

RESEARCH STUDIES ON MUSLIM MINORITIES

A PROPOSAL

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SAFAR 1397

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INTRODUCTION: RATIONALE FOR RESEARCH STUDIES

The total Muslim population of the world today, according to many figures, is over 900 millions. Over 300 million Muslims, i.e. 40% of the total population, lives as minorities under non-Muslim regimes. Their honorable survival and indentity as Muslims are under constant threats. Varing in nature and intensity from country to country, they are subjected to pressures and sufferings. They are denied the kinds of facilities necessary to their growth and development. Quite often, there are encroachments on their freedoms -- religious, political, economic and others. Muslim minority in India represents a striking example of this observation. In the short span of their history since 1947, they have been tortured in every possible way. As the tempo of Hindu militancy unfolds itself, as it has done frequently in the past, the life of a Muslim becomes terribly miserable. He spends sleepless nights and fearful days. He feels equally threatened and virtually victimized in other ways -- religiously, economically, politically etc. However, Muslims in India are not the only exceptions. The sufferings of the Muslims in the Philippines, Yugoslavia, Burma, Cambodia, Cyprus, Soviet Union, Communist China and Ethiopia are some additional examples that the recent history of the world politics has witnessed. Furthermore, the continued economic distresses of the Muslims in various other parts of the globe have invoked the interests of Christian Missionaries, Communist Zealots and the imperialist ^{activists.} ~~activities.~~ The former two have essentially directed ideological onslaught, the latter fundamentally political. Conversion of many Muslims into Christianity in random parts of Africa, South and South East Asia lend support to the observation that the Missionaries have attained substantial success in

taking the "Message of Gospel" to the starving Muslims. Likewise, the rise and growth of Communist leaning among Muslims in Kerala and other parts of neighbouring South Asia testify the success of Communist ideological penetration. Moreover, the situations of the Muslims in the "Iron Curtain" countries is, in some cases, ^{inexplicable} in-explicable. They are subjected to ideological indoctrination and cultural assimilation. No wonder, they are rarely represented at the annual Hajj. Finally, the events unfolded in the recent past among the economically deteriorated Muslim habitations demonstrate, with clarity, the treacherous designs of the imperialist powers against Muslims. Ethiopia and Philippines may be mentioned as passing instances of such facts. All these, and many more, represented situations of alarm and call for awakening for the Muslims living in the Muslim world.

Until today, however, the response of the latter towards the former was marked with potential impotency and marked indifference. It is indeed too regrettable. This prompts ^a ~~or~~ question: Why the Muslims-in-the Muslim world have shown indifference to the sad conditions of their brothers living in the non-Muslim world? A careful examination into the factors accountable will reveal one factor as the outstanding determinant.

Precisely, it may be stated as this : There has been absence and/or lack of needed awareness among the former towards the on-going situations of the latter.

This absence and/or lack of awareness is multi-dimensional. In the first place, there is an enormous amount of incomprehension on the essential components of their existence. In the second instance, there is very little information on the in-depth understanding of the problems and

challenges of the Muslim minorities. Finally, there is a continuing negligence on the understanding of the problems of the Muslims who are the victims of exploitations either by the missionaries or Communists or other interested elements. Taken as a whole, and varying from one situation to another, many questions may be posed: What are the highlights of the general conditions of the Muslim minorities? In what countries are they most subjected to tortures and pressures of all kinds? What is their on-going conditions, viewed from all perspectives -- political, economic, religious and social etc.? What kinds of assistance they need?

Underlying such general questions, there are some specific questions: If the situation of certain specific Muslim minority is deplorable, what factors account for that? If their religious fervidness has diminished in momentum, what may be stated as contributing causes? Do they need education and proper training on the principles and teachings of Islam? If so, in what countries and by what methods, it would be desirable to assist them? Similarly, if they need visits of their brethern from the Muslim world, how the program of such visits can effectively be organized? Qualitatively^v and quantitatively, what the Muslim world, in general, and certain countries, in specific, can offer their services towards ameliorating their worsening conditions? If they need assistance, on official levels, what the Muslim government can do for them to build a more harmonious pattern of their interaction with their ~~co-habitant~~ ^{co-habitant} non-Muslims? What are the vulnerable Muslim minorities to Communist ideological penetration and Missionaries' designs? How the most resourceful nations in the Muslim world and other thoughtful elements can assist them? These are some questions, tentatively suggested, as illustrations. Search for their answers, and answers of many other questions of ~~ideological~~ ^{identical} orienta-

tion, will remove the gap that exists today. It is fair to state that, as of yet, even the intellectual circles in the Muslim World lack maturity in their understanding on the problems and distresses of Muslim minorities.

This is despite the fact that we are living in an era of communicational sophistication unprecedented in history.

The preceding passages lead to reorient our attention on a ^{0.}subject of central importance: There is dire need of collecting information, through exploratory research, on Muslim minorities and subsequently of its dissemination among Muslims, living-in-the Muslim world.

The importance of this need will reflect its more vividness, and hence receive more momentum, if viewed in the light of pertinent Islamic injunctions. The Holy Quran, in two of its sacred verses, is very explicit on the subject:*1

(Indeed, the Believers are but a single Brotherhood; so make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers).^{*2} The second verse reads:

*3 (The Believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another).^{*4} The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw the entire Muslims united together like the bricks of a cemented wall. He observed in emphatic tone^{*5}:

(Indeed, a Believer towards the other Believer is like a wall that cements each other). He also exemplified the entire Muslim Ummah with the human body. As the diverse organs in human constitution are united together, the

1. Sura, Al-Hajrat, 49:10

2. Yusuf Ali, English Translation of the Holy Quran, Vol.II P.1405

3. Sura, Al-Tawba, 9:71

4. Yusuf Ali, Op. cit. Vol. 1 P. 461

5. Al-Bukhari, "Kitab Mozalim", Part 2 Hadith, 5

same are the scattered elements of the Muslim Ummah bound in one integrated mechanism. As the pain in one component of human body is felt by the entire human structure, the same is the reaction of the Muslim Ummah towards each other. A calamity to any Muslim community in any part of the world, in the Prophets' eyes, hits the entire Muslim populace. In very beautiful words, He elaborated:

(You will notice the Believers in showing kindness, affection, and love to each other like the human body. As one of its part pains, the rest of the body is overtaken with awake and fever).^{*1}

No wonder, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had to state:

(None, among you, can attain the perfection of Faith until he cherishes for his brother what he cherishes for himself).^{*2}

Obviously, if the Muslims living in the Muslim world cherish prosperity, freedom of religion, security of life and dignity in society, it is incumbent upon them to wish the same values for their brethern living in distress situations. This necessitates, therefore, a matured understanding on the conditions of Muslim minorities.

The need to investigate the affairs of Muslim minorities gives rise to another need of equal importance; the establishment of a Research Center oriented for this purpose. On this point, too, there has been marked indifference. Not a single academic institution, out of hundreds and thousands, operating

*1 Ibid, "Kitab Al-Adal" Part 8, Hadith 27.

*2 Ibid, "Kitab Al-Emam, Part 1, Hadith 7.

in the Muslim world has given serious consideration to this problem. It is for the first time, and even that with initial moves, King Abdulaziz University at Mecca Al-Mukarrama has made a positive response. With the establishment of a Center for Academic Research and the Revival on Islamic Heritage at the Faculty of Sharia,^{*} the University has made the start just few months ago. It has embarked on the task of systematic, scientific, and academically oriented research on Muslim minorities' affairs. We earnestly supplicate to Allah Almighty to guide our steps, without check or hindrance.

LEVELS OF NEEDED RESEARCH: A CLASSIFICATORY SCHEME

Cognizant of the fact that the existing literature on Muslim minorities' affairs^{is} are both ^{scarcely}scarify and incomplete, how best we can systematize the future research plans? The present writer suggests a three-fold classificatory scheme. It is hoped that this scheme will serve as a useful guiding framework for the future researchers. To put in simple words, the scheme conceives the direction of future research on three levels;

- (i) bibliographical;
- (ii) general; and
- (iii) geographical.

1. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL

As of now, the sources of data and other published materials on Muslim minorities are scattered. In view of the established significance for continuing research on the subject, it is both useful and essential, on

priority items, the preparation of bibliographical works. On this score, the present writer agrees with Dr. Asad Hussain. In expressing his views on the 'SHORT TERM PLAN' for research on Muslim minorities, the latter has observed. "This is essential as no research work is possible unless a comprehensive bibliography is ready as early as possible".*

Research on bibliographical works, it is further the considered opinion of this writer, ought to be under two categories: (a) General Bibliography and (b) Classified, Annotated Bibliography.

A. GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY:

The prospective work on 'General Bibliography' must, from the very outset, observe the rules of bibliography-writing. Published materials must be arranged in an alphabetical order. As a whole, and in our stage of incipience, the sources of data should concentrate heavily on the following:

- i) Books;
- ii) Dissertations & Thesis;
- iii) Periodical Literature; and
- iv) Newspaper Reports.

The bibliographical information must concern, as far as possible, all the countries in the non-Muslim world. Their names should be inserted in alphabetical order. It is certainly possible that exhaustive information on some countries may be either inaccessible or incomplete. Nevertheless, thier incorporation, to the extent of availability, is useful. The work on the task should be prepared, again to agree with Dr. Hussain " in book

* Asad Hussain, Institute of Muslim Minorities Affairs (Jeddah, King Abdulaziz University, 1975) AppendixA P.1

form as well as on index cards.*1

It is hoped that, with the completion of work on General Bibliography, the future researcher will be in a position, Insha'Allah, to benefit a lot. On their own part, they will come out with their own contributions. In turn, these will lead to the preparations of "Supplements to the General Bibliography on Muslim Minorities." Thus, the gaps that might arise will, Insha'Allah, be filled in the course of time. In any event, the work will set forth a basis for future bibliographical writers in supplemental forms. In addition to its usefulness for the future researchers, the "General Bibliography" will mark a constructive step towards preparing an exhaustive, classified, annotated bibliography.

Work on the "General Bibliography", in the opinion of this writer, does not involve intensive scholastic competence. A Research Assistant, working under the supervision of a qualified researcher, can handle the job rather conveniently. On this score, too, Dr. Asad Hussain has been very explicit. He has offered a suggestion "to employ at least two assistants for the purpose of preparing and arranging the bibliography.*2

B. Classified, Annotated Bibliography:

Equally important, and in fact even more, component of works on bibliography is more exhaustive in nature. This involves the writing of "classified, Annotated Bibliographies" on Muslim Minorities. This may be explained in terms of their differences with the "General Bibliography." These differences are two-fold. First, the "General Bibliography", such as suggested

*1 Abid.

*2 Abid.

by this author in the preceding passages, contains information on the Muslim minorities of all the countries in the world. The works on the "Classified, Annotated Bibliography", on the contrary, center on some specific country as India, or a specific region. The latter could be either geographically identified or politically delineated. North America and Communist Bloc may be mentioned as examples that represent, respectively, the regional specification on geographical and political lines. In more comprehensible terms, the following titles may be suggested. They are purely tentative; certainly not final. They represent mere illustrations on the contents of the present discussion. Even, for widened understanding, these may be suggested under two items: (a) focussing on country; (b) centering on region.

Focussing on specific country, the tentative topics, as illustrations, are as follows:

1. An Annotated Bibliography on Muslim Minority in Bulgaria.
2. An Annotated Bibliography on Muslim Minority in Philippines.
3. An Annotated Bibliography on Muslim Minority in Brazil.
4. An Annotated Bibliography on Muslim Minority in India.
5. An Annotated Bibliography on Muslim Minority in Communist China.

Centering on specific regions, the following topics, likewise tentative, provide examples:

1. An Annotated Bibliography of Muslim Minorities in Southeast Asia.
2. An Annotated Bibliography of Muslim Minorities in Southeast Asia.
3. An Annotated Bibliography of Muslim Minorities in Latin America.
4. An Annotated Bibliography of Muslim Minorities in the Communist World.
5. An Annotated Bibliography of Muslim Minorities in the NATO countries.

The second, and indeed more ^mimportant, point of difference between the "General Bibliography" and the "Classified, Annotated Bibliographies" concern their distinctive characteristics. The former is precise in information. It reveals to the reader the title of the source, the author, date of publication, and place of publication. In case of periodical literature, it gives information on the specific article, author, periodical title, volume and issue number and/or month and year of publication. While there basic constituents of bibliography-writing remain intact, the "Annotated Bibliography", on the contrary, provides one essential addition: it records a summation of the outstanding themes of the source listed, which are digested normally in one passage.

2. GENERAL

As the systematic, elaborate, and academically-planned research on Muslim Minorities is taking first strides, it is advisable to initiate works on some projects of "General" nature. This will, Insha'Allah, lead to the attainment of two fundamental goals: first, it will alert and widen the common man's knowledge throughout the Muslim world on the existing conditions of his brother in the non-Muslim world. Second, it will especially alert the intellectual classes in the Muslim world. In turn, it is hoped, they will be motivated to consider, in serious terms, to do something positive to alleviate the sufferings of Muslim minorities. This eventual positive action, on their part, might take, among others, two essential courses. First, they will be convinced to the indispensability of expanding systematic research on Muslim minorities and, with this conviction, prompted to allow their potentialities to be utilized for Muslim causes. Second, they will emerge in better position to educate and advise the policy ^makers ~~makers~~ concerning the

Muslim minorities in the world. Needless to state, the latter will have its own positive outputs. A resourceful, politically or economically Muslim nation, can influence a non-Muslim country desiring a deal with her. During the bargaining process, the former can prevail over the latter for making concessions to its Muslim minority. Lack of matured advice to the Muslim ruling elite on the minority question has negative impact. The recent history of Muslim nations' relations with the non-Muslim countries have witnessed such tragedies quite often. One passing example may be sufficient to serve as illustration. Egypt, under President Nasser, has enjoyed a long "honey-moon" era with India. Despite his political resourcefulness and his reputed ability in political maneuverabilities, President Nasser has paid a deaf ear to the deteriorating conditions of the Muslims in India. The currents of world power structure moving at times during this "honey-moon" period were such that India was seeking a political refugee and a closer reapproachment with Nasser. The latter was able, on all counts, to serve Muslim causes in India much better than the head of any other Muslim country. But history records no golden words on his positive accomplishments for the distresses of Muslims in India. Nasser's negligence was shared by his fellow-countrymen. Underlying this negligence was the factor stated above: Lack of education or immatured understanding on the conditions of the Muslims living in the country desiring political ties.

There is still another impelling reason that argues the initiation of research operation on general subject. It is basically academic in nature. It is a well-understood observation that "specialty" is the eventual goal in any academic elevation. The road that leads to this goal begins with the constructive step of "generality" or "non-specificity". Research on Muslim

minorities must observe this rule. Apart from other advantages, it will ensure a well-planned strategy and gradual progress.

As the name indicates, it is difficult to specify the sub-areas under the category "General". This is comprehensive, all-embracing and even multi-dimensional. For purposes of better comprehension, certain sub-areas may be mentioned. In no event, it is claimed, however, that they encompass all aspects pertinent to the "General" category. Rather, they represent some examples for purposes of illustration. These may be listed as below:

- a) Informative-descriptive studies;
- b) Comparative studies;
- c) Substantive studies.

The following is an expansion of these broad ideas.

a. Informative-Descriptive Studies:

To embark on a mission that necessitates a gradual and progressive strategy, it is logical to make a reasonable *start* which is to prepare *works* on informative-descriptive studies. Needless to state, these studies are oriented to widen the existing extent of knowledge of the Muslim readers on their brethren living as minorities throughout the world. Furthermore, these studies will stimulate their interests to gain deeper understanding of the problems that the latter are facing. To the intellectuals, such studies will provide useful perspectives as bases for future research.

Woven essentially in analytical frameworks, such studies must endeavor to expose almost all aspects of ~~the~~ minorities' conditions. In particular, such studies must discuss, though in summation, the distinctive problems of the minorities under treatment. These should unfold as well their historical

political and religious situations. Written in Arabic, Dr. Ali Al-Muntasir Al-Kattan⁽¹⁾'s work on Muslims in Europe and the U.S.A., may be mentioned as a passing example. Though devoid of refined analyses, this work is useful study. Understanding⁽²⁾ this book is under publication in Germany. Additional tentative topics will better illustrate the ideas implicit in the preceding passages. These may be enumerated as follows:

1. The Conditions of the Muslims in Africa
 2. Muslims in the Non-Muslim World: Their Major Problems.
 3. The Japanese Muslim Minority: Its Growing Interests in Islam.
- b) Comparative Studies:

Comparative studies represent a phenomenon widely-practised in the recent social science research. Its usefulness has been proven beyond doubt.

Usually, this leads a researcher to come out with findings that, in turn, serve guiding perspectives for growing future intellectual sophistication. Basing on such perspectives, the future researcher is able to produce simulating results necessary to meet the challenges posed by the non-Muslim scholars.

For our purposes, comparative studies may be undertaken from different standpoints. The scope of this discussion is too comprehensive to be summarized in this paper. Suffice it to say, for purposes of illustrations, that these studies may be undertaken in terms of treatment, religious freedom, political liberties etc. granted to Muslim minorities. The following examples, with tentative topics, should be able to make the point clear.

2. Verbal conversations with Sheikh Mohammad Al Muntasar Al-Kattani, the father of Dr. Ali Al Muntasar on Safar 10,1396. The Sheikh is presently serving as a researcher at the Center.

1. Political Freedom of Muslims in India and Israel.
 2. Muslims Vs, Christians in Philippines: A Comparative Study of their Treatment under the Constitution of their Country.
 3. UN Role on the Question of Muslim Minority Vs. Non-Muslim Minorities: Some Case Studies.
 4. Muslims in Bhuddist Country Vs. Bhuddists in Muslim Country: Case Studies of their Comparable Treatment in Thailand and Pakistan.
 5. Russo-American Contrasting Attitudes on the Muslim Minority in Israel.
- c) Substantive Studies:

Most existing substantive literature on Muslim minorities has been produced by the non-Muslim writers. Qualitatively, these are replete with gaps and flaws. In one way, these reflect the distorted stereotypes, prejudices and biases which their writers have nurtured on the situations of the Muslim minorities they have written. Paradoxically, the contributions made by the Muslims, so far, are insufficient in quantity and unsatisfactory in quality. Hence, there is a need of filling these gaps.

Substantive research seeks to employ a concrete substantive factor as a focal point in the projected study. The extent of such factors are numerous. For the purposes of this paper, and in a bid to amplify the point under discussion, the following may be stated: (i) sociological (ii) economic, (iii) political, and (iv) religious.

Centering on sociological substantive factor, the prospective research on Muslim minorities should endeavor to investigate the attitudes of the non-Muslim majority to the Muslim minority, the pattern of their evolving intercourse, the actions and reactions of the Muslim minority in "crisis" and

"non-crisis" situations. In nature, such research could be either descriptive, comparative or theoretical and methodological. Likewise, it could be either generalistic or specialistic. Geographically, it could be either universalistic or non-universalistic. Some examples, with tentative topics, may be presented:

1. Social Pattern of the Muslims in Fiji.
2. Muslims in Russia: The Problem of their Assimilation.
3. Muslim Minorities in Ceylon and Thailand: A Comparative Study of their Interactions towards Bhuddist Societies.
4. Muslim Minority Vs. Non-Muslim Majority: A theory of their Social Intercourse.
5. Muslims in Brazil & Argentina: The Tragedy of their Sub-merging Identities.
6. The United Nations and the Major Social Problems of the Muslim Minorities.

Analyzing economic factor, prospective research can bring to light the major economic problems of the stricken minorities, the causes underlying these problems, insights into their solutions, and suggestions for thoughtful Muslim governments to attempt to eliminate them. Likewise, such studies can shed lights on Muslim minorities that, under the pressures of economic strains, are vulnerable to the exploitations of alien interested influences.

Some examples, again with tentative topics, may be mentioned:

1. Economic Conditions of the Muslim Minorities in Africa.
2. Muslim Minorities in India, Philippines and Israel: Some Common Economic Variables,
3. Economic Factor as a Determinant in Missionaries' Approaches towards

the Muslim Minorities: Case Studies of Philippines and China before World War II.

Focussing on political factor, as a substantive measure, the prospective research on Muslim minorities will essentially uncover the real patterns of their existence in different political orders. In addition, it will explain the magnitude of the problem of their loyalty, especially in the event of national crisis. Finally, this research will help to enrich the comprehension of the general readers on the quality of their representation in the government they are living. Theodore Wright⁽¹⁾, on this subject, has presented an excellent example. Other examples, with tentative subject titles are useful. They are presented as follows:

1. Big Powers Politics & the Muslims in India.
2. Muslim Minority as a Factor in Pakistan's Policy towards India.
3. League of Nations and the United Nations on Minority Question:
Some Guiding Principles Relative to Muslim Minority Problem.
4. The Political Situation of the Muslims in the Whites-Dominated
South Africa.

The religious factor, as a substantive variable, is last but not the least for the purposes of this paper. This is the most pressing problem that a minority has faced invariably in the historical past. Unfortunately, it is still a major strain sustained by Muslim minorities in this so-called "age of tolerance" and the "era of democracy". Mr. Faruqi's article² on the

1. Theodore P. Wright, jr. "The Effectiveness of Muslim Representation in India", in D. E. Smith ed. South Asian Politics & Religion (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1969) PP. 102-137

2. Zia-ul-Hassan Faruqi, "Indian Muslim and the Ideology of the Secular State", in Smith, op.cit. pp. 138-149

situation of the Muslims in India and their religious freedom is worth looking. Other examples, again with tentative subjects for future research, will better expound the idea stated above:

1. Democracies and Interference in the Religious Freedoms of the Minorities: The Case Studies of Muslims in India and Israel.
2. Religious Freedoms of the Muslims in the Communist World: A Comparative Study of their Situations in China, Russia and Bulgaria.
3. Muslims in Philippines, Japan and U.S.A: Their Impelling Need for Islamic Education.
4. The Distorted Islamic Identity of the Muslims in Latin America: An Analysis of their Problems.

The above stated passages represent modest efforts to impress upon a general reader on the variety of some research projects that fall within the 'general' category. It is not calimed that these are all-inclusive and exhausive. The room for more additons is certainly open.

3. GEOGRAPHICAL

The last constituent of our classificatory scheme suggested to demonstrate the categories of needed research is "Geographical". This represents a next logical level of future research direction. The author does not suggest to focus on this level in the initial stage. Its reasoning has been presented in the preceding pages. Their recapitulation, therefore, is both unnecessary and dis-interesting. Suffice it to say that the "Geographical" category of needed research, for the time to come, has special implication. To put in simple words, these refer to some resemblance with "specialization" which, as indicated earlier, is the eventual ladder in academic progression.

It must be preceded with "General" level of research direction.

Dr. Asad Hussain, in his proposal on the prospective Institute of Muslim Minorities Affairs, has been very explicit in categorizing "Geographical" settings for his suggested LONG TERM PLAN. With notes of virtual approval, this author takes the opportunity to recount them in his own words as follows"

For the long Term Plan, this study should be divided into six parts:

1. Muslim Minorities in Asia (except Communist countries)
 - a) South Asia: (India, Sri Lanka, Nepal & Bhuttan).
 - b) Southeast Asia: (The Philippines, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore and Hong Kong).
 - c) East Asia: (South Korea, Republic of China and Japan).
2. Muslim minorities in Africa.
3. Muslim minorities in Europe.
4. Muslim minorities in Pacific: (Australia and New Zealand).
5. Muslim minorities in America: (North, South and Central).
6. Muslim monorities in Communist countries.
 - a) European Communist countries
 - b) Asian Communist countries.¹

In expounding on this LONG TERM PLAN, Dr. Hussain makes one conclusive observation: "The Completion of this project will take at least five years or may be even continued for a longer period."²

1. Hussain, op. cit. pp.11-12

2. Ibid.

ACCESS TO THE SOURCES OF DATA

The problem to the access of the sources of data needed for future research is an important question. It needs attention and advance thinking. Cognizant of the twin factors that the prospective research is systematic in nature and academically starting from a scratch, a careful answer to this question is needed. On this score, too, Dr. Asad Hussain has assisted us. He suggests three methods leading to the access of the needed data. His recount, in his own words, is recorded as follows:

There are three viable, recognized and systematic ways of doing research

First and foremost is the field trip to study governmental and non-governmental materials on the subject; interviewing important personalities and finding out facts on the conditions of minorities and above all observing and analysing the mood and intention of the common man and the commun^{al}~~ist~~ climate of the country;

2. Next to consult and study secondary materials, and *Combs* through all possible available published materials;
3. Last but not least, interview Muslims who come from minority areas but are now living in different parts of the world, especially in U.S.A., Europe and the Arab world. This type of study, if conducted carefully, could be considered as useful and valuable. However, while doing research on Muslim minorities, care should be taken that the work is done with no secrecy and within the framework of the law of the land.¹

¹ Ibid. pp.10-11

Apparently, a future researcher has to pool out research data by employing different methods. He must undertake a "trip" for research purposes at a conducive stage. This becomes more important in view of one consideration that this author has taken pain to note. Even the secondary and published materials, necessary enough for future research projects, are not, as yet, amply maintained at the University Libraries. In turn, this necessitates a future researcher to plan his future trips in a way that may also allow him to utilize a measure of his time in benefitting from foreign libraries.

RESEARCH STUDIES IN THE INITIAL STAGE: SOME SUGGESTIVE TOPICS

Research projection in the initial phase should be viewed within the framework of the three-fold classificatory scheme on levels of research direction. In operational terms, this should bear the identical character of the 'scheme'. To put in other words, the prospective research undertakings must be organized in the order as the 'scheme' envisaged in all facets --- description, reasoning, amplification, induction - deduction, analyses, and theorizing etc. To recount, the 'scheme' stipulated three levels of research direction: bibliographical, general, and geographical. The last one, as discussed exhaustively in the pertinent pages, is an area that concerns with the LONG TERM PLAN. The first two, therefore, are the logical step-by-step levels of research approach.

For research undertakings, this author is taking liberty to suggest the Center for the oversight on the bibliographical levels of research, even in this initial stage. There is some solid basis for this suggestion. The Jeddah Campus of the King Abdulaziz University has undertaken plans on bibliographical works, which were set out in the Draft Porposal of Dr. Hussain's "Short Term Plan". Centers' experimentations on these works

will represent, therefore, unnecessary duplications. While mentioning the approval of an Institute of Muslim Minorities Affairs at Mecca Al-Mokarrama, Dr. Asad Hussain has made an authoratative record. He reveals, in vivid terms, the commitment of the Jeddah Campus to prepare works on bibliography as spelled out in his SHORT TERM PLAN.¹ He notes:

The University Council, in its last meeting on 9/6/1396 (June 7, 1976) has approved the establishment of an Institute of Muslim Minorities Affairs which will be attached to the Faculty of Sharia, King Abdulaziz University, Mecca Al-Mokarrama. In the same meeting the coming year the work of the Institute will be done under the direction of the Research and Development Center which will be responsible to complete the SHORT TERM PLAN of the Institute as suggested in the Draft Proposal.²

What is the probable task that the Center on Academic Research and the Revival on Islamic Heritage should concentrate for the coming months?

Obviously, only one level of research direction that the scheme spelled out in this paper is left out, namely, 'GENERAL! Topics for comprehensive research, therefore, must be in consonance with this level. This lead us to next logical question: What ought to be, in precise terms, the list of suggestive topics for future research? In response, it may be stated that the mere listing of topics in an act of marked un-intellectualism. The emphasis should rather be on providing "food for thinking". The latter is a central point, as it leads to broaden the horizons of intellectual sophistication, necessary for academic progression. This question has been well

1. Asad Hussain, "Institute of Muslim Minorities Affairs: Proposed Organizational Structure: An outline for the Institute Standing Orders." Unpublished paper, 1976. p.1 (prepared at the King Abdulaziz University Jeddah).

2. Ibid.

attended in the pertinent pages of this paper. As might be recalled, every suggestive topic was preceded with exposition of certain amount of rationalization. Therefore, the following listing of Topics must be studied inconjunction with other Topics mentioned under the "General" category of this scheme. They were offered, as examples, for illustrative purposes. The following insertions are some additions. In no event, these are conclusive. Indeed, it will be too naive to suggest as such. The central notion stands unchanged; the emphasis, in scholarly research, is not on the "food" itself, but rather on the "food for thinking".

Guided by this stimulation, the following is an additional list of topics:

1. Major Muslim Minorities: A Precise Study of their Conditions.
2. Major Social Problems of the Muslim Minorities in Southeast Asia.
3. Major Political Problems of the Muslim Minorities in South Asia.
4. Unattended Muslim Minorties: Case Studies of Some Latin American Countries.
5. Major Muslim Minorities under Economic Pressures: An Exposition of their Situations.
6. Resourceful Muslim Nations and Muslim Minorities: A Study of their Interactions.
7. Muslims in Yugoslavia: An Analysis of their Religio-Politico-Socio Conditions.
8. Muslims in India During "Crisis" Situations: An Examination of their Reactions.
9. Freedom of Religion in Democracy, Monarchy and Dictatorship: A Comparative Study of its Application for Muslim Minorities in India, Thailand and the Soviet Russia.

10. Muslims in Communist Countries: A Comparative Study of their Conditions in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Russia.
11. Muslims in Cyprus before Turkish Take over: An Exploratory Study of Big Powers' Policies and Postures.
12. Muslims in India Vs. Hindus in Pakistan: A Contrast and Comparison.
13. Muslims in China Today: An Analysis of their Identity Problem.
14. Muslims in Communist China Vs. Muslims in the Nationalist China: A Comparative Study of their Conditions.
15. Outstanding Leaders of Muslim Minorities Today.
16. Representation of Muslim Minorities in the United Nations.
17. Economically-Distressed Muslim Minorities in Africa.
18. How the Wealthy Muslim Nations can Assist the Economically-Stricken Muslim Minorities?
19. Growing Muslim-Minorities in Japan and America: An Exposition of their Need for Islamic Education.
20. The Need of Repelling Muslim Designs of Qadianis among Muslim Minorities.

The above-stated list of some topics, together with others alike as indicated in the pertinent pages of this paper, should serve to invoke the attention of thoughtful readers. It is hoped that these will equally serve as guiding perspectives for future researchers.

C O N C L U S I O N

The 'Center for Academic Research and the Revival on Islamic Heritage' is in its first stage of operation. It is also taking first strides towards research studies on Muslim minorities. It faces a challenge of meeting the tasks ahead on minorities' affairs. We thank Allah Almighty for helping us on a scheme in hand, and we pray to Him to guide our steps on the right path.

With the operation of research on minorities' affairs, the first ever taken by Muslim University, we hope that the 'end of neglect' on a problem of central importance has entered in its phase of optimistic beginning. All in all, we pray to Allah to help us ^{move} ~~moving~~ constructively towards attaining the goal implicit in the projected research: Unity of the entire Ummah.