphy are discussed. The pupils reproduce the Shahadah in 'Islamic' style.)

6. Prayer - the second pillar of Islam. (Artefacts concerned with prayer are examined: prayer-mat, prayer-beads, prayer-cap, qiblah compass. A recording of the muezzin's call to prayer is heard.)
7. The Mosque. (Slides of mosques around the world are shown and common features noted. A visit is made to Birmingham Central Mosque.)
8. Almsgiving - the third pillar of Islam.
9. Fasting - the fourth pillar of Islam. (With some groups a proportion of the pupils have chosen to fast in order to see "what it is like". This has given rise to some interesting observations and experiences.)
10. The Festival of Id-Ul-Fitr. (A video-taped TV programme is viewed. Id cards are examined and then pupils make their 'own' Id-card remembering what was previously said - in (5) - about Islamic art and calligraphy.)
11. The city of Mecca and the Ka'aba. (This forms a prelude to work on the Hajj. A map is drawn, post-cards and slides looked at etc.)
12. The Hajj - the fifth pillar of Islam. (The complexity of this is a headache but we try to emphasize the significance of the Hajj for the Hajji rather than the many activities undertaken during the pilgrimage. A taped interview with an English Muslim who has just returned from the Hajj is played.)

This is often as far as time allows us to go, though in the past there has sometimes been time to look more closely at (13) Muhammad (14) the Qur'an and (15) Islamic contributions to civilization."

The same teacher emphasizes strongly that "work on Islam concentrates on the present reality of the faith rather than beginning with 'history' (Muhammad, spread of Islam, etc.) and working up to the present day. In my experience the latter approach can easily lead to aridity and a sapping of life-force from the present manifestation of a religion. Instead we choose to use the 'five pillars' of Islam as the framework for our study and then move out tangentially from this in order to examine other important features (including historical connections)."

Media coverage, particularly of recent events in Iran, has not, in the words of one teacher "always encouraged the pupils to begin with a 'sympathetic' attitude to the subject. They seem to have been left with an impression that the Qur'an is full of instructions to chop off limbs for minor criminal offences". The response of this particular teacher was, therefore, to begin "by asking them to assemble recent news reports about events in Islamic countries, so that any prejudice or rather superficial understanding might be brought into the open fairly quickly and attempts might be made to balance what they saw as negative aspects of Islam, by reference to these features of the religion which they more readily see as positive e.g. zakat, or the discipline of Muslim prayer".

These concerns are echoed by another teacher from the same area:-

"The recent happenings in Iran give a lot of useful material but also create a lot of problems, especially since the Western press takes an "anti" standpoint. It is difficult to know oneself what is really going on. What impressions are our children getting" ?

A third teacher from the same area had a slightly different approach to the use of press coverage - "The pupils cut out, from their own newspapers, articles about events in Muslim countries. Alongside these we have cuttings about events in Northern Ireland to show that both Islam and Christianity have 'followers' who do things which the rest of us might deplore".

While some teachers "do Islam" as such, others 'bring it in' from time to time within the framework of a syllabus organized on thematic lines. Two examples of this sort of work are appended. (Appendix D) The syllabuses for public examinations provide examples of both approaches. (7)

With regard to public examinations the evidence suggests a clear trend towards the provision of 'world religions' options encompassing Islam. Information on 'take-up' is however not readily available, although the Chief Examiner for the Joint Matriculation Board's 'A' level examination

has told the writer that 75% of the candidates taking the 'World Religions' option choose Islam out of the four religions offered.

The policies of the Boards show significant variations. Some have no syllabuses which deal with Islam. The Southern Universities Joint Board states bluntly that "Islam is not covered in any of our syllabuses". The Southern Regional Examinations Board points out, however, that "although no specific reference is made to Islam in our Mode I syllabuses, candidates have the option of preparing a project on a religion other than Christianity". And provision of syllabuses at CSE level which do cover Islam is increasing. The South Western Examinations Board reports that "At present we have no examination syllabuses which include a knowledge of Islam. It is possible, however, that in 1983 a new paper concerning worldwide religions will be included in our Religious Education Mode I examination it will almost certainly include a study of Islam". And the Head of the Welsh Joint Education Committee's Examinations Department has also noted that "Our 'O' level and CSE syllabuses are purely scriptural at the moment, but I have no doubt that any 16+ syllabuses in Religious Studies would be of a much wider nature and include World Religions among its contents." The recently announced decision to merge CSE and GCE examinations into a common Examination at 16+ may well lead to further significant changes.

CSE level syllabuses vary significantly in detail. Work on Islam could account for up to 60% of the final marks of a candidate taking the examination offered by the North Regional Examinations Board (Appendix A) whereas such work would account for only one sixth of the marks under the schemes offered by the West Yorkshire and Lindsey Regional Examining Board and the West Midlands Examinations Board. There are also notable differences in the detail with which the coverage of Islam is specified by the various boards. Compare, for example, the two last-mentioned boards in this respect. (see Appendix A)

Rather fewer options are available at GCE 'O' and 'A' level. And there are similar differences in respect of the depth of detail and breadth of coverage between the schemes offered by the various boards; contrast, for instance, the syllabuses specified by the Joint Matriculation Board and the Welsh Joint Education Committee. (See Appendix B)

Whatever the level and breadth of coverage expected it is noteworthy that the general approach is almost universally a phenomenological one. Study of selected passages from the Qur'an is rarely specified. (The Welsh Joint Education Committee's 'A' level is one example.) The contrast with the detailed references to Biblical passages in most 'O' level and some CSE syllabuses is striking.

It is also worthy of remark that some of the Boards specify affective as well as cognitive objectives. Indeed, the North Regional Examinations Board CSE syllabus stresses that:-

"The principal purpose of this course is to enable the pupil to understand what it means to be a Muslim. More specifically this implies:-

1. Possessing an awareness of the place which the Qur'an and the mosque hold for the Muslim.
2. Appreciating his sense of the unity of God and the significance of the other pillars of Islam
3. Understanding his attitude to the prophet of Islam, Muhammad.
4. Being aware of the Muslims' sense of belonging to the community of Islam, the Umma.
5. Recognizing the contribution of Islamic culture to civilization.
6. Having some knowledge of what it means to be a Muslim in Britain today."

(Emphases added)

The West Yorkshire and Lindsey Regional Examining Board likewise emphasises that with regard to its CSE syllabus theme C - Three Major Monotheistic Religions. "This course of study is to be seen essentially as a quest for know-

ledge and understanding through the fullest use of AVA within the classroom and by school visits wherever possible. The teaching should not consist of the presentation of a mass of unrelated facts. It should enable the pupils to understand the main themes and principles of the different faiths, and also to acquire some insight into the meaning and influence these have in the lives of those who believe in them On the other hand, the rubric of the Associated Lancashire Schools Examining Board CSE level regulations states that "the aim of the syllabus is to present Christian teaching in a vital and relevant manner and to stimulate the application of it to 20th century life".

The inertial strength of established practice and attitudes must always be remembered. In this connection the following comments from the Deputy Secretary of the Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations may be significant:-

"We do not in fact have any formal coverage of Islam in any of our syllabuses. Islam may be referred to indirectly in the study of such subjects as History and Geography and, marginally, in our Advanced Level Religious Studies paper on Religion and Change in the Twentieth Century.

I should emphasize that, essentially, our examinations are designed to test work which takes place in schools and it so happens that we may have not so far received any specific request from a school for a syllabus on Islam at any level".

The implications of the notion that Islam is not just a religion in the narrow, formal sense, but a complete way of life, the framework and manifestation of an entire cultural tradition, do not seem to have had much impact on the secondary school curriculum as a whole. (8) Islam has been seen as the concern of the Religious Education specialist. This is hardly surprising. But that it should not also be the concern of other specialist teachers simply does not follow from that. Teachers of history and social studies (within which category I include humanities, integrated studies, etc.) have ample scope for introducing topics, examples and materials from the world of Islam' but there is little evidence to suggest that any significant steps have been taken in this direction.

As far as history teaching is concerned the only topics relating to Islam that most pupils are likely to come across are the Crusades and the Ottoman Empire (as 'the sick man of Europe') a few may also learn about the Mughal Empire (in decline) and the Mahdist state in the Sudan.

The treatment of these topics is invariably one-sided. A favourite 'A' level history question is, for instance, "when did the Ottoman Turks cease to be a threat to the peace of Europe?". Dr James Henderson has argued that "the Muslim brush has painted such large tracts of time and space during the last 1400 years that the historical panorama which did not feature them could be nothing but a wild and grotesque distortion of reality". (9) That appears to be the situation at the present time, although some useful materials have appeared in recent years and alternative approaches have been suggested. (10)

Social studies teachers have a remarkable degree of freedom to determine their own syllabuses. (11) In practice the same topics tend to recur and many of these, such as 'the family', 'minorities' and 'education', obviously provide opportunities to bring in an Islamic dimension. Nor would such a perspective be excluded from the course of study prescribed for public examinations. The Cambridge 'A' level Sociology syllabus, for instance, prescribes the study of socialisation, kinship relations, modernisation and cultural transmission (Paper I) and education, religion and race relations from the sociological point of view (Paper II). The JMB 'A' level Sociology syllabus offers a range of optional studies which includes the family, community, education, politics, welfare and work, any of which might admit the inclusion of examples and case-studies from the Islamic world. (12)

Other subject specialists could also make relevant contributions. Art and design and craft courses could include work on Islamic textiles, ceramics, architecture and calligraphy. Indeed, a number of public examination syllabuses give scope for project work which could be

devoted exclusively to a study of such a topic. The background to the way of life of Muslim communities could be provided by the teacher of geography; though it must be noted that the Middle East and South-East Asia have been curiously neglected in British schools and recent trends in geography teaching, which have emphasized skills, concepts and quantitative methods do not seem to encourage attention to the cultural and human aspects of man's relation to his environment. (13)

Teachers of English - and of French - could examine some of the novels and poetry produced by Muslim writers or at least which relate to Muslim countries and concerns. (14) Teachers of mathematics and science could pause to consider the contribution made to their disciplines by Arab and Persian scholars. (15). In a year in which the British winner of the Nobel Prize for Physics was a Pakistani-born Muslim this might not be inappropriate.

1. e.g. L. Stenhouse - An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development (Heinemann Educational Books 1975)
R. Barrow - Common Sense and the Curriculum (Allen & Unwin 1976)
2. John Hull concludes that "It seems unlikely that agreed syllabuses will ever regain the influence which they had from about 1924 to about 1970." "Agreed syllabuses, past, present and future" in N. Smart and D. Horder - New Movements in Religious Education (Temple Smith 1975)
3. Resources on Islam are reviewed extensively in W.O. Cole (ed.) - World Religions: a Handbook for Teachers (Commission for Racial Equality 2nd ed. 1977) and R. Tames - The World of Islam: a Teachers' Handbook (School of Oriental and African Studies 1977)
4. B. Gates - "Teaching World Religions in England and Wales" in W. Owen Cole (ed.) - World Faiths in Education (Allen & Unwin 1978)
5. For a further example see R. Robinson - "Islam at 'A' Level: A Case Study" in R. Jackson (ed.) - Perspectives on World Religions (School of Oriental and African Studies 1978)
6. On this aspect see R. Yeomans - "Religious Education through Art" in R. Jackson op. cit.
7. See also R. Glithero - "World Religions in CSE, 'O' and 'A' Level Examinations" in R. Jackson op. cit.
8. For a general treatment of this issue see R. Tames - "Asian Studies in English Schools: Problems and Possibilities". Asian Affairs February 1978.
9. "The Importance of Islam" - World Studies Bulletin No. 29 December 1973
10. R. Tames - "Islam in History". Teaching History No. 17 February 1977
11. For suggested approaches relevant to the lower secondary age-level see R. Tames - "Studying Islamic Culture" World Studies Bulletin No. 36 September/October 1975 and R. Tames - "Islam and Integrated Studies" in R. Jackson op.cit.
12. On a related aspect see R. Tames - "Islam and Political Education" in R. Jackson (ed.) - World Religions and Religious Education (John Murray. Forthcoming)
13. On this aspect see D. Wright - The Missing Maghreb (un published paper. Keswick Hall College of Education)
14. e.g. Sheikh Hamidou Kane - Ambiguous Adventure (Heinemann Educational Books 1973) and other titles in the African Writers series and Arab Authors series from the same publisher.
15. See, for instance, J. Schacht and C.E. Bosworth (ed.) - The Legacy of Islam (Clarendon Press 1974) Chapter X; P.M. Holt, A.K.S. Lambton and B. Lewis (ed.) - The Cambridge History of Islam (Cambridge University Press

1970) Part VIII Chapter 10;
R.M. Savory (ed.) - Introduction to Islamic Civilization (Cambridge University Press 1976) Chapter 10;

Appendix A

ASSOCIATED LANCASHIRE SCHOOLS EXAMINING BOARD

CSE LEVEL RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

The examination consists of:

- (i) a written paper (carrying 80% of the marks) in two parts - A (45 minutes) requiring short answer questions on the life and teaching of Jesus and B - (1 hour 45 minutes + 10 minutes reading time) requiring 4 essay type answers on:

1. Christian faith and practice (1 question)
2. Morals: personal, family and community (2 questions)
3. Wider Issues - the Church in Action, One World, Other faiths (1 question).

'Other faiths' consists of Judaism, Hinduism and Islam; the syllabus for this section requires "a brief outline of the life of the founders, and the main beliefs, customs and festivals. (Teachers are advised to link the study of this section with the local situation.)"

- (ii) course work assessed by the teacher (carrying 20% of the marks).

EAST ANGLIAN EXAMINATIONS BOARD

CSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Two Mode I examinations are available, called respectively the Northern syllabus and the Southern syllabus.

The Northern Syllabus is assessed on the basis of 2 2-hour papers, each carrying 50% of the marks, plus an optional project of approximately 1,000 words. It consists of a compulsory section (candidates must choose one of 3 options relating to Christianity) and an optional section (candidates must choose 1 of 4 options, one of which covers 'Multi-Faith World'). The Multi-Faith World section requires candidates to study four of the following religions - Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism and Humanism - in terms of the following categories:

- (a) origins
- (b) teachings
- (c) sacred books
- (d) festivals
- (e) worship and holy places
- (f) way of life
- (g) some outstanding personalities

With respect to Islam these are interpreted as follows:

- (a) Life of Muhammad
- (b) One God (Allah), five Pillars, Life after death, charity and good works towards the poor, oppressed and orphaned
- (c) Qur'an
- (d) Ramadan and Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Adha, Id-milad-un-Nabi
- (e) Mosque, Friday. Prayer five times a day
- (f) Home and family, position of women in society, birth, marriage, dietary laws
- (g) Al-Ghazali, Saladin

The Southern Syllabus is assessed on the basis of one 2½ hour paper and an optional project. Candidates must study 2 of 5 sections.

Section C (World Religions) requires a study of 2 of the

following: Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism. Islam is covered as follows:

1. The origins of Islam

- (a) Arabia before Islam: an examination of the social and religious background of Arabia before Muhammad. This area should include tribalism, idolatry and social injustices, e.g. slaves, the status of women, widows and orphans.
- (b) The prophethood of Muhammad: an outline of the life of Muhammad with special attention given to the significant moments in his life. This area should include the call, persecution, the Hijra, the return to Mecca and the main themes of his teaching.

2. The beliefs of Islam

- (a) The importance of the name Islam: submission.
- (b) The importance of the concept tawhid: essential unity of Islam and all aspects of life.
- (c) The origin and authority of the Qur'an
- (d) The nature and significance of each of the five pillars.
- (e) Life after death. This section should include the Quranic descriptions of the Day of Judgement, heaven and hell, and the significance of this teaching for a Muslim.

3. Life in an Islamic community

- (a) The Mosque: its design, contents and uses within the community.
- (b) The festivals of Id-ul-Adha and Id-ul-Fitr: the reason for each celebration, the way it is celebrated and its significance.
- (c) The ceremonies associated with the rites of initiation, marriage and death.
- (d) The role and status of women.
- (e) Food customs: fasting and halal.

Section E (Religion - A Thematic Approach) is organized in 3 parts:

- 1. Religion in tribal cultures.
- 2. The expression of religion in language, acts and objects
- 3. Faith and behaviour.

Part 2 specifically mentions:

- (a) The stories of religion - including the birth story of Muhammad.
- (b) Worship - regular worship by Muslims: pilgrimage in Islam.
- (c) Sacred objects and buildings - the Mosque (design, function, furniture and sacred objects).

Part 3 requires a study of moral codes and decision-making in Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism. Specific mention is made of "the Five Pillars of Wisdom" (sic).

LONDON REGIONAL EXAMINATION BOARD

CSE LEVEL 'RELIGIOUS STUDIES'

The London Regional Examining Board was formed in October 1979 through the merging of the Middlesex and Metropolitan Regional Examination Boards. "It is expected that new syllabuses in Religious Studies will be produced shortly for first examination in 1983 and that Islam will be covered in a separate 'World Religions' syllabus as in the current Middlesex scheme."

Syllabus C (132) of the Middlesex Board is assessed by a 2½ hour paper, of which section A will carry 60% of the marks and section B 40%. The syllabus requires a study of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Part I of the syllabus (corresponding to Section A of the examination) requires with respect to all 5 religions a study of:

- (a) Celebrations and observances;
- (b) Characteristic places of worship (including special features of buildings; officiators) and modes of worship; and

- (c) Brief life histories of central figures of the faiths referring especially and as appropriate to birth, early life, call, public ministry and its effects.

Part II (corresponding to Section b) requires a deeper study of any 2 of the 5 religions, with respect to:

- (i) sacred writings, their origins, structure, purpose and application; and
- (ii) the attitudes of followers to customs and practices associated with birth, maturity, marriage and death.

Further aspects are specified with respect to each religion. In the case of Islam these are:

- The Qur'an
- Naming ceremony
- Circumcision
- The Five Pillars
- Laws pertaining to diet and apparel

NORTH REGIONAL EXAMINATION BOARD

CSE LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Mode I examination consists of 2 written papers (80% of the final grade) and a teacher's assessment of pupil work (20%). Paper I (1½ hours, 60 marks) is compulsory and covers 'The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ' and 'Life Situations'. Paper 2 (1¼ hours, 40 marks) contains 3 options, of which candidates must attempt one. The options are:

- A) Themes and Personalities of the Old Testament
- B) The Growth of the Early Church
- C) World Religions: Islam

Option C is examined by means of:

- 10 questions requiring one word answers
- 10 questions requiring single sentence answers
- 3 questions (out of 6) requiring short paragraph answers
- 1 question (out of 3) requiring a short essay answer.

The Syllabus for Option C is as follows:

- 1. A knowledge of the life and times of Muhammad, and of the nature and influence of the Qur'an.
 - (a) The Arabian setting - social conditions - religious practices and influences.
 - (b) The career of the Prophet - Muhammad as a moral reformer and statesman - as the model for Muslims (Hadith).
 - (c) The revelation of the Qur'an - what is revelation? What is prophecy?
 - (d) The place of the Qur'an in Islamic art and daily life.

Questions will not relate to specific passages.

- 2. A knowledge of the practices and beliefs of the Muslim as summarised in the Five Pillars of Faith.

- (a) The Muslim conception of God.
- (b) Prayer - ablution - purpose of prayer - manner of prayer.
- (c) Charity - a Muslim's obligation to his fellows.
- (d) Fasting - the development of spiritual qualities.
- (e) Hajj - conditions for pilgrimage - the rites - equality of races in Islam.

Questions will be concerned with the importance of practice rather than of belief.

- 3. A knowledge and understanding of the importance of family life in Islam.
 - (a) the status of women before Muhammad - his teachings on women.
 - (b) The traditional role of women in Muslim society - their rights in law and practice - divorce and inheritance.
 - (c) Family life - authority in the family - growing up as a Muslim.
 - (d) Forces for change - education, work and nationalism.

4. A knowledge of the importance of Islam as a world religion
- A sketch of Islam's expansion, in particular the part played by Islamic culture in western civilisation.
 - Distribution of Muslims today - the challenge of change, with particular reference to Muslims in Britain.
 - A case study of one country with a strong Islamic tradition, e.g. Saudi-Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, etc.

NORTH WEST REGIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD
CSE LEVEL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SYLLABUS B)

The examination consists of:

- a core syllabus assessed by a written paper of 1½ hours, accounting for 40% of the total marks and dealing entirely with Christianity.
- One option, chosen from 4, to be examined by continuous assessment (teacher and moderator) accounting for a further 40%.
- Individual work to be assessed by the teacher.

Islam appears as part of Option 2 which looks at Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity in the following terms:

Part I

(A) Beliefs

- Interpretations of deity
- The dignity and responsibility of man
- The way of salvation

(B) Worship

- Forms and places of worship
- Feasts and festivals
- Rites and ceremonies associated with birth, initiation, marriage and family life, fasting, sacrifice, death.
- Important signs and symbols in religious practice.

(C) Priests and Leaders

- Their calling, selection and support.
- The nature of their authority, their status and function in the worshipping group they serve.
- Their relationships with and service to society.

Part II

A study of some of the following topics in relation to the 5 main religions:

Birth
Home and family
Poverty and wealth
Human rights
Purpose in life
War and Peace
Law and Order
Pain and suffering
Death
Living among people of other faiths
An outstanding personality
Sacred literature

SOUTH EAST REGIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

CSE LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Mode I examination consists of a common core in 'The Life and teaching of Jesus Christ and their relevance to modern times', plus one of 5 options, of which Option B is World Religions, candidates choosing one religion from each of the following groups:

- Judaism, Christianity, Islam;
- Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism.

Under Mode III there are 5 examinations which include an element of Islam:

- Candidates present a project (counting for 20% of the total marks) in one of the following - Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism and Christianity.
- Candidates study one religion from each of the following groups:
 - Judaism, Christianity, Islam;
 - Hinduism, Buddhism, a primitive tribal religion.
- Candidates study St Luke's Gospel and 'the five main world religions'
- "has a 30% content of Islam".
- Candidates study "the geographical, historical and cultural background, the sacred writings, sacred places, worship and religious festivals, rites of passage, ethical standards, etc. of the five main world religions".

SOUTHERN REGIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

CSE LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

A Mode 3 syllabus "Christianity and Another World Faith" will be available in 1981. Assessment will be based on:

- a written paper (2 hours plus 10 minutes reading time) counting for 60% of the final grade and consisting of a short answer section and an essay section (4 questions to be attempted), both parts divided equally between Christianity and the other religions selected (from Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism); and
- coursework counting for 40% of the final grade.

The syllabus for Islam is arranged under the following headings:

- Origins
 - Arabia before Muhammad
 - The life of the Prophet - his call
 - Early opposition at Mecca
 - The Hijra
 - The establishment of the Muslim community at Medina
 - Return to Mecca and the establishment and growth of Islam
 - Present distribution
- Doctrines
 - The Unity of God
 - Prophethood of Muhammad
 - The Five Pillars
 - Universal brotherhood
 - Judgement
 - Life after death
- Sacred Writings
 - The Holy Qur'an - its origin and significance
 - The Hadith
- Festivals and Holy Days
 - Ramadan, including Id-ul-Fitr; Id-ul-adha
- Sacred buildings and places of pilgrimage
 - The mosque - its significance for the Muslim
 - Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem
 - Hajj
- Worship
 - Daily prayers
 - Corporate Friday prayer
- Way of Life
 - Rites of passage
 - Fasting
 - Almsgiving
 - Pilgrimage
 - Dietary laws
 - Jihad
- Two outstanding personalities.

WEST MIDLANDS EXAMINATIONS BOARD

CSE LEVEL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A Mode I scheme on World Religions will be introduced in 1982. Islam will be one of 3 religions to be studied by

candidates for 50% of the final marks. In the past candidates have also been allowed to present a Special Study on this subject but from 1982 onwards they will be required to attempt one of 3 topics specified by the Board. The topics for 1982 will be:

- (i) Religion and Society (the work of a religious organisation or individual)
 - (ii) The Church in the Modern World
 - (iii) Worship (its nature and expression, role of buildings, art, music, etc.).
- (Islam might therefore be covered in (i) or (iii).)

The chosen topic will account for the other 50% of the final marks. (Alternatively candidates may offer a paper on Christianity and Life.)

The new World Religions paper requires the candidate to study Christianity and any two of - Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism - in terms of the following framework:

1. Founders - Historical and Geographical Background
 - (a) Historical and geographical setting from which the religion arose.
 - (b) The Founder
 - (c) Brief outline of the development of the religion to the present day.
2. Beliefs and Customs
 - (a) What does each religion believe about:
 - (i) God(s)
 - (ii) Man and his destiny
 - (iii) Death and after-life ?
 - (b) Customs:
 - (i) Modes of dress
 - (ii) Diet
 - (iii) Taboos, e.g. alcohol and tobacco
 - (iv) Significance of animals
 - (v) Burial customs
3. Worship
 - (a) Worship in the community, the role and functions of officials and laity in public worship and the significance of the main activities.
 - (b) Worship by the individual, its nature, frequency, time, place and associated rituals, e.g. birth, initiation and marriage.
 - (c) Sacred buildings; significance of the architecture, furnishings and decorations.
 - (d) Festivals and Holy Days:
 - (i) The major festivals, their origin, meaning, and contemporary significance.
 - (ii) Holy Days.
 - (e) Places of pilgrimage.
4. Sacred Writings

Origins, contents, use in worship, characteristic features, language and basis of authority.
5. Position of the Religion within the United Kingdom
 - (a) Problems
 - (b) Culture clash
 - (c) Charitable works
 - (d) Religion as a link for migrants

"It is expected that candidates will be familiar with and have an understanding of the following terms as appropriate to any of the five religions: After-life; Consecration; Conscience; Deism; Eternal life; Ethics/morality; Faith; God; Good and Evil; Monotheism; Mystery; Pantheism; Polytheism; Prayer; Priest; Revelation; Sacrifice; Salvation; Soul, spirit; Theism."

WEST YORKSHIRE AND LINDSEY REGIONAL EXAMINING BOARD
CSE LEVEL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Mode I examination consists of 2 2-hour papers (carrying equal marks), one dealing with The Life and Teachings of Christ, the other with 3 themes, of which candidates offer one.

Option C 'Three major, monotheistic religions: Judaism,

Christianity and Islam" gives an equal weighting of marks to each of the 3 religions.

Candidates offering Option C are required to study the 3 religions in terms of:

- (i) Sacred Writings and main teachings
- (ii) Greater leaders
- (iii) Places and forms of worship

It is interesting to note, that of the 4740 candidates entered for Religious Education with this Board in 1979 no less than 3960 were entered for Mode 3. According to the Board's Syllabus Analyst "this Board is somewhat untypical in that it accepts a wide range of syllabuses.... (which) have been designed by teachers in particular schools and groups of schools with the needs, aspirations and backgrounds of their particular pupils in mind".

Appendix B

ASSOCIATED EXAMINING BOARD

GCE O LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES SYLLABUS II (MULTI-FAITH)

The examination consists of 1 paper of 2½ hours carrying 75% of the marks and 1 project of 3,000 - 4,000 words carrying 25%. The syllabus is organized thematically as follows:

1. Sacred Places

Buildings used for worship

The significance of their architecture, basic design, characteristic features, furniture and furnishings, symbolic decoration.

The role of the buildings both officially in the religion and in the life of the individual adherent.

2. Worship and Festivals

The basic form of congregational worship.

The significance of the main activities, e.g. place of the scriptures, prayers, teaching, etc.

The role of both officials and laity in public worship.

Private or individual worship, its nature, frequency, time, place associated rituals.

The major festivals: their origin and their meaning in the religion today; their place in the religion's calendar; the way in which they are celebrated; the significance of the activities.

The role of the family in the celebration.

3. Sacred Writings

(a) Scriptures

(b) Writings which are accorded a place of honour in the religion but which are not technically Scriptures:

Their origin and development;

The kinds of literature contained in them.

The languages of the original writings.

Problems of translation, e.g. the non-equivalence of words and phrases in other languages and cultures, the attitude of Muslims to the Arabic of the Qur'an.

The role of the sacred writings within the religion, in public worship and in private use.

The nature of the authority of the sacred writings in the religion.

Candidates will study the above in terms of at least 3 of the following: Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism.

The project is to concentrate "upon one particular religious area selected from the fields of the family, birth, growing-up, marriage and death. The study will be based upon one religion or, possibly, a comparison of some feature in two religions and may incorporate first-hand experience in an appropriate community".

Candidates must attempt either a paper (1½ hours) on St. Luke's Gospel or on the Acts of the Apostles and one of 3 other papers (1½ hours) - Evil and Suffering, Men at Worship and The Church in Society.

Islam receives a passing mention as one of 5 "other attitudes" (i.e. other than the Judaeo-Christian) in the paper on 'Evil and Suffering'.

Men at Worship emphasises 'practice' rather than 'historical development'. Examples from Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Sikhism are to be dealt with in the context of the following categories:

- (i) A consideration of the rites of initiation
- (ii) Places of worship
- (iii) Occasions of worship (including fasts and festivals, marriage and funeral rites)
- (iv) How men worship (including prayer, pilgrimages, the place of sacred books in worship and statements of belief).

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GCE O LEVEL - RELIGIOUS STUDIES

1 Paper of 2 options (Paper I and Paper IR) lasting 2½ hours.

Paper I consists of 5 sections none of which concern Islam.

Paper IR consists of the same 5 sections plus Section 6 (Personal and Social Relationships and Problems) and Section 7 (World Religions).

Candidates must choose a total of 5 questions from any two sections, each section consisting of 6 questions. Section 7, World Religions, consists of 3 parts on:

- (a) Judaism (6 Questions)
- (b) Islam (6 Questions)
- (c) Aspects of Five World Religions (Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism) (8 Questions).

The syllabus relating to Islam are as follows: Part (b) -

- (i) The five pillars of Islam and their significance; the oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad, Salaat, fasting, Zakaat, Hajj.
- (ii) Muslim festivals of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha.
- (iii) Jihad in Islam.
- (iv) The Mosque, its design and uses.
- (v) Social practices and institutions - marriage, food, dress and law.

Part (c) Islam -

- (i) Mosques
- (ii) Friday prayers, Ramadan, Eid-ul-Adha, Eid-ul-Fitr.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GCE AO LEVEL - RELIGIOUS APPROACHES TO MODERN LIFE AND THOUGHT

1 Paper of 3 hours.

The paper consists of 3 parts. Candidates will concentrate on one part and answer 4 questions chosen from at least 2 sections.

Part A (Religious Diversity and Unity) consists of 6 sections, one of which covers Islam as follows:

1. Muhammad
2. The Qur'an and the Hadith
3. The Five Pillars of Islam
4. The Muslim in the modern world

Appendix C

ASSOCIATED EXAMINING BOARD

GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Candidates must take 2 of 4 options, each option being assessed by a 3 hour paper. Option 4, The Nature of Belief, consists of a compulsory section on "religious Beliefs and Language" and either a section on "Questions of Religious Truth" which includes "a Special Study of the dialogue between Christians and one other religious Community - Hinduism, Islam or Judaism) or "Ethics and Belief" (including Special Studies of 2 of the following - Family, World Poverty, Race, War, Conservation). Regarding "Questions of Religious Truth", "candidates are especially recommended to concentrate on one religious tradition other than Christianity and are advised not to attempt this section without adequate supporting knowledge of the religion which they have selected".

JOINT MATRICULATION BOARD

GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Candidates are required to attempt 2 3-hour papers chosen from a list of 6. Alternative E - World religions - consists of 4 sections:

- (i) Hinduism and Sikhism
- (ii) Buddhism
- (iii) Judaism
- (iv) Islam

- of which one must be studied. The coverage to be given to Islam is specified as follows:

Life and religion in Arabia prior to Muhammad
the life and teaching of Muhammad;
the Qur'an and its teachings;
the Muslim community at Medina;
the period of the 'rightly guided caliphs';
the 'Pillars of Islam';
the Beliefs of Islam;
fasts and festivals;
shias and sunnis;
sufism;
Islam and the modern world

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GCE A LEVEL - RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The examination consists of 4 papers of which candidates must choose two, answering 4 questions from one section of each of the papers of their choice.

Paper 4 - World Faiths - consists of 4 sections, one of which covers Islam as follows:

pre-Islamic religion in Arabia
Muhammad
The Qur'an
The rise of the Muslim community
The beliefs and worship of Islam
Festivals and feasts
The Muslim sects
Muslim mystics
Islam in the modern world

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE SCHOOLS EXAMINATION BOARD

GCE A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Candidates must offer 2 papers from 5. Paper 5 - Modern Religious Thought and Ethics - the first section of which concentrates on "the principal Christian thinkers in Britain and on the continent from Schleiermacher to the present day". The second section "on ethical theories and on particular ethical issues" may offer some limited scope for Islam.

Candidates are required to attempt 2 of 3 3-hour papers (New Testament, Old Testament, Religion in a changing world) each of which has several options.

Option II - An Introduction to the Psychology and Sociology of Religion - might conceivably include some reference to Islam.

Option IV - An Introduction to some World Religions - requires candidates to study either Judaism or Islam together with either Hinduism or Buddhism, answering 2 questions on each of the religions of their choice.

N.B. This syllabus will be examined for the first time in 1981. Islam is to be covered as follows:

- A. (i) Pre-Islamic Arabia, its cultural, economic and religious climate (e.g. trade routes and influence of tribal beliefs, Jinns, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity).
(ii) Muhammad in Mecca, noting the distinctive features of Mecca.
(iii) Muhammad in Medina and the Hegira, the establishment of community laws.
(iv) The first four caliphs.
(v) The expansion and decline of Islam 750-1500CE (to include the advance across North Africa to Spain; through Asia Minor to the Balkans; through Iraq to India).
(vi) The Mongol invasion
(vii) The Mediaeval Empires of Islam
(viii) Divisions and sects in Islam: Sunni, Shi's Sufis. Attention should be given to the following notable characters: Al Ghazali, Al Ashari, Rumi, Muhammad Iqbal
(ix) Modern Islam - its spread into Africa and Asia; and its influence in Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Pakistan and Britain.
- B. The Mosque is the unique architectural feature in Islam. Candidates should be familiar with the basic architecture and the significant variations in the major Islamic countries. Attention should be given to mosques in Britain. Special consideration should be given to the place of prayer at the Mosque, notably the Friday midday prayer, call to prayer, muezzin and Imam, ablutions.
- C. The five pillars of Islam, the six essential beliefs, the prophet in Islam, Feasts and Festivals, Hajj, Ramadan, Eid-ul-adha, Eid-ul-fitr, the Day of Hijra, the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, the night of power, the night journey.
- D. The Qur'an
(i) The growth of the Qur'an and establishing the canon.
(ii) A Study of the Text - Sura 1, 74, 96, 97.
(iii) The teaching of the Qur'an on Revelation, Judgement, Doctrine of God, Society. The Medinan and the Meccan surahs should be noted.
(iv) Ijaz, Imam, Ijma, Hadith, Shari'ah, Sunna.
- E. Muslim Cultural Growth - in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, art and technology, in the 10th and 11th centuries; and recently in Muslim resurgence due to political awareness and oil.
- F. (i) Religion and the Home, place of women, marriage and divorce, food and drink, eating customs, dress, the life cycles.
(ii) Religion and the State, Zakat, Brotherhood of all Muslims, Jihad, usury and the use of money, law and order, education, politics and religion in, for example, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.
- G. Muslims in Britain:
(i) Mosques and prayer rooms
(ii) Methods of adapting to the British life style

Appendix D

Selective Girls School, South London

There is a detailed syllabus for the 11-16 age range. Three "general aims" are specified:-

- "an appreciation of the religious quest as a universal phenomenon"
- "Knowledge of, and sensitivity to, the dominant religious and philosophical systems of this country, with the greatest emphasis on the Judaeo-Christian tradition but also with attention to the 'belief, behaviour and belonging' of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Humanists"
- "a personal search for meaning"

The first term of the first year is concerned with "the nature of religion". Examples from the Islamic tradition might be involved here. The rest of the first two years is devoted to Bible Studies. World religions "provide the content for years 3 to 5." Three objectives are reiterated:

- "to impart knowledge about beliefs and practices"
- "to encourage attitudes of openness and tolerance"
- "to promote a spirit of free enquiry"

The first term of the fourth year is devoted entirely to "Muslims", the syllabus being organized as follows:-

1. What is Islam? (N.B. Muslim conception of God).
2. Life of Mohammed - his revelation and the establishment of a Muslim society.
3. The Five Pillars.
4. The Koran - its composition and structure, and discussion of certain selected passages.
5. The form and function of the mosque.
6. The characteristics of Muslim art.
7. The position of women in Islam.
8. The Muslim community in Britain.
9. Project (group work): one of the following topics:-
 - (a) A modern Islamic state e.g. Iran, Pakistan, Egypt
 - (b) Everyday customs in a particular Islamic society
 - (c) A particular aspect of the history of Islam e.g. Crusades, Muslim Spain, Ottoman Empire, Mogul Empire
 - (d) A depth study of any other aspect of the course

Comprehensive Mixed School, Essex

The school has its own Mode 3 'O' and 'A' levels approved by London University for an experimental period of seven years.

Work in the lower school (years 1-3) is organized thematically, thus:-

- Year I
1. The language and wisdom and religion
 2. Religious Founders and Leaders (including Muhammed)
 3. A place of worship (project)
- Year II
1. Sacred writings (including Qur'an)
 2. Choices and decisions
- Year III
1. Rites of passage
 2. Myself and the world about me

Non-examination religious education work in the upper school (years 4-6) is largely implicit in its approach, occurring in the context of a 'Design for Living' course and courses on the background to current affairs and general studies.

The School's Mode III 'O' level is organized as follows:-

- Section I - Making a Judgment (personal responsibility including home, money, leisure, community)
- Section II - Religious Belief
- (a) The place of founders, scriptures and traditions
 - (b) Prayer, worship and spiritual discipline
 - (c) Religion in the modern world
 - (d) The use of music or art in religion

Each section is assessed by a project and an examination (two hours) each of which carries 25% of the total marks.

Examples of projects include:-

- Have I the right to do what I like ?
- Do women get fair opportunities ?
- People and religion in our neighbourhood
- Religious poetry
- The architecture, symbolism and furnishings of a particular place of worship

The Schools Mode III 'A' level is organized as follows:-

Section I - Man and Religion

Part A The candidates' own belief, or one with which they are familiar, an exposition and defence of a point of view and its implications for behaviour.

Part B One other system of belief

Both parts are assessed by a project, each carrying 25% of the final marks.

Section II

Part A A study of one of the following themes in religious thought:-

- (i) Science and religion
- (ii) Ideological persecution
- (iii) Literary sources of belief: their use and misuse
- (iv) Religious leaders and prophets
- (v) Religious education and the development of sensitivity

Part B Philosophy of Religion

- (a) Religious language: myth, symbol and analogy
- (b) God and the world: creation, determinism and providence, miracles, evil and suffering
- (c) God and man: the existence of God, the nature of religious experience, man and his destiny religion and morality

Both parts are assessed by an examination, each carrying 25% of the final marks.

(N.B. Since this scheme was established three other nearby schools have adopted it).

A review of filmstrips & slides about Islam

By DILWYN HUNT*

Introduction

What follows is essentially a review of the filmstrips and slides on Islam most often mentioned in guides to resources. As a main, but I hope not an exclusive criterion of value, I have had in mind the principle consumers of such material, R.E. teachers in Secondary schools and their audience, school children. It is not, nor could it be a definitive list. Apart from the problem of new material coming onto the market as one writes, old material comes in and out of print from year to year and resource centres and libraries might or might not be prepared to lend material. Also as Muslims see Islam reflected in the world about them, there is a whole wealth of photographic material of the natural world; mountains, flowers, valleys, deserts, etc., which are not found on "Islam" filmstrips but nevertheless are as equally Islamic as Mosques, Qur'ans or Prayer Mats. A combination of slides showing geometric arabesque and snow crystals could provide a deeper insight into Islam than simply arabesque slides on their own.

Following this introduction I have succumbed to the temptation of making a number of generalized comments about the present state and possible future development of filmstrip and slide resources on Islam.

Finally, I have provided a list of what I suspect is minor material which I have not had an opportunity to see or review properly.

Enormous strides have been made over the last ten years in the extent and quality of filmstrip and slide material available for teaching about Islam. There are now over 1,500 commercially available photographs in slide or filmstrip form directly relevant to Islam. Although there are mistakes and inaccuracies it cannot be said of any of this material that it seeks either blatantly or surreptitiously to undermine or to misrepresent the faith. There are no attempts to describe Muhammad as a power hungry con-man, nor are there any "nice" references to health hazards, superstition, animism or rigidity in Islamic prayer and rituals. In all this material there is only one passing hint ("Islam" Part One Time/Life) at the use of the sword in winning converts.

Yet in spite of these achievements the great mass of this material leaves one somewhat disappointed. A great number of them are generalized introductions to Islam which seek through forty or fifty photographs and a small booklet to cover a bit of everything; Muhammad, history, the Qur'an, doctrines, rituals, architecture, rites of passage and ethics. Two of these "Introductions", "Encounter with Islam" (BBC) and "The Way of Islam" (CMS) narrow their

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terms of reference slightly and are quite successful. But there can be no real disclosure of Islam unless we take specific aspects of the faith and explore them in depth. Too much material remains accurate, objective and non-controversial because it is merely factual. This in itself is not superficial. There has to be a factual base but when one never really explores past that factual base the exercise is of dubious value. Via filmstrips and slides we can show the different salat prayer positions but if we fail to discuss in depth the symbolism and theology, the psychology and social relevance of this ritual, what is it we have taught? Unfortunately many busy teachers not trained in Islam but feeling it should be taught, are caught up in the general daily problems of school life, They rely heavily upon the text books and slide notes which their children are reading and listening to. If this material fails to do any more than scratch the surface with a quick introduction we cannot in fairness expect any more from our teachers.

In the future one hopes that certain Islamic themes will be explored in depth as for example we find in "The Hajj" (Argus Communication) or the as yet not commercially available "Doctrine and Practice of Islam" (Islamic Texts Society). An entire filmstrip could be devoted to the symbolism of the Mosque, or the relationship between salat, zakat and the fast of Ramadan, or the Qur'an, or du'a, or specific festivals, or the Shi'a, or the Muslim home. Perhaps a cartoon form could be used where the leading figures, if there are theological objections, need not be shown. Such a technique was successfully used in the book "The Rise of Islam" by Muhammad A. Gamiel (Cape Town 1970). The quality of the Islamic character can be vividly brought to life by providing visual biographies of men like Muhammad, Abu Bakr, Umar, Al-Razi, Saladin and Rumi.

In terms of filmstrips and slides a good beginning has been made. Introductions have been produced. Bigotry and distortion have been avoided. But it is time now to move onto the next stage of development for resource material on Islam. We have walked around the maze and have admired its complexity, we must now venture upon one or two specific paths and see if we can find the centre.

Filmstrips and Slides Reviewed

Filmstrips

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Encounter with Islam (BBC) | To be reprinted 1980/81 |
| 2. The Way of Islam (CMS) | £5.00 incl VAT |
| 3. Islam (EP) | £4.05 + VAT |
| 4. Islam (Hulton Ed Pub) | £2.90 + VAT |
| 5. Islam (Concordia Films) | £5.19 incl VAT |

Teaching Packs

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 6. Islam and Europe (Gateway) | Out of print |
| Islam: the Faith | |
| History and Influence | |
| 7. The World's Great Religions: Islam | |
| (Time/Life) | £35.00 incl VAT |
| Islam Part One | |
| Islam Part Two | |
| 8. The Islamic Tradition (Argus | |
| Communications) | £20.00 + VAT |
| Islam | £8.50 + VAT |
| The Hajj | £8.50 + VAT |

Slide Sets

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 9. Muhammad and the World of Islam (Slide | |
| Centre) | £3.55 + VAT |
| 10. The Rites of Hadj (Slide Centre) | £3.60 + VAT |
| 11. Moslem Jerusalem (Woodmasterne, Slide | |
| Centre) | £3.60 + VAT |
| 12. Islamic Calligraphy and Illumination | |
| (British Museum) | £4.20 + VAT |
| 13. Islam (Leicestershire L.E.A.) | |
| 14. The Taj Mahal (Ann & Bury Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 15. The Tomb of Akbar (Ann & Bury Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 16. Mughal Cities: Delhi (Ann & Bury | |
| Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 17. Agra Fort Palaces and Mosques (Ann & | |
| Bury Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 18. Id-ul-Fitr at Fatehpur Sikri (Ann & | |
| Bury Peerless) | £4.00 + VAT |

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 19. Islam (Visual Ed. Service) | Out of print |
| 20. The Doctrine and Practice of Islam | |
| (ITS) | Not commercially available |
| 21. The Historic Spread of Islam | |
| (ITS) | Not commercially available |
| 22. Islam, Arts and Sciences | |
| (ITS) | Not commercially available |

Additional Filmstrip and Slide Material not Reviewed

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 23. Persian Miniatures The Early Period | |
| (British Museum) | £2.80 + VAT |
| 24. Persian Miniatures The Middle Period | |
| (British Museum) | £2.80 + VAT |
| 25. Persian Miniatures The Later Period | |
| (British Museum) | £2.80 + VAT |
| 26. The Turkish Pottery of Iznik | |
| (British Museum) | £2.80 + VAT |
| 27. Life among the Arabs (Slide Centre) | £4.50 + VAT |
| 28. Oil in the Middle East (Slide Centre) | £4.25 + VAT |
| 29. Focus on Egypt (Slide Centre) | £8.50 + VAT |
| 30. Prayer in Islam (Salaat) (Slide Centre) | £3.60 + VAT |
| 31. Islam (Slide Centre) | £4.50 + VAT |
| 32. Muslim Art Packs (Slide Centre) | Out of print |
| 33. Arabs in the Holy Land (Slide Centre) | £2.40 + VAT |
| 34. Fatehpur Sikri (Ann & Bury Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 35. Tomb of Itimid-ud-Daulah (Ann & Bury | |
| Peerless) | £6.00 + VAT |
| 36. Babur Nama (Ann & Bury Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 37. Akbar Nama (Ann & Bury Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 38. Later Mughal Emperors (Ann & Bury | |
| Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 39. Mughal Court Scenes (Ann & Bury | |
| Peerless) | £3.00 + VAT |
| 40. Northern Nigeria (Hulton Ed. Pub) | £2.90 + VAT |
| 41. Tunisia (Hulton Ed. Pub) | £2.90 + VAT |
| 42. Islam (Longman Group) | Out of print |
| 43. Berbers of the Atlas Mountains | |
| (Longman Group) | Out of print |
| 44. Muhammad, the Last Prophet (Fergus | |
| Davidson) | £5.00 + VAT |
| 45. What's the Difference? Worship No 3 | |
| (EP) | To be reprinted |
| 46. Moors in Spain | £3.20 incl VAT |

Encounter with Islam

BBC publications, Schools Orders Section, 114-152 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 4TH. Taped commentary from Theatre Projects Services Ltd., 11-13 Neals Yards, Monmouth Street, London WC2H 9JG. Colour filmstrip 28 frames full frame Tape recorded commentary 16 minutes and printed notes of the commentary.

Of all the "general introductions" to Islam this is one of the best second only perhaps to "The Way of Islam" (Church Missionary Society). As Owen Cole writes, "By far the most satisfying photography possessing real aesthetic qualities and so putting the student in the right position to encounter Islam with sympathy and appreciation." Essentially the filmstrip consists of eighteen good, some of them glorious frames, showing a variety of mosques. We range from a magnificent picture of the citadel at Cairo to Istanbul, Medina, Damascus, Cordoba and Lahore. Finally the filmstrip ends with seven outstanding frames illustrating the Hajj, including almost a unique frame showing the Black Stone (See also: The rites of Hadj, The Slide Centre) set in its silver holder. Also there is a magnificent frame showing Mecca at night.

The tape commentary is generally accurate, sympathetic and well produced. There is no obtrusive music but there is some fine Arabic Quranic recitation and calls to prayer provided at suitable points. Translations of the Qur'an are also read. Fortunately there are no distracting audible frame change signals. The commentary basically describes the central belief in one God and the prophetic role of Muhammad. Then follows a brief history of the expansion of Islam. Finally the five pillars are described ending with the Hajj. One would have liked to have had the actual names of the mosques and their location mentioned as part of the commentary, however this information is provided in the notes. The notes come with black

and white pictures of each frame which is enormously helpful to the operator. Altogether an excellent resource material.

The Way of Islam

Church Missionary Society, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1
Colour filmstrip 67 frames half frame
Notes by Mabel Randolph and tape cassette 19 minutes

This is another excellent and probably the best introductory filmstrip on Islam. It has more frames than the "Encounter with Islam (BBC) filmstrip but the majority of the frames concentrate on Muslims at prayer and living together as a community whereas the "Encounter" filmstrip concentrates on architecture. There are some excellent photographs showing important features of Islamic worship particularly how Islam unifies different races into one brotherhood and how there is a tremendous sense of community and humility achieved during congregational worship.

The commentary begins like the "Encounter" filmstrip with the Islamic belief in one God and Muhammad's role as the Prophet of God. Then instead of exploring the historic spread of Islam or its architecture each of the Five Pillars are dealt with in some detail. When describing prayer its religious symbolism and social role are hinted at. Similarly the importance of the Ramadan fast is well described. Zakat however is quickly passed over. But what follows is a useful introduction to the Hajj although the Ka'ba rather than Arafat receives much attention. Six frames are devoted to the Qur'an which is somewhat neglected on the "Encounter" filmstrip. As this is an introduction emphasis is correctly put on describing how a Muslim handles and feels about the Qur'an and how it forms part of his daily life, rather than on attempting to outline its contents. Finally the last seven frames deal with social customs; purdah, marriage, polygamy and various political and economic questions; Western education, war and secularism. The commentary is unhurried sympathetic and accurate. As an introduction to Islam it rises above the level of the factual and descriptive and begins to explore the faith as a living religion which gives meaning to the lives of men. However one would have preferred to have had in the commentary also precise details about the events, cities and mosques shown and their location.

Islam

Educational Productions Ltd. Bradford Road, East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorks WF3 1BR

Colour filmstrip 25 frames half frame
With printed notes

Another general introduction to Islam. The approach is descriptive and formal and somewhat dry. The filmstrip begins with reference to four of the five pillars of Islam, leaving out the Shahada. Then follows some eight frames showing the salat prayer positions and huge congregations gathered for prayers at Id and on a Friday. Again it is unfortunate that precise locations and details of the event are not given. School children always want to know cities and countries. They might never remember such details but it helps to set the event in the real world.

A number of "articles of interest" are then shown; a Qur'an, a Rosary, Mihrab, Minbar and Prayer Mat. However the information in the commentary is somewhat dubious. Muslim Prayer Beads should be called Prayer Beads or Subha, but I would have thought "Rosary" was unsuitable. Also Prayer Beads usually have 33 or 99 beads not "one hundred". If the arches shown in frame 16 is really a Mihrab and not a Sanctuary (Zulla) it is a very misleading example. Also the information for frame 18 confuses the functions of the Mihrab and the Minbar.

Five good frames follow showing a variety of Mosques in India and Pakistan. Precise details and locations are

given but clearly from these frames one will learn little of the great Mosques of Isfahan, Istanbul or Cairo. The notes lack real insight. Too many of the frames are visually weak. People, objects and buildings appear too static, lifeless and without colour.

Islam

Hulton Educational Publications Ltd., Beacon Filmstrip, 55/59 Saffron Hill, London EC1
Colour Filmstrip 37 frames half frame
Notes edited by Revd J.C. Allen

This filmstrip is meant to be an introduction to Islam but in fact six main areas are covered; the Mosque exterior (8 frames), Mosque interior (10 frames), Public worship in a Mosque (4 frames), Personal prayer (4 frames), Pilgrimage (5 frames), Burial (2 frames). Each mosque is named and its location is given along with a brief history but no attempt is made to use the architecture to explain any insights into Islam as a religion. The frames which show Muslims at prayer in Mosques show little detail which is of value. One gets the impression of small Mosques and small congregations and this view is not balanced by any frames showing a vast congregational "army" gathered at Id or other festivals. The four frames showing a Muslim at prayer are almost successful. They are taken at quite a distance and one does not get the impression of intrusion or of self-consciousness on the part of the worshippers. Also the worshipper looks authentically placed in the courtyard of Al-Aqsa, Jerusalem. But unfortunately immediately behind the worshipper is a dark tree which distracts from the point of interest. One would also like to have seen the turning of the head positions (Salam) which concludes the prayer. The five frames showing pilgrims in Jerusalem en route to Mecca and transport used by pilgrims reveal virtually nothing of the nature or importance of pilgrimage in Islam. No real insight apart from an odd reference to Abraham is given as to why Muslims regard Jerusalem as sacred, and that familiar mistake of confusing Isaac and Ishmael is made. In the Islamic tradition Ishmael is the son nearly sacrificed by Abraham and the majority would favour Mina in Arabia rather than Mount Moriah in Jerusalem as being the site for this event. As was the case with "Islam" (Educational Productions) either as an introduction to Islam or simply as photographs of the World of Islam this filmstrip is of limited value.

Islam

Concordia Films, Viking Way, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8EL

Colour Filmstrip 61 Frames half frame
Full notes and commentary tape cassette 14 minutes

This filmstrip attempts to provide an introduction to Islam. The filmstrip follows Abdul and his parents on a pilgrimage to the Dome of the Rock. There are some twelve frames which show the Dome of the Rock itself. The idea of using one particular family and a young boy so that children can relate to the events is valuable and works reasonably well. The pilgrimage becomes Abdul's pilgrimage and not merely an abstract ritual performed by anonymous "Muslims". The technique is even more successfully treated in "The Hajj" (Argus Communications). However Abdul as an individual is virtually forgotten after frame 36 and we have another 25 frames which attempt to pack in details about the Five Pillars, prayer beads, six main articles of faith, the Qur'an, Muslim education and Mosque architecture. Too much is covered too quickly and too superficially. The last twenty frames instead of wetting a beginner's appetite for further study would only result in indigestion.

The information on the tape is accurate enough although the commentator's voice sounds unnecessarily intense. At one stage in bizarre contrast to the commentary the music breaks into unrestrained flippancy. The audible frame change signals are always irritating.

The colour on the film is not particularly good. Also as W. Owen Cole comments it would have been helpful if the

names and precise location of the specific mosques shown in the last five frames had been given.

Islam and Europe

Gateway Educational Films, St Lawrence House, 29/31 Broad Street, Bristol BS1 2HF
Two Colour filmstrips. Two taped cassette commentary

Islam - The Faith 32 frames half frame cassette commentary 27 minutes by Marian Leibmann

As a general introduction to the faith of Islam this filmstrip and tape has been largely superseded by "The Way of Islam" (Church Missionary Society) and "Encounter with Islam" (BBC). Both in terms of photographic quality and subject matter either of these two filmstrips are better than "Islam and Europe - The Faith".

History and Influence in Europe 38 frames half frame cassette commentary 33 minutes by Marian Liebmann

This filmstrip has an interesting approach and some unique material. Instead of the familiar description of Islam; Muhammad, the Five Pillars, the Qur'an and the Mosque, the filmstrip explores Islam's contribution and influence upon European culture. Seven frames including a map and photographs of Cordoba and the Alhambra provide an insight into the remarkable civilization achieved in Moorish Spain. Three frames which show Arabic script formed into patterns and pictures indicate the high regard and mysterious fascination Arabic holds for Muslims. Two frames effectively describe the enormous value of using Arabic numerals with a place value and a zero and how this technique was adopted in Europe. Four frames showing the use of the astrolabe and the theodolite illustrates Islam's contribution to science and astronomy. The reason for the "decline" in Islam as a contributor to civilization is then rather simplistically described. Finally the filmstrip ends with three interesting frames showing recently built or converted mosques in Britain.

As a lesson in the history of Islam there is some valuable material here. But this material might also provide a point of contact with modern Islam. It's possible children might more sympathetically understand Islam as it existed in its "Golden Age" and via this route might better understand and appreciate 20th century Islam. It might seem illogical to say that to understand the phenomenon of a world religion like Islam today one has to take a step back in time but the straight path is not always the most direct.

Both tape commentaries are clear and reasonably accurate but both are too long. The commentary includes a number of irritating questions after which the operator is meant to stop the tape while the pupils answer the questions. Also the commentary requests the operator to change frames, instead of simply providing a pause, and even suggests the frames be moved back so that additional points can be made. Some teachers would prefer these techniques but the majority would rather that on the other side of the tape there was simply the commentary with silent pauses between frame changes and no questions. Questions on a tape commentary are invariably the wrong questions for the children listening and one would prefer the option of doing without such interruptions.

Islam Part One

The World's Great Religions Islam, Time-Life, Edward Patterson Associates Ltd, 68 Copers Cope Road, Beckenham, Kent
Colour filmstrip 54 frames half frame
Notes and Cassette tape 11 minutes

The World's Great Religions; Islam, is a lavish "Teaching Kit" with two filmstrips, two tape cassettes, spirit masters and five 20 page booklets called, "The World of Islam".

The booklet contains a number of valuable colour photographs but that is about the only positive statement that can be made about this material. As a tape slide sequence both part one and part two suffer from tendentiousness, over-production and inaccuracy which makes them of dubious value in the classroom. Part one begins with Bach's Toccata in Fugue which is quite out of place, indeed it sounds pretentious. Then follows a rapid and confusing introduction to Islam where vital areas are touched and passed over like a stone thrown over the surface of a lake. A certain tendentious theme runs through both part one and part two; Islam, we are told is juxtaposed between the old and the new, can it survive this tension? The pervading implication being that it cannot. After raising this issue we are thrown back 1400 years to ancient Arabia and the birth of Muhammad. We are then told that Muhammad as a young boy worshipped idols and was influenced by Jews and Christians, statements which many Muslims would find repugnant. Then follows a description of the Night of Power for which inexplicably we are shown a slide illustrating the cave in which Muhammad and Abu Bakr hid while escaping from Mecca. The Qur'an is mentioned, as are Imams, then follows virtually without breath two sentences each on the first three pillars of Islam, four sentences describing the fast of Ramadan and then we find ourselves back in Mecca on a Hajj. We are then inaccurately informed that Hajj consists of three rituals, circumambulation of the Ka'ba, the running between Safa and Marwah which is not illustrated, and the standing at Arafat. The stoning and the sacrifice at Mina are not mentioned. A brief reference is then made to Muhammad's life; the Hijra and the capture of Mecca. The expansion of Islam is then referred to and we are told that Islam established an advanced civilization. After a brief look at the Dome of the Rock the commentary returns back to the theme, the "winds of modernization are affecting the religion of Muhammad" and with the question of Islam's future survival the commentary comes to an end.

Islam Part Two

The World's Great Religions Islam, Time-Life, Edward Patterson Associates Ltd, 68 Copers Cope Road, Beckenham, Kent
Colour filmstrip 53 frames half frame
Notes and Cassette tape 9 minutes

Islam Part Two is equally unsatisfactory as Islam Part One. Various ceremonies, festivals and customs are described. Reference is made to the celebrations at the birthday of the Prophet, Zar dancing and Mosque worship. The role of women in Islam is discussed, the wearing of the veil and polygamy are mentioned. Rites of Passage in Islam are touched on including circumcision, weddings and death rites. With the mention of death we are then told of the events which followed the death of Muhammad and the problems the Islamic community experienced with the institution of the Caliphate. A number of sects in Islam are referred to including Sufi mystics, whirling dervishes, Zar dancers and the Shi'a. We are shown a few gory frames of the procession during the festival of Muharram but the commentary fails to adequately explain the background to these scenes. The work of the Ammidiyah missionary movement particularly in Africa is then commented on. Finally the tape ends with another reference to the problems Islam is having to face due to "oil wealth" and the "drastic changes posed by modern life."

The commentary tries to cover too much ground, some of it controversial ground, too quickly. One is left baffled and confused. Older pupils would be irritated by its superficial leapfrogging and younger pupils would be lost in a maze of multiple impressions and unexplained words and statements. Throughout the tape, recorded at far too loud a sound level so that it is sometime difficult to hear the commentary, there is an assorted collection of sounds; calls to prayer, Ramadan cannon, whirling dervishes etc. Thrown in is an incessant traditional drum and flute music played at a frantic pace which reflects the nature of the commentary but not Islam.

Visually some of the frames are good but with the exception of the frames showing whirling dervishes, Zar dancing and Muharram very similar material can be found in the "Encounter with Islam" (BBC) and "The Way of Islam"

(CMS) filmstrips. Nine frames show Turkish or Persian miniatures of Muhammad, without facial features. Each individual teacher must consider the theological objections and educational disadvantages of using such material for himself. I would have thought that perhaps one miniature could be shown to a non-Muslim class to make it clear how real the Islamic objections are to representing the form of Muhammad. But to use a number of them to illustrate major events in the life of the Prophet is an implicit denial of the attitudes of respect and regard to other people's feelings which one is trying to encourage. Perhaps fundamentally this is what is wrong with the on-tire package. It seeks to present Islam as one of the "Great World Religions" but only succeeds in conveying the impression that it is a bizarre collection of rituals and customs struggling into the 20th century.

Islam

Argus Communications, Plumpton Road, Hoddesdon, Herts
Colour 115 frames half frame
Notes, full commentary and black and white illustrations of the frames
Tape Cassette 24 minutes

This material comes as a fully packaged "Teacher Set" complete with two filmstrips, two tape cassettes, five student readers, a teacher guide, and blackline masters for creating spirit masters or transparencies. The filmstrip and commentary are recommended as an introduction and overview of Islam. Then after some six lessons covering Islamic doctrines and the five pillars, the Hajj filmstrip and commentary is suggested. Two more lessons are then meant to follow dealing with the moral teachings and social system of Islam. Finally the tenth lesson ends with a summary of Islam and a re-showing of the Islam filmstrip.

The Islam filmstrip presents the now familiar sweeping introduction to Islam. Muhammad's career is described, the early expansion of Islam is briefly mentioned, then follows an account of the five pillars with particular attention to prayer. The filmstrip ends with a look at Muslim family life, social and moral teaching and a brief reference to the Shi'a and Sufis.

Photographically this material is of a high quality, the emphasis being upon Muslims and Muslims at prayer rather than upon architecture. There are also a number of valuable frames which show Muslims in a Western culture, presumably America, and some unique frames showing modern Mosque architecture. Some of this material it must be admitted however is very similar to some earlier filmstrips. The five frames on the Hajj are equally well presented in "Encounter with Islam" (BBC) and frames showing Muslims at prayer in "The Way of Islam" filmstrip have probably more atmosphere and religious insight. Nevertheless this filmstrip will provide a useful addition to resource material on Islam.

The tape commentary is accurate and sympathetic towards Islam. There is none of the tendentiousness present in the Time/Life Pack. There is also an attempt to explain the role of the Prophets in Islam. An important aspect of the faith which is often neglected. However the accent of the reader is clearly American which does not always fall well on English ears. The commentary rightly includes a number of Arabic technical words which the reader unsuccessfully and occasionally inaccurately stresses which merely make them sound odd and distracts from the commentary. The tape is really too long (24 minutes) and too hurried. The unhurried nature and peace of Islam is reflected in the Arabic proverb, "the soul travels at the speed of a trotting camel." This tape moves the soul at the speed of an Apollo space craft. On a number of occasions the quality of the frame warranted a lingering pause and an exploration in depth but the commentary drives on. As Desmond Brennan writes, "the urgency with which the sequence on prayer is treated is not helpful in conveying the Muslim notion of prayer as a time of peace - refreshment." Again as we have seen with a number of other filmstrips the names and precise locations of a number of mosques are not indicated either in the commentary or in the printed notes.

The Hajj

Argus Communications, Plumpton Road, Hoddesdon, Herts
Colour 85 frames half frame
Notes full commentary and black and white illustrations of each frame
Tape Cassette 17 minutes

This is a unique filmstrip and one hopes will form part of a new generation of resource material available on Islam. Instead of providing yet another "Introduction to Islam" for virtually the first time one particular aspect of Islam, the Hajj, is selected and described in depth. Via tape and cassette we follow an American Muslim on his Hajj. On the commentary the man comes across as intelligent, sincere and devout. Spiritually he clearly gains much from the Hajj and through a fine combination of excellent photography, original sounds and valuable personal commentary, the man's remarkable experience is conveyed. Because it is one man's Hajj and as we remain with him throughout the experience it is not difficult to identify and feel with him an empathy. At the end we see a man who is tired but deeply renewed in his faith. He has fulfilled a lifelong vow, he has visited the heartland of his faith, he has made genuine friends, he has experienced the brotherhood of Islam. The filmstrip and commentary explains the rituals and the Abrahamic background to Safwa and Marwa, the stoning at Mina and deals fully with the standing at Arafat, all areas which are often neglected. Finally the filmstrip ends with a visit to the Prophet's tomb at Medina. The commentary does assume a degree of knowledge of Islam and uses a number of Arabic expressions which are not explained in the text. However this is not a serious weakness as it does not mar the overall effect. Also the assumption of previous knowledge is justified as this is clearly not another introduction to Islam. If the filmstrip does have a weakness it is that no reference is made to the sacrifice at Mina. Also one would have liked to have known the name of the Muslim commentator on the Hajj. One certainly identified with him but by knowing his name even more realism would have been added.

Muhammad and the World of Islam

The Slide Centre, 143 Chatham Road, London SW11 6SR
Colour slide set 12 frames full frame
With notes by H.O.A. McWilliam

These are good quality slides but four of the twelve slides; the Ka'ba, the Qur'an, Shah Abbas Mosque and the Citadel, Cairo, can be found more cheaply on filmstrips. The interior view of Al-Aqsa however is well worth having. The second slide, a Persian miniature, shows Muhammad with facial features and his companions preparing for the Battle of Badr. This slide would be theologically unacceptable to most Muslims and probably visually not strong enough to interest non-Muslim children. The last five slides could perhaps be used for teaching about Islam during the Middle Ages but again simply in terms of visual interest these slides are not very strong.

The Rites of Hadj

The Slide Centre Ltd, 143 Chatham Road, London SW11 6SR
Colour 12 slides full frame

These slides have some value but they pale considerably compared with "The Hajj" (Argus Communications). The majority of the slides show the sites of the Hajj rather than pilgrims, hence Mina, Arafat and the path between Safa and Marwah appear deserted. There are no photographs showing the massed crowds circumambulating the Ka'ba. There is no sense of the brotherhood of Islam gathered together. The first two slides showing the Ihram worn by men and women are clear but the photographs are formal and posed. There is one unique slide showing a close up of a pilgrim kissing the Black Stone and one which looks like the legendary site where Abraham prayed.

There are a few points which can be made about the Hajj using these slides but in isolation they would not capture the real atmosphere of the event.

Moslem Jerusalem (Woodmasterne)

The Slide Centre Ltd., 143 Chatham Road, London SW11 6SR
Colour 9 slides full frame

As Desmond Brennan writes, "Woodmasterne has become synonymous with first-class quality photography" and these are indeed outstanding photographs of the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Dome of the Rock regularly features in filmstrips but this set is worth having simply for the five slides on Al-Aqsa, an important Mosque which is often neglected because of its more famous neighbour.

Islamic Calligraphy and Illumination

British Museum Publication, Audio Visual Library Services Ltd, Powdrake Road, Grangemouth, Stirlingshire FK3 9UT
Colour filmstrips 18 slides full frame
With written notes by Martin Lings

In terms of definition and colour quality these are excellent slides. But they highlight a question many teachers are trying to answer, "How does one provide children with a meaningful insight into the role, meaning and respect the Qur'an commands in Islam." When teaching children about the Qur'an it is often suggested one should avoid examining directly the Qur'an in terms of translated passages. Children must be able to grasp how a Muslim feels about the Qur'an at an experiential level before they can begin to understand the book at a doctrinal level. Hence one must make children aware of how a Muslim handles the Qur'an, how it plays a part in his daily life, how the Qur'an is adorned and decorated. For such an approach these slides should provide a valuable aid. From them one should be made aware of how individuals have lavished time, energy, care and patience on a labour of love, copying the Word of God. These slides do go some way towards achieving this but a teacher could not simply show these slides without comment and hope that their visual impact would impress children. They would only be seen as a mazed collection of odd shapes. Nor could a teacher hope to really convey anything a child could understand, least of all appreciate the Qur'an experientially, by reading out the information provided in the notes. The notes are detailed and faultless but Martin Lings was not writing for the classroom. He is more anxious to describe the similarities and differences between various Arabic scripts as they varied geographically and historically. The subtle distinctions between Thuluth and Jalil scripts would be lost on children. A teacher would have to pause for a long time with these slides and try to draw from the children a realization of how much effort has been put into producing these shapes and patterns and what this tells us about the artists' attitude of mind towards the Qur'an. Used with care and thought then these slides could prove to be a valuable resource for teaching about Islam.

Islam

Leicestershire Education Authority
Colour 24 slides full frame full notes

This is a new and apparently already popular collection of twenty-four slides. The first fourteen are particularly valuable. They show a typical Friday Zuhr service at the Leicester Mosque. Each stage of the service is shown and factually described in some detail; the removing of shoes, Wudu, Salat on entry into the Mosque, the Azan, the Iqama, the Khutba, the salat, du'a and one slide even shows the singing of hymns and praise to the Prophet. The slides are clear and accurately record what takes place in hundreds of Mosques and house Mosques in Britain. On this particular subject, visually one could not ask for more.

The notes provide a helpful guide to what is taking place in each slide. Precise details are given about the ritual requirements of wudu. The first (Adhan) and second call to prayer (Iqamah) are distinguished although the Iqamah is inaccurately called a "second Adhan". Also one could well understand how confusion might still exist between private prayer (du'a), optional (Sunnah) salat and obligatory (Fard) salat. Also the seven clock faces which appear on slide six do not appear to agree with the usual times of the five daily prayers. Frame fourteen shows some members of the congregation gathered in a semi-circle singing "hymns of greeting and praise to the Prophet." This is an intriguing slide but one would like to have:

more information on this aspect of worship and perhaps some acknowledgement of its controversial nature within Islam.

The next eight frames show Muslim children at home in the various positions of salat including the salam which ends the prayer. Perhaps inevitably they appear slightly staged and formal. The notes provide as full a factual description of the prayer ritual as one would wish to have.

The last two slides show Muslims at home. In themselves they are interesting but to make up a reasonable lesson on a Muslim home one would like to have a set of 12 or 24 slides on that subject alone.

As a slide set showing Mosque congregational worship in Britain and the salat these slides are very valuable. The notes provided are basically on a factual level only but with thought these same slides could be used to describe Islamic worship at a much deeper symbolic level.

The Taj Mahal

Ann and Bury Peerless, 22 Kings Avenue, Minnis Bay, Birchington-on-Sea
Colour 12 slides full frame with notes

Undoubtedly the best collection of slides one can buy on the flower of Mughal architecture, the Taj Mahal. One or two frames on some filmstrips show the Taj but provided here is a good range of angles with superb definition and colour. Although the Taj is a tomb and not a Mosque much of the nature of Mosque design and the sense of harmony and peace in Islam has been captured in these slides. The notes are detailed and interesting but are essentially historical in their approach.

Tomb of Akbar the Great

Colour 12 slides full frame with notes

Mughal Cities: Delhi

Colour 12 slides full frame with notes

Agra fort palaces, pavilions and Mosques

Colour 10 slides full frame with notes

Ann and Bury Peerless, 22 Kings Avenue, Minnis Bay, Birchington-on-Sea

As with the Taj Mahal, these slides are again excellent examples of colour photography. If one wishes to describe the glories of the Islamic civilization in Mughal India these slides will certainly help to capture the extent of the achievement. However these slides reveal little about Islamic architecture in general which is not already available on filmstrips previously discussed. Again the notes are detailed but essentially historical.

Id-ul-Fitr at Fatehpur Sikri

Ann and Bury Peerless, 22 Kings Avenue, Minnis Bay, Birchington-on-Sea
Colour 12 slides full frame with notes

With the exception of two frames on Muharram ("Islam Time/Life) and two frames on Id al-Fitr (Islam Argus Communications) this is the only slide material which illustrates a main Muslim festival. Festivals might not rate on the same spiritual level as the Five Pillars but visually in neglecting the festivals we have neglected an important aspect of popular Islam. Three of these frames capture something of the fairground atmosphere and joy which is part of Id al-Fitr. But there are simply not enough slides showing happy faces, children making a noise, or the variety of foods really to bring Id alive. Nevertheless if one wishes to describe Id al-Fitr these are the best, indeed virtually the only slides available.

Islam

Visual Education Service, The Divinity School, Yale University, 409 Prospect Street, New Haven 11, Connecticut, USA
Colour filmstrips 112 slides full frame
Photography and notes by Kenneth W. Morgan

These slides have such poor definition and colour quality they are virtually impossible to use. It is difficult to tell whether this is due to deterioration over the years

or to original bad production. Whatever the reason this is a great loss because assuming better definition and colour quality potentially this material provides the most valuable slide resource for teaching about the Mosque. Instead of as is usual, one frame for each mosque, this material provides a detailed study of over twelve important mosques with a fair collection of frames given to each individual building. For example, there are three frames showing the Ibn Tulun Mosque, Cairo; six frames showing Al-Azhar, Cairo; eight frames are devoted to the Umayyad Mosque, Damascus; seven frames on the Sultan Ahmed (Blue Mosque), Istanbul. Nor are Shi'a Mosques neglected. There are five frames on the Mosque of Husain, Karbala, and four frames on the Kadhimiya Mosque, Baghdad. Also there are a number of frames showing Mosque architecture in India and some intriguing studies of Indonesian Mosques. In most cases both interior and exterior views are shown. The notes provided give details on names and precise locations. From these slides, if they were of a better quality, a real exploration and appreciation of Mosque architecture, its symbolism, its range and recurring themes could have been undertaken.

The Doctrine and Practice of Islam

By Faard Gouverneur, The Islamic Texts Society
Colour 111 slides

This material is not commercially available but it particularly warrants attention not only because of its outstanding quality but also because we have here a Muslim who is not merely advising a Western production team but is describing his own faith. This material was not intended for children but with some simplification of the text potentially it could be used in schools. Certainly there are some vital lessons in this material on how to present Islam which teachers should take note of. First, although Persian and Turkish miniatures are used, for example, to illustrate Adam and the fall of man, none of them show Muhammad or his Companions either facially or in outline. When Muhammad is mentioned, for example, in reference to revelation, his presence is hinted at by using a Persian miniature of Gabriel or by showing the top part of the flames enveloping the Prophet. A number of slides show famous Muslim buildings but the emphasis as in "The Way of Islam" (CMS) filmstrip is upon Muslims praying, working, talking and living together as a community. Some of the slides illuminate superbly aspects of the commentary. For example, when we are told of the cleansing nature of prayer in Islam and of how spiritually the body becomes "infused with light" we are treated to a slide of a Muslim in prayer who is gloriously lit by a bright ray of sunlight. When we are told how the Qur'an is believed to contain in essence "all knowledge" a series of slides draw us closer into the book to emphasize how the text must be read in depth.

The commentary attempts to describe no more than a number of central doctrines and the Five Pillars. The pace, like Islam, is calm and unhurried. The commentary correctly places Muhammad not at the beginning of the world's youngest religion, but at the end of a long line of Prophets who have uttered God's perennial message to mankind. The role of Adam and Abraham in Islam are carefully explained. Muhammad's role as a Prophet who finally restores "the perfect example" for Muslims ultimately leading to the compilation of the Hadith is also described. Both points are vital aspects of the faith which are virtually neglected in all previous slide material.

Each of the Five Pillars are then explored in depth. We are treated to a living understanding of how each of the Pillars serves to uphold the Islamic doctrine of the unity of God, how each Pillar raises the Muslim above the level of materialism, how each Pillar serves to sanctify and purify, how each Pillar serves to draw one away from the world towards God.

This is a real lesson in Islam. We begin to see why men and women in different walks of life, with different skills and capacities find this faith meaningful. It is an excellent resource for teaching teachers but ultimately, in a modified form, if Islam is to be meaningfully taught in schools what teachers must try to convey to children.

The Historic Spread of Islam

by Faard Gouverneur, The Islamic Texts Society
Colour 113 slides

The second of three slide and commentary sequences produced by the Islamic Texts Society and regrettably like the other two not commercially available. This material attempts to describe 1400 years of Islamic history. The Arabian background, Muhammad's birth, opposition in Mecca Night Journey, Hijra, the development of the community in Medina and the conquest of Mecca, are all dealt with in some detail. Via mainly Turkish, Persian and Indian miniatures the early expansion of Islam is described. We are told how the Copts and Jews and other conquered peoples were surprised and delighted by the tolerance of their Muslim leaders. A policy of "no compulsion in religion" was adopted and converts came into the faith inspired by Muslim leaders, scholars and saints. The architectural achievements and high culture of the Muslim world; Moorish, Moroccan, Arab, Turkish, Persian and Indian are all without further commentary visually demonstrated. The decline in the Islamic world is then mentioned and 19th century Western colonialism is not forgotten. Finally the commentator attempts to peer into the future and sees a faith full of life, continuing to expand in Africa and perhaps win converts further afield.

As the history of the Middle East in many schools seems to end after the Romans there is a great deal of valuable information in this material which one would like to see used. The information is so well ordered and has such a corrective value in challenging the traditional Western impression of oriental tyranny and despotism that in being critical one feels peeved. Nevertheless one senses that a broad brush has been used to cover too much and the brush has missed not merely the peripheral but has also missed main factors and events which helped shape Islamic history. The early Civil Wars, the origin of the Shi'a, the social and economic factors which led to conversion, the theological factors which led to intellectual stagnation, are all vital parts of the total story. A Muslim historian might assemble evidence or arguments challenging the view that they are central but even in a broad historical introduction one is not justified in simply passing them over in silence. In spite of these criticisms this slide sequence provides a valuable and coherent Muslim view of Islamic history and with an informed audience opens up the possibility of discussion and debate

Islam, Arts and Sciences

by Faard Gouverneur, The Islamic Texts Society
Colour 47 slides

The third in the series produced by the Islamic Texts Society discusses Islamic Arts and Sciences. The nature of Islamic art as an expression of Islam is subtly explained in a treasured collection of slides showing calligraphy, ornamental Qur'ans, arabesques, stylized plants, Mosques, mihrabs, minbars, minarets and domes. One often hears arabesque described in merely negative terms as being abstract, an avoidance of the representational. But with this material we are given an insight into how natural forms like the circle and triangle are used to form arabesques. We learn how in the multiplicity of pattern there is a unity. The slide sequence draws one closer into the arabesque pattern so one recognises the single unit that makes up the whole. Equally well done is the description of the symbolic significance of Mosque architecture. The nature of the "void" in Mosque architecture is illustrated and one's attention is drawn to how the emptiness of the mosque courtyard intensifies the feeling of God's invisible presence. The material has been carefully researched, intelligently written and professionally executed.

Reading List

1. W. Owen Cole "Audio-visual Material" Learning for Living Jan 1972
2. Desmond F. Brennan "Resources Notebook" British Journal of R.E. Spring 1980
3. Richard Tames "The World of Islam: A Teacher's Handbook" SOAS 1977
4. W. Owen Cole (Ed) "World Religions: A Handbook for Teachers" Community Relations Commission 1976
5. Birmingham Education Department "Living Together: A Teacher's Handbook of Suggestions for Religious Education" City of Birmingham District Council 1975

PREVIOUS TITLES IN THIS SERIES:

1. The Growth and Organization of the Muslim Community in Britain by M. Mashuq Ally (out of print)
2. Forms and Problems of Legal Recognition for Muslims in Europe by Jørgen S. Nielsen
3. Attitudes to Medical Ethics among British Medical Practitioners by Aminah Molloy
4. Muslim Religious Education in the Federal Republic of Germany – the Qur'an School Debate by Muhammad S. Abdullah.
5. Attitudes to Islam in Europe – an Anthology of Muslim views
Annual subscription (four issues with Abstracts): £5
single copies: £1.25.

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