HOW THE APPROACHES OF WILFRED CANTWELL SMITH AND KENNETH CRAGG AS CHRISTIANS TO ISLAM COMPARE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SUBJECTS OF REVELATION AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

James William Milne

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ABSTRACT

JAMES WILLIAM MILNE

HOW THE APPROACHES OF WILFRED CANTWELL SMITH AND KENNETH CRAGG AS CHRISTIANS TO ISLAM COMPARE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SUBJECTS OF REVELATION AND KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

Both Smith and Cragg have Christian backgrounds, the former an ordained Protestant minister and the latter a Canon of the Anglican Church. They both have lived and worked amongst Muslims for many years and have come to hold a deep appreciation of the Islamic religion. They are highly qualified scholars who have studied Islam intensively. I wish to set forth their approaches as Christians to Islam, and to consider if they follow the same approaches, and if not, then to draw out their differences. Today, relationships between Muslims and Christians are becoming more possible to promote, and some progress has been made in mutual dialogue between Christians and Muslims, although so far not extensively. Smith and Cragg provide some directives for advancing further in this direction.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Kenneth Cragg are two Christian scholars who have written at length about Islam. In what they say about Islam and how they say it one gains different perspectives of Christian thought about this religion. In proceeding, I shall not want to dwell upon every aspect of their thought regarding Islam, but shall mainly look at the way they offer to other Christians of approaching Islam today. In any comparison of Islam and Christianity one finds some basic religious topics appearing in both religions. These include "revelation" and the belief in God.

It is in relation to such subjects that I plan to consider the approaches of Cragg and Smith. Their approaches will have a certain evaluation of religious truth inherent in their own tradition as well as in Islam. In carrying out this task I have relied on the published works of the two authors which are available and which relate to my subject area. Both Cragg and Smith have had several books published. Kenneth Cragg has dealt with themes at the heart of the religion of Islam. Some of his works are well known. Of these Sandals at the Mosque, The Call of the Minaret and The House and the Book deserve mention. In his works, Cragg has dealt with such subjects as the Muslim [illegible] and at prayer in his [illegible] the Prophet Muhammad, [illegible] Islamic society, the Quran,

Muslim and Christian relations and the modern Islamic situation. Both writers have had articles published in journals and periodicals. W. C. Smith has written less than Cragg on themes in Islam, and more about religious traditions in general. He has also given special attention to historical aspects and the political implications for religions. Smith has attempted to probe behind the religious traditions in search of religious truth to which religious persons may relate. Among his works mention may be made of Modern Islam in India, Islam in Modern History and The Meaning and End of Religion.

Both Cragg and Smith have had close contacts with Islam. Smith spent considerable time in what is now Pakistan while Cragg did his work in the Near East. They are familiar with other Christian workers with whom they have worked. Through their experience, researches and writings, they have been concerned to offer their point of view and their suggestions as to how modern day relationships between Christian and Muslim should be governed. In this vein, Smith has addressed Christian gatherings and written for Church publications. His articles appeared in Anglican and Presbyterian Church magazines, he taught in a Christian College and he has participated in the discussions about Christian mission strategy. Cragg too has been involved with Christians in the task of understanding Islam better and of interpreting Islam to Christians. This included participating in outgoing missionary orientation training, teaching Christian workers and writing for the Near East Christian Council.

A common concern amongst people of all religions may be found in their understanding of revelation--that is, whether and how God and man have said to communicate. This is a basic question amongst the religions, and Smith and Cragg have developed their own particular approaches to the issue.

It may help in appreciating the lives and thought of these men to trace some of their academic background with biographical notes. First concerning W. C. Smith we learn that he was educated at the University of Toronto and Princeton University where he received his Ph.D. in 1948 in Oriental languages. Other studies were done at Grenoble University, Madrid University, the American University of Cairo and Cambridge. He was ordained a Presbyterian minister. From 1940 to 1949 he was representative among Muslims of the Canadian Overseas Mission Council, chiefly in Lahore, India which is now in Pakistan. He was a lecturer at Forman Christian College, Lahore from 1941 to 1945, and at Punjab University from 1942 to 1945. From 1949 to 1963 he was Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University and Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies, 1951 to 1963, then Professor of World Religions and Director of the Study of World Religions at Harvard in 1964. He has travelled widely throughout the Muslim world, visiting Indonesia, Ceylon, Pakistan and India. He is now attached to Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada.

K. Cragg lived for many years in the Near East. He received his M.A. in 1938 and D.Phil. in 1950. He was Chaplain at Beirut, 1939 to 1947 and Warden of St. Justin's House in

Beirut, 1942 to 1947, Rector of Longworth 1947 to 1951 and Editor of The Muslim World, 1952 to 1960. From 1951 to 1956 he served as Professor of Arabic and Islamics at the Hartford Theological Seminary, U.S.A. He was Canon Resident of St. George College Church, Jerusalem, 1956 to 1959. From 1960 to 1967 he was Warden of St. Augustine College, Canterbury. He was a Visiting Professor at Union Seminary, New York and is an Honorary Canon of Canterbury Cathedral. He has translated from Arabic into English and has published studies on Muslim, Christian and Jewish themes. He is at present Anglican Bishop of Egypt.

With such background material to assist in this study, let me begin the task of trying to understand the approaches of these men to the religion of Islam. In making the following attempt to do this, I have tried to let Smith and Gragg speak from the pages of their works. In so far as I have been able to interpret their thought correctly, I hope the lines of comparison which will be drawn will be of interest to those who might see that the approach to another religion is an important and worthwhile issue.

CHAPTER I

ATTITUDES OF CRAGG AND SMITH IN THE STUDY OF ISLAM

In his approach Cragg is a strong defender of the principle of greater neighbourliness with Muslims. He sees much in both the Christian faith and Muslim thought which corresponds. We see him say:

> It is certainly both a Christian privilege and a Christian duty to meet with other minds on a basis of equal respect. Christianity by definition is committed to love and love means knowledge. The will to understand and to pay the price of understanding is a Christian thing.[1]

For Smith too we may ask what attitudes Christians should have towards Muslims and how should they make attempts to communicate with them? Or what has Christianity to offer in relating to Islam? He believes the Christian ought to take up an attitude to the Muslim whereby

> in this order of consideration, if the Christian revelation be true, then there follows a moral imperative towards reconciliation, community, harmony, and brotherhood . . . ; we recognise the Members of the religions of Asia as one with Christians, as sons of the universal Father, seeking Him and finding Him, being sought by Him and being found by Him. At this level, we do not begin to be truly Christians until we have reached out towards a community that turns all mankind into one total 'we.'[2]

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[1] Kenneth Cragg, "Each Other's Face," Some Thoughts on Muslim-Christian Colloquy Today, The Muslim World, XLV (April, 1955), 179.

[2] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Christian Study of Reli-

He sees Christians approaching men of other faiths with the love their Lord imparts to them which results in loving their neighbour as themselves. Such love will communicate with a Muslim, eliminating thoughts of exclusiveness, having discovered "an underlying kinship" which religious knowledge has given. This will come through "mutuality of shared experience, listening as well as preaching, a true meeting of minds."[1] For him this is part of Christian mission's strategy rather than the past "affirmation of its own faith in terms of the death of Asian gods"[2] which offended and repelled believers in other religions. Instead of a Christian rejection of the religions by an exclusivism Smith feels there must be an involvement with others on a global scale. He finds grounds for this line of thought in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit whom he thinks acts in other religions, yet admits that "few of us Christians know much about God's mission in the Islamic venture."[3] Spheres outside the Church where he mentions activities of the Holy Spirit are in

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gions of Asia," Changing Asia: Report of 28th Annual Couchiching Conference, Geneva Park, Lake Couchiching, Ont., August 8-15 (Toronto: The Canadian Institute on Public Affairs, n.d.), p. 16. "(Hereinafter referred to as "Religions of Asia.")"

[1] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Understanding Among Religions," Anglican Outlook and News Digest, February, 1958, p. 6.

[2] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Religious Atheism: Early Buddhist and Recent American," the Charles Strong Memorial Lecture delivered before several Australian Universities, July 1966, in Comparative Religion, ed. by J. Bowman (Leiden: Brill, 1972), p. 76.

[3] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Mission of the Church and the Future of Mankind," in The Church in the Modern World: Essays in Honour of [illegible], ed. by George Johnston and Wilfred [illegible] (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1967), p. 156. "(Hereinafter referred to as "Future of Missions.")"

Greek philosophy and in the Roman Empire.[1]

Both Smith and Cragg are pursuing an understanding of and awareness about the two religions of Christianity and Islam. Concerning these, they are both conscious of God being at work. Cragg reveals no problem in utilising the term "religion." He has not dissected its meaning as Smith so carefully has done in his book, The Meaning and End of Religion. Smith, although he uses the word "religion," puts a special meaning upon it after his careful investigation of the historical use of the word. One learns that both Smith and Cragg are adamant against dogmatic and doctrinal Christians evaluating other religions upon such theological bases. Smith is the one who has worked out his objections in greater detail. He would eliminate the common use made of the term "religion" to refer to the Christian or Muslim religion. Smith does some historical investigation to show that religio or "religion" did not originally carry the modern common reference to the Muslim, Christian, Buddhist or other religion. His understanding carries him to more the historical and personal aspects. He says that "I have proposed my pair of concepts, tradition and faith, to replace the currently established single one [of religion], without inquiring at length into the nature of the two."[2] He is trying to get away from the impersonal to the personal so

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[1] Ibid., p. 196.

[2] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind (New York: Macmillan Co., 1963), p. 196. (Hereafter referred to as Meaning and End.)

> religion in any vital sense . . . is not the rites, symbols, doctrines, etc., of the system; but what these mean to a man. What he does with them; and what they do to him. Religion lies somewhere in the interaction between men and their religious material.[1]

K. Cragg thinks in terms of inter-religious exchange as a valid and necessary modern phenomenon: "From inter-religion as one of the facts of our existence, we turn to think of it as a conscious ordering of relationship."[2] This will include on the part of the Christian "humility,"[3] which will pave the way for "fulness and openness."[4] Cragg is ready to go to the furthest limits possible in pursuit of the deepest understanding of Islam that may be attainable. He has done his pursuing in a very personal way as he has sought to see Islam as Muslims themselves have.

Both Cragg and Smith say that Christians have been much too ignorant of what Muslims really stand for. Cragg suggests that if Muslims are to be encouraged to learn of Christ, Christians must show some interest in learning about Islam. He believes this to be an obligation which arises from the Christian's faith:

> Through all there runs, as integral to the sense of the universal, the new dimension of the person, the sense of men as men, not of Jews as Jews, or Greeks as Greeks. This effec-

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[1] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Comparative Study of Religion: Reflections on the Possibility and Purpose of a Religious Science; Inaugural Lecture," McGill University Faculty of Divinity 1950-51 Inaugural Lectures (Montreal: McGill University, 1950), p. 31. (Hereinafter referred to as "Comparative Study.")

[2] Kenneth Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque: Christian Presence Amid Islam (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1959), p. 89.

[3] Ibid., p. 86. [4] Ibid., p. 87.

> tive discovery of personality, individual yet social, the self in its own right and yet properly in company, is the most remarkable achievement of New Testament religion.[1]

One is very conscious in Smith's writings that he makes use of and applies the findings of comparative religion. He makes clear his partiality for the help such study gives. He says:

> In other words, the comparative study of religion, practiced in a scientific spirit, does not cut one off from truth vouchsafed through revelation. On the contrary, it brings one into touch with a much wider range of what has so functioned among men than does orthodox study; and asks one to approach it all with reverence and application, and to test it with all means at one's disposal. But it postulates as a principle what is anyway for a reasonable man an obvious fact . . . : that in the end all knowledge and all goodness, whatever their source, carry as authority only the weight of their own inherent merit.[2]

The latter part of this quotation should be carefully noted. Smith would let the facts speak for themselves. He is an empiricist and advocates a scientific approach with the use of an inductive rather than a deductive starting point. He is not trying to amalgamate all religions. Rather, Smith tells us, "I have elsewhere elaborated the thesis that the task of comparative religion is that of constructing statements that will be true in more than one tradition simultaneously."[3]

Smith emphasizes the plural society which has come into existence in our day. This means that people must be able to

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[1]Kenneth Cragg, Christianity in World Perspective (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1968), p. 62. "(Hereinafter referred to as World Perspective.)"

[2]Smith, "Comparative Study," p. 47.

[3]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Questions of Religious Truth (New York: Scribner, 1967), p. 61.

learn to live together if there is to be survival. Along with all the other factors he sees the realm of "religious pluralism." These factors intertwine: "To will socio-cultural resurgence is to will religious resurgence. . . . To wish the Orient well is to will that its religious resurgence be healthy, be genuine."[1] He feels the necessity of men of different faiths being able to co-operate across their individual frontiers. One will find him time and again talking about a transcendent reality to which each religion relates.[2] For example, he writes:

> Man, in his universalist condition, in the variety of religious traditions asks (varying) questions of the same universe, in relation to a transcendent and evidently unitary reality; or, in more theistic terms, that God, who is not plural, deals with man wherever He may find him as best He can, despite or within the limitations of the variety of religious forms.[3]

He is concerned strongly to oppose the suggestion of some such as H. Kraemer who follow the conservative line of thought that other religions lacked contact with God and therefore had incomplete knowledge when compared to Christian knowledge of God. Smith often uses strong language to make this point. He believes that there is a firm basis for a new orientation which is "the recognition that God is creatively, redemptively at work in the reli-

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[1]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 160.

[2]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 9.

[3]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Some Similarities and Differences between Christianity and Islam. An Essay in Comparative Religion," in The World of Islam. Studies in Honour of Philip K. Hitti, ed. by James Kritzeck and R. Bayly Winder (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1959), p. 30. "(Hereinafter referred to as "Similarities and Differences.")"

gious life of all the major communities of mankind."[1] But rather than agreeing that Christianity opposed this view he believes it fostered it. He thinks modern knowledge and Christian insight compel its acceptance although not minimizing the theological work still remaining. For him, part of such work may be "to clarify the new terms," which encompasses "global involvement."[2] He accepts that there are questions to resolve. One concerns the correlation of God working within human society and the Christian belief of God incarnate in Christ and redemption received through him.[3] In evaluating Cragg's position one cannot categorise him with those Smith opposes. For Cragg declares that he does disagree with H. Kraemer in such a book as Why Christianity of All Religions? concerning views of other religions including the matter of revelation. He does not want to close the doors in approaching Muslims when they themselves have been opening them. He rejects the position to which others like Kraemer have led themselves and states: "The openness of Christianity surely means much more a taking upon ourselves 'the mystery of things' that absolutist views of 'revelation' scarcely measure."[4] For him, even a doctrine of revelation should not prevent him approaching Muslims in the fashion so evident in all his writings.

Cragg is ready to work within the reality of the modern situation. He is aware of his journey and willing to accept the

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[1]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 164.

[2]Ibid., p. 163. [3]Ibid., p. 164.

[4]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 79.

risks. For instance, he would not even allow the dangers of syncretism to deviate him from the tasks which he feels constrained to pursue.[1]

If religious pluralism is accepted, Smith contends that Muslims must from their direction be ready to alter their perspective. If Christians have been accused of ignorance of Islamic thought, Muslims, Smith points out, are even more ignorant of Christianity. For him, Cragg tells us, Muslims have proceeded on the assumption of an "unexamined tradition that Islam perfects all other faiths and does so without the need to study how."[2] Such observations would promote a mutual inter-religious exchange. Smith would see Christians in their approach to men of other faiths proceeding on an inductive method which utilizes accurate religious knowledge.[3] Cragg would have a follow-up on the commonly shared experiences. For Smith, religion is part of man's present day questions: "How to turn our nascent world society into a world community, on a group level; and on a personal level, how to find meaning in modern life."[4] In a significant article where Smith discusses the differences and similarities of religious traditions, he finds analogies rather than likenesses;[5] and he thinks the establishment of such analogies may be a possibility for answering these personal and social

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[1]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 212.

[2]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 176.

[3]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 163.

[4]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 8.

[5]Smith, "Similarities and Differences," p. 58.

needs.

In attempts to secure religious truth, Smith in his writings keeps clear of the theological and dogmatic formulations of some Christian thinkers. In calling his approach an "intellectual"[1] kind and making reason the judge of revelation,[2] one can understand why he can strongly oppose groups of Christians whom he singles out--the evangelicals and neo-orthodox. For he sees them as attributing an authority to the revelation they hold which he will only give to reason. Of them he says: "If one knows by divine revelation that Islam is false, a human error, then any sympathy for its supposed value is preliminary misunderstanding."[3] Smith serves this judgment upon the approach of Christian missionaries to Muslims who so often condemned Islam. Their work seemed a ready confirmation of all he was trying to oppose. His way offered a sympathetic approach to Islam which he felt could secure true understanding whereas others like Kraemer and K. Barth were prevented by their theological positions from comprehending the truth of other religions.

Smith finds his own way in areas close to his own academic interests:

> Religious truth is utterly crucial; is the paramount and inescapable issue, before which all other religious matters, however mighty, must bow. It is final. The great question, however, is, where does it lie?--and the immediate question, does it lie in the religions. I am suggesting that it does

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[1]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 180.

[2]"Below, p. 38."

[3]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "A Presentation of Islam," International Review of Missions, XLIX (April, 1960), 223.

not (that it lies elsewhere; namely, in persons).[1]

Smith has an important and valuable role for such truth. It will assist in creating community and human oneness as religious persons seek it.[2] This truth will appear in the empirical and historical pursuits men make in their comprehension of their world:

> For surely the only truth that matters, the only truth that exists, he must find in the universe itself. . . . This is where metaphysics is married to science, religious truth to my empirical, historical approach to these different faiths.[3]

I do not think Cragg tries to proceed upon this same level. He plunges into a deeper study of Islamic documents like the Quran, if his writings are any indication, than Smith does. The purpose of this could be simply to allow such knowledge to speak for itself. Certainly the truth as these two writers conceive of it should become clearer as we go along. They are both intensely aware of the personal and human content of this truth. Both see religious Muslims as fellow human beings. Their close associations with Muslims compel them to exercise kindness where judging Muslims and their faith.

Both of these men dislike the use of the term "non-Christian" by Christians when referring to those of other traditions. Cragg puts his conviction forcefully:

> It is a blatant confusion, for example, to dub the deep transience-of-life perception in Buddhism, or the sublime creatorhood of God in Islam, as 'non-Christian.' But, worst of all, the mentality behind the useage is betrayed into a

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[1]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 67.

[2]Smith, "Comparative Study," p. 58.

[3]Ibid., pp. 58-59.

> treachery. For it implies the negative of kinship, the exclusion of hope, and perhaps even of the acknowledgement of human neighbourhood. Necessary and sharp distinctions deserve to be reserved and pondered in much more hospitable and adventurous terms.[1]

This will not necessarily lead to syncretism, for Cragg is one who can emphasize the Christian idea of divine grace and its action.[2] Smith thinks in terms of "the evolving global religiousness of man."[3] He sees "Islamic religious history is becoming rather the Islamic strand in the evolving religiousness; similarly, to be Christian is coming to mean, to participate Christianly in it."[4] Within this development he rejects a Christianity-and-other dichotomy, replacing this with "an exceedingly long-range dynamic interacting pluralism."[5]

Smith wants Christians to begin evaluating Islam's tradition from within, and to see its adherents from where they stand. Nor would he want them treated as inferior or with a condescending attitude.[6] This he would equate with the colonial western attitude which has caused Muslims to distrust the West. He does not think that one can make out the major religions to be so unified that one could generalize about a specific religion and treat it as a single unified system. He would even go so far as to suggest "that every religion is new every morning."[7]

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[1] Cragg, World Perspective, p. 74.

[2] Kenneth Cragg, The Dome and the Rock: Jerusalem Studies in Islam (London: S.P.C.K., 1964), p. 54.

[3] Smith, "Future of Missions," pp. 160-61.

[4] Ibid., p. 161. [5] Ibid., p. 161.

[6] Smith, "Religions of Asia," p. 14.

[7] Hocking, Meaning of Religious Truth, p. 75.

Therefore he would do away with the use of such nouns as "Hinduism" and "Christianity." He is very concerned with the human issues of our modern world such as community, brotherhood, understanding and feels that the religious life of mankind has a vital part to play. He challenges Christians at the deepest level saying that to be truly Christian entails the readiness to see God at work as much in other faiths as in their own. This is his conviction and he asks:

> How is it possible to hold a firm, deep, vibrant Christian faith, whole-heartedly and committed, without knowledge that God meets other men in other ways? . . . It is rather to hold that God loves all men equally, and reaches out after them wherever they may be, and loves them within whatever situation He may find them in. If <u>this</u> is not true, then the Christian faith is false.[1]

He illustrates his point with the Parable of the Good Samaritan which raises a basic issue to one's reaction to Smith's ideas. He utilizes an allegorical interpretation which allows a certain freedom. But he did not take enough account of the questioner who was a "good man" yet one who did not accept the way demanded of him although it was clearly revealed. One may ask, Does Smith use his Christian scriptures in their natural sense or does he rather seek to harmonize them with his other knowledge?

One major matter involved in an approach to Islam is salvation and conversion. Cragg believes that the possibility and right of a person changing their religion must be safeguarded and protected. If this were not to be the case then any one religion would be isolated from others, it would close the doors to understanding, it would demean tolerance, and it would oppose

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[1]Smith, "Religions of Asia," p. 13.

freedom in thought and worship. He sees no obstacle in forging human relationships between the religious communities if attitudes involve trust and sincerity without selfish ulterior motives.[1] Cragg suggests a place where for him there lies a difference between Christianity and Islam. It is exemplified in the status Ramadan has for the Muslims:

> Ramadan, in this sense, partakes of the general Muslim confidence in a 'conditional' goodness of which man is capable--'conditional' in that it results from the acceptance and performance of the right conditioning factors. . . . In keeping Ramadan one has, with endurance and carefulness, fulfilled what one understands to be a divine command.[2]

In contrast, Christian faith does not operate on the principle of self-discipline, but depends upon Christ taking charge of a man.[3] In the mind of Cragg the community plays a major role in any salvation which the Muslim may attain. The Muslim functions within a community structure which acts as a support mechanism to discipline, sustain and educate his human frailty.[4] Salvation for the Muslim also becomes a "reliance on the merit of religious performance."[5] Islam as a religion of works-righteousness is emphasized by Cragg where the individual takes the matter of his salvation into his own hands, aided by assistance from the revelation given through Muhammad and within the Islamic community. So "given sincerity and propriety, the works of Muslim obliga-

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[1]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 180.

[2]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, pp. 26-27.

[3]Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[4]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 122.

[5]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 17.

tion, including worship, avail in relation to one's standing with God and one's expectation of Paradise."[1] This leads him to draw an important distinction with his Christianity:

> The resultant contrast is one of the sternest issues between the two faiths. . . . The shifting of the onus for our relationship with God to a fulfilment of obligation, a bringing of tribute, a performance of ritual duty makes meritoriousness central.[2]

Smith is vehement against those who judge from their Christian beliefs that Islam stands entirely separate from Christianity. He takes a firm line in his disagreement with those denying salvation to Muslims, and by inference with Cragg whose position he does not entirely share. Smith calls Cragg an "evangelical," a class for whom he feels antipathy, and yet he sounds a note of appreciation for Cragg's approach to Muslims. In a comparison of Cragg to another evangelical Dr. Kellerhals, Smith says Cragg "knows and loves Muslims more" and his theological position is less rigid."[3] Smith clearly stated his position at the Lake Couchiching Conference held where Christian missionary strategy was discussed. He scorns any kind of Christian arrogance whose presence he found in widely held missionary attitudes in India. He reveals where he feels this leads: "Running through almost all of this is the distorted ideal itself--the basic doctrine that we are saved, outsiders are damned."[4] Such an outlook he suggests is unworthy of Christians; he finds it unacceptable:

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[1] Ibid., p. 16. [2] Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[3] Smith, "A Presentation of Islam," p. 223.

[4] Smith, "Religions of Asia," p. 12.

> If Christian doctrine taught that in the eyes of God Christians held a special place more favoured than other peoples, and nothing within the Christian scheme made us feel that this view is wrong, then there would be little hope for us.[1]

Nevertheless, he states that "the Christian Church does teach that in faith in Christ there is ultimate and final truth; through it, ultimate and final salvation."[2] It appears that Smith recognizes a Christian teaching with which he disagrees. On this point he seems to say that traditionalists who hold to it should feel uncomfortable in trying to retain their position. He suggests that he is one who has freed himself from that very thing.

On the basis of this understanding about faith, Smith makes an approach to Muslims. He accepts that in both Christianity and Islam there is salvation by faith which means a faith in God and in His revelation.[3] Regarding such revelation, he understands Muslim faith to be in the Quran and what it says which is of a "moral imperative"; this means for him "the mediator . . . between man and God is righteousness";[4] or in other words, man relates to God through what He has given in the Quran. To Smith this is a valid religious criterion for Muslims although he recognizes the Christian parallel that "faith is in God and Christ, which means 'living in Christ' and also (correspondingly) participating in the Church."[5]

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[1] Ibid., p. 12. [2] Ibid., p. 12.

[3] Smith, "Similarities and Differences," p. 53.

[4] Ibid., p. 53. [5] Ibid., p. 53.

CHAPTER II

ISLAM

Now that we have seen the kind of attitude Smith and Cragg have towards another religion such as Islam, and towards other Christian interpreters of Islam, I want to begin setting out their understanding of Islam itself.

Both men would agree that "a man cannot be both a Christian and a Muslim at the same time."[1] Yet the term "Muslim" may be appropriated by the Christian in the following way: "I for one can understand and countenance meanings for the term in which not only is this possible, but even in which one could say that to be truly Christian is ipso facto to be truly muslim."[2] Both try to get within the meaning of Islam's terms and practises. In Muslim worship, for instance, Cragg sees knowledge and inspiration, for at his worship the Muslim is most open to be studied.

Similarly, Smith would look upon the Muslim heart to discover what it is for a Muslim to believe and act. Smith explains his own religion: "By my Christianity I mean my actual, living Christianity, my Christianness, the specific religion of my personal life."[3] From this place he meets the differences between Muslim and Christian beliefs: "The question of serious signifi-

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[1] Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 107.

[2] Ibid., p. 107. [3] Ibid., p. 68.

cance then becomes: may the religion of a particular Christian be more true, and may it be more false, than the religion of a particular Muslim."[1] Thus Cragg and Smith are not only interested in a systematic outline of Islam as a religion; they also wish to understand the nature of its influence upon people.

Smith groups Islam with the major religions of the world. He considers himself a confirmed Christian, but not a militant one, and not out to destroy Islam or to act as an apologist for the Christian faith. He believes that Islam is for the Muslims as Christianity is for the Christians. Taking Jesus' words, "By their fruits ye shall know them,"[2] he attests that the lives of Muslims he personally knows are a tribute to a God-given faith. He is always very positive in his approach; in fact, he describes very little that is wrong or to be disagreed with in Islam. Neither does Cragg display a negative attitude towards Islam. Smith thinks that Islam expresses surrender and obedience which is similar to what he gives as a Christian. He cannot see how such a religion with its long tradition, history and exemplary individuals should be denied acceptance. He finds many comparable aspects in Islam to his own religion. He does not allow dogmatic theological opinions to mould his basic understanding.[3]

Cragg's subject material is the historical and religious

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[1] Ibid., p. 71.

[2] Matt. 7:20.

[3] Antonio Roberto Gualtieri, "Theological Evaluations by Christians of the Religious Faith of non-Christians" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1969), p. 340. "(Hereinafter referred to as "Theological Evaluations.")"

data which comes from the Near East concerning Islam, Christianity and Judaism. He investigates sources, particularly their scriptures. As a result he finds, he thinks, similarities between Islam and Christianity which he elaborates upon. As M. A. C. Warren observes:

> The author, Dr. Kenneth Cragg, starts from the conviction, born of his own experience in the world of Islam, that Christianity itself is vitally concerned with the same underlying themes that are at the heart of Islam. . . . It begins with what Christians have in common with Muslims.[1]

Later in this book, Cragg mentions as themes: "'The God to end gods,' 'the revelation to end revelation'--these are the inclusive common convictions of Islam and Christianity."[2] One may note that his approach as a Christian to Islam includes discussion concerning "God" and "revelation."

Cragg sees Islam as

> a faith that lives by the unity of God, the efficacy of His Prophet, the sovereignty of His law, the certainty of His will and the finality of His power. . . . Mission on behalf of God and for His due recognition is the central meaning of Islam both as a concept and a community.[3]

What similarities or affinities then did his study of Islam and Christianity bring forth for Cragg?

> By their basic commitment to belief in the significance of the world, the oneness and personality of God, the fact of revelation and the moral accountability of man in and beyond this life, these two faiths have close affinities, not shared in the relations of either with the religions of further Asia.[4]

He follows this up with saying:

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[1]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 10. [2]Ibid., p. 20.

[3]Cragg, World Perspective, pp. 119-20.

[4]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 74.

> Islam and Christianity deal fundamentally with the same things and to a significant extent deal with them in the same way. . . . Prophecy, worship, prayer, mercy, law, scriptures, patriarchs, God's signs in nature, creation and sin--all these are religious categories having to do with the Divine relation to the human situation.[1]

This may well be because Islam has a Semitic religious background. Cragg and Smith both see God speaking to man through Islam as the religion itself claims. Cragg's words could well speak for them both: "For Islam sees itself as, truly, the ultimate form of alertness to God, informed by a final revelation and bringing to a climax the primal reality of religion."[2] He goes on to say that Islam

> sees its vital belief in the Divine unity and its witness to the final prophethood of Muhammad as meaning a custodianship of truth separating Islam from all earlier, partial or compromised systems. It has in its own keeping the criterion by which it is validated and all else is judged.[3]

Both scholars have tried to enter the inner minds and beliefs through personal knowledge and contact with Muslims, and through understanding of the primary sources and knowledge of Muslim thinkers; but Cragg has written more at length and expounded more upon the Muslim's Quran than has Smith. The latter has written more about the history of Islam, especially in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. In this way the results of their scholarship complement each other. Smith seems to champion aspects of Islam which suffered neglect. Cragg is more of a

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[1] Ibid., pp. 74-75.

[2] Kenneth Cragg, Alive to God: Muslim and Christian Prayer; with an Introductory Essay (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), p. 29.

[3] Ibid., p. 30.

bridge builder so that Christians may approach closer to Islamic and Muslim thought.

Cragg and Smith see a main locus of interest located in the personal element as represented by the religious individual. They are aware of the greatly increased opportunities in this modern era to see the religious adherents of Islam in their human aspirations. They accept the validity of Muslims reaching out for their own selfhood through their own religious tradition. Thereby, Cragg would have us focus attention upon the Shahadah, the Muslim's "Confession of faith," that is, "There is no god except God." From that confession arise a number of ideas which demonstrate Islamic affinities with Christian thought. These include "forgiveness" which Cragg says "is vital to Islam";[1] "peace" which is "derivatively from the prior meaning of submission";[2] and "prayer" which is "essentially a religious duty."[3]

Both Christianity and Islam are theistic religions. We may investigate therefore how our two writers understand Islam at this point. Smith is quite positive in his own views, believing that the various religious traditions give their people a knowledge of God. He writes:

> Those of us who, after our study of Islam and Indian religion, and after our fellowship with Muslims and other personal friends, have come to know that these religions are not that [a 'human attempt to win God for oneself, . . .'], but are channels through which God Himself comes into contact

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[1] Ibid., p. 40.

[2] Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 109.

[3] Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 12.

with these His children--what answer can we give?[1]

To those who oppose his deduction he calls "empirical knowledge" to his support and charges the opposing position as being "inadequately Christian" and "uncharitable."[2] He accepts that the traditions have differing ideas about God, but will hold that they are concerned with the same Deity: "Jews, Muslims, Hindus, for that matter Presbyterians and Methodists, all have something different to say about God, yet all are admitted as talking about Him."[3] In his Christian approach then he has become an inclusive exponent of not denying to others the knowledge of God which he himself considers he has as a Christian. He suggests that those who do not follow him on this point have a subsidiary task:

> I do not assert, flatly, that God is not unknown outside the Christian community. It seems to me, as an observer, quite impossible to explain the religious history of mankind outside the Judeao-Christian tradition on any other hypothesis. Those Christian theologians who have postulated that that history has proceeded without contact with transcendence have done so without, in fact, knowing the history. Once it is recognised, as I claim that it must be, that God is known and is active in other communities, then it is a problem for the Christian theologian to formulate his conviction that He is known and is active in the Christian Church in a special way.[4]

However, Smith is not ready to confess that there is at present a complete knowledge of God. For he would put forth the proposal that there might be new and further ways whereby God may teach mankind about Himself: "One may at a minimum suggest that we do

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[1]Smith, "A Presentation of Islam," p. 224.

[2]Ibid., pp. 224-25.

[3]Smith, "Religious Atheism?" p. 56.

[4]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 325, n. 21.

not yet know fully all the ways in which God has spoken, and speaks, to man."[1] It seems that he envisages the possibility of further revelations of God which will tell man more about Himself.

Smith would find a knowledge of God in Islam as the result of positing a revelation there. Gualtieri draws our attention to this by saying: "It should be observed, moreover, that Smith approves the religious faith of non-Christians according to the criterion of revelation, that is the presence of God."[2] This enters accord with Islam's self-understanding that it is monotheistic, was initiated by Muhammad who proclaimed the existence of the one God--"There is no god except God"--and was confirmed by the Muslim followers who came to accept the revelation Muhammad offered them which was embodied in the same confession. Smith supports this observation as he says that he agrees with the statement of Sir Hamilton Gibb which he quotes: 'For myself, I unhesitatingly accept the term "Revelation" (in Arabic tanzil, "sending down" or wahy, "inner communication") as the description of Muhammad's personal experience, . . .'[3]

K. Cragg, like Smith, is ready to accept much in Islam as religiously valid and valuable. This includes thoughts about God:

> Islam and Christianity, it is fair to say, are deep and inclusive patterns of the cognisance of God. They can properly be seen as adjacent faiths. For all their taxing

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[1]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 62.

[2]Gualtieri, "Theological Evaluations," p. 346.

[3]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 57.

> diversities and tensions they have in common a vital sense of the Lordship of the worlds.

Cragg recognizes both a discontinuity and a continuity amongst the religions. At one time he says: "We are thus required to say that God is not the 'same' in the two faiths." Then he will say: "Neither Christianity nor Islam allows such pluralism. God is one. When they both speak of him, they speak of him and there is not duality." He elaborates upon how ideas differ and show similarities about God by saying:

> Islam and Christianity have many common predicates about God --that He is one, creator, lawgiver, provider, ruler, the compassionate, the faithful, the true, the real. There is a single ancestry, too, for many aspects of their doctrine; . . . But they have also deeply divergent statements about God, notably in what, for Christianity, has to do with the Father and Shepherd analogies, which involve God with mankind in costly and intimate grace. From these Islam immunizes the Divine majesty and, in its severest mood, insists that you can 'ask Him no questions' and on Him you can 'make no claims.' God is unaffected by human ills and evils and frailties.

This leaves Cragg with a kind of "Yes"-"No" stance in order to encourage an advance to the fullest understanding of the matter. So he says:

> Thus the burden of the disparate predicates persists. Since the one theme of the one God is diversely understood in the statements of doctrine and in the terms of worship our answer to the question whether God in the two faiths is the same God has to be Yes! and No! . . . The duty to say: 'No! they are not identical theologies' belongs inside the realisation that they relate alike to the one Lord. We are together under Him and in Him, even when we are diverging about Him.

These statements seem to leave us a clear impression of Cragg's position. His conclusion is--"we worship the same Lord, in worships informed by significantly similar, as well as sharply dis-

cordant, theology."[1]

Cragg and Smith presuppose that Islam and Christianity speak about the same God. Where these religions differ in their views as over an incarnation of God, such differences are said to result from their theological outlook. In speaking about God both acknowledge mystery. Cragg says that any concept of unity cannot get rid of the fact the world "remains indisputably plural and disconcertingly manifold."[2] Against such background comes the Muslim profession--"There is no god except God." To this Cragg feels it must be added--'God is greater.' It is not easy to answer, Greater than what? for any comparison is impossible.[3] Yet this is the God alone to whom, Smith believes, final loyalty is due. He would deny such loyalty to any single religion or tradition itself like Christianity or Islam for in that event, the final result would be destruction.[4] Smith sees transcendence and immanence in Islam as well as in Christianity. He emphasizes personal faith. How these things go together may be seen in Smith's view: "God transcends Islam, but is immanent in Muslims. God transcends Christianity, and yet is immanent in us."[5]

The Law forms a central place within the structure of

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[1]Cragg, Alive to God, pp. 1, 17, 18.

[2]Kenneth Cragg, The Mind of the Quran: Chapters in Reflexion (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1973), p. 157.

[3]Ibid., p. 157.

[4]Smith, "Comparative Study," p. 59. [5]Ibid., p. 60.

Islam? Both our scholars say that Law in Islam has taken the place of theology. Cragg contrasts the law of God within Christianity and Islam. In the former it is personal in Christ while codal in the Quran and Shariah. The Quran was the expression of God's will to which Muslims or those who submitted were to conform. One is reminded of the way the Torah became God's Law to be kept sacred by the Israelite even at the risk of his life. Cragg brings out the contrast that he sees with the Christian faith:

> If it is the Muslim sense of the adequacy of law alone, and of a mercy that has no Cross at its heart, which makes the Christian faith in Christ crucified so strange an enigma, then, by the same token, that faith must be the heart of the relevance of the Gospel of peace to men in Islam.

For the Christian, faith, Cross and Gospel are all channels of relating to and meeting God. He indicates the Christian can approach a Muslim with a message about them to aid his encounter with God. The Muslim lives under obligation to conform to the Law since islam represents a submission to God's Law. It is the Muslim's responsibility to make every effort to submit. Anything interfering with such a prime duty must be carefully recognised and avoided. Hence Cragg could say, "The nature of evil cannot be for the Muslim an academic issue. It is crucial to all that he is because by it the whole concept of Islam must stand or fall."[1]

Smith would accept that Law has a validity for the Muslim in his religious life. We find him saying that "Christians have seldom appreciated the significance of a tradition such as the

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[1] Cragg, Counsels in Islam, pp. 129, 130.

Jewish or Islamic where law has been faith's primary and controlling expression, . . ."[1] One may agree with him that faith should produce moral results in lives, but Smith is saying more than that: "The Christian is wrong, however, if he infers that salvation in Christ is available to us who are sinners but that salvation through a law is not."[2] So Smith makes his approach at the point of law to be by acceptance--accepting Muslims have their way while Christians have theirs, which do not have to be the same. While Cragg would recognise along with Smith that Law has this special importance for the Muslim, I did not find that he was ready to accept its validity as Smith is.

In recent times Islam has been forced to give more consideration to theology for explaining its beliefs as it had increasing contacts with other religions in a more pluralistic world. One belief concerns Islam's status amongst other religions. Where Islam finds itself contained and restrained from expansion and progress, this fact is a real challenge to its theology according to Cragg who says that Islamic theology holds to a belief in Islam's ultimate success.[3] From its origins in Medina, Islam was a combination of the religious and the political. Cragg takes this as an essential quality of Islam,[4] and a fundamental aspect of its nature: "This belief that the politi-

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[1]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 179.

[2]Smith, "Similarities and Differences," p. 53.

[3]Kenneth Cragg, The Privilege of Man: A Theme in Islam, Islam and Christianity (London: Athlone Press, U. of London, 1968), p. 47.

[4]Cragg, Event Encounter, p. 70.

cal expression and the rule of God can coincide has been the ruling characteristic of Muslim belief about society and the Muslim hope about history."[1] Islam relies upon the State to help attain her goals.[2] It sees a necessity to manipulate the external conditions in order to realize her goals. This becomes an important factor since according to Cragg, for Islam "man is perfectible but the conditions of his perfectifility are environmental, circumstantial and thus also political."[3]

Because of an integrated view of the world and religion, Cragg notes that Islam has looked upon success as confirmation of her unique religious role. Nevertheless, Cragg would not accede to the assumption that a religion would always exist under the best social conditions. He says this from his own Christian ideas:

> Christianity, historically, contrasts clearly and unmistakeably with both of these (the Jewish sense of destiny and Islamic sense of power), though from the same commitment to the Divine sovereignty and the same human dominion. It parts company with the particularism of Israel and it diverges from the power invocation of Islam.[4]

Smith also sees Islamic theology teaching that Islam's destiny would be favorable. He wrote his book, Islam in Modern History, which contains different experiments in different countries like Turkey, Pakistan and India. He brings out the reaction to western colonialism and imperialism which restricted

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[1]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 124.

[2]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 248.

[3]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 123.

[4]Cragg, The Privilege of Man, p. 126.

Islam, kept her weak which in turn raised questions concerning her destiny. For him, Islamic theology does not contain within it theological foundations as in Christianity with the Cross, that allow for reverses, weak Islamic powers and obstacles blocking the spread of Islam.

Both Cragg and Smith understand Islam not as a static, but as a historically evolving religion whose process of change must be taken into account. Cragg favorably quotes N. Bammate who said 'history for Islam is in suspense between a past conceived as prophecy and a future which is constructed around Judgment Day.'[1] Islam's history was a wonderful success story in its early years. Like other religions it became institutionalized with its habitual practises. So in recent years Islam has not retained its previous momentum.

Smith very evidently sees the evolution or development of traditions.[2] He sees this happening in Islamic history.[3] Through historical investigation, Smith affirmed such variations "constitute Islam as an historical process. They are the religion"; so "Islam is the empirical process which began in history at a given point and continues today."[4] For him religions have movement and change. He sees the religions of the world "are not

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[1]Kenneth Cragg, The Event of the Quran: Islam in its Scriptures (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1971), p. 178.

[2]Smith, Meaning and End, pp. 2, 3, 199.

[3]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 160.

[4]Smith, "Comparative Study," pp. 50-51.

one, but are in the process of becoming so--historically."[1] In his historical investigations, Smith does not look to be utilizing specific Christian principles. We might say of Smith in his approaches to Islam that he uses history and comparative religion as he adheres to his own personal type of Christian understanding.

Smith talks of the Muslim's tradition now being what it is by a "process of reification: mentally making religion into a thing, gradually coming to conceive it as an objective systematic entity."[2] The change has taken shape from Islam's lessened attendance to the message of the Prophet Muhammad and its replacement with more concentration on the Muslim community for its direction and guidance. For him, in some ways, the Islamic religious tradition has been the most reified.[3] Smith looks back and sees the original message of this Prophet as adopted from the Jewish and Christian traditions.[4] For him, "it is sound Islamic doctrine that the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic as historical systems are variations on a single theme."[5] He brings out an important difference of the others from Islam--"Muslims find more religious significance in their community's history than is true of any other religious group"; and he goes on to say: "It would appear that here is something fundamental

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[1]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "University Studies of Religion in Global Context," Study of Religion in Indian University: A Report of the Consultation Held in Bangalore, September, 1967 (n.p., n.d.), p.86. "(Hereinafter referred to as "Global Context.")"

[2]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 51. [3]Ibid., p. 117.

[4]Ibid., p. 108. [5]Ibid., p. 106.

to the uniqueness of the Islamic among the religious orientations of the world."[1] In contrast, for him, western traditions do not hold to such an integrated outlook.

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[1] Ibid., p. 107.

[2] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Religion and Social Change in South and South-East-Asia," A Talk Prepared for the C.B.C. "Wednesday Night Programme," October 6, 1954, pp. 1, 2. (Mimeographed.)

CHAPTER III

THE QURAN.

Muslims relate themselves to God through the Quran. Smith and Cragg have given particular attention to the place that the Quran occupies for Muslims. Smith's researches have caused him to draw a parallel between the place of the Quran and the person of Jesus Christ in the respective religions. He disagrees with the method of making that parallel to be between their two scriptures, the Quran and the Bible. Smith concentrates upon the fact that the Quran and Jesus are the centres of revelation for their believers, and what Muslims say about the Quran is comparable to what Christians say about Jesus. Cragg would tend to agree, but how much is not clear.

To Muslims, Cragg would make some challenging suggestions which he thinks are rightful matters for them to ponder: "We must encourage the view that neglect of pre-quranic 'oracles' of God [i.e. the Bible] is hardly consistent with faith in the Quran."[1] For if the Quran fulfills and supersedes Jewish and Christian scriptures, Muslims should be ready to say why and how. In fact, Cragg says, the Quran is indebted to both their "inspiration and example."[2] By his own Quranic studies Cragg is throw-

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[1] Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 114.

[2] Cragg, Counsels in the Muslim, p. 34.

ing out a challenge to Islamic thinkers to do the same kind of research. In pursuing any study of the Quran he freely admits that every consideration must be given to the attitudes and responses of Muslims themselves. He believes that even Muslim Quranic study rests upon outmoded and outdated methods for its interpreters have yet to use modern methods of analysis.

Smith has not attempted in writing to deal with the Quran as much as Cragg has done. Smith says that the Muslim feels contact has been made between his own temporal existence and time, and transcendence and eternity both in his own believing person and in the Quran. But having said this, for which there is concurrence from Cragg, both see the historical nature of all this. Cragg sees the Quran as "revelatory" and also 'eventful' and thus "must live in history";[1] Smith says that the Quran is to be studied by the historian.[2]

The existence of the Quran is linked to the Prophet Muhammad who appeared to the Arabic people of Mecca in the early seventh century delivering what he proclaimed was a message from God. In one of his books, The Event of the Quran, Cragg tells us

> its aim is to focus on what happens in the Quran, in the primary and ultimate encounter of Muhammed with Arabian pluralism both of belief and tribe. It aspires to know what manner of phenomenon the Quran was, looking for the answer to its question in the authentic quality of the Book itself, its geographical setting and locale of metaphor, its literary shape, its historical bearings, its personal Risāliyyah and

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[1]Cragg, The Event of the Quran, p. 17.

[2]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 162.

its great Risālah.[1]

Cragg later on gives his view "that the crux of things Quranic lies in the confrontation of Muhammad of the world of the Quraish, the custodians of the city of his birth with its shrine and pilgrimage."[2] Thereby, he would indicate the Quranic world was conditioned by Muhammad's world in Mecca. In addition he sees other influences which are fused together and these are "personal charisma, literary fascination, corporate possession, and imperative religion"[3] and "its miraculous quality."[4] A dominant aspect of the Quran is that it was written in Arabic and for Arabs--Cragg says "that the Quran was a supreme sacrament of Arabness as well as of Arabicity."[5] For the Prophet Muhammad, Cragg said his task was "a thoroughgoing elimination of idolatry."[6] Muhammad and Islam succeeded because the Quran was accepted as a revelation from God. It is important to see how Smith and Cragg approach this subject.

W. C. Smith finds no trouble in accepting the Quran for what the Muslims themselves see it to be. For him Muhammad was a person who had contact with transcendent reality. The Quran becomes a place where Muslims have contact with this reality. Smith is incensed when certain Christian theologians disregard it out of hand. Of Cragg he has some words of praise, which reflect his own thinking: "Similarly, a Christian theologian like Kenneth Cragg, leading theorist of Protestant missions to Mus-

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[1]Cragg, The Event of the Quran, p. 10. [2]Ibid., p. 16.
[3]Ibid., p. 13. [4]Ibid., p. 21. [5]Ibid., p. 54.
[6]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 121.

lims, no longer responds to the Quran by rejecting it theologically."[1] He is thinking of Cragg's books--The Call of the Minaret and Sandals at the Mosque. In Smith's works, one finds that he regards the revelatory character of the Quran the way that Cragg does. He accepts that for Muslims the Quran is God's revelation and it is divine. Hence "they believe that it is divine, and then they read it."[2] Revelation opens up the way for men of different religions to find some common ground in religious experience if one follows Smith's approach on this subject. This happens because through their respective revelations they encounter God:

> I certainly do not deny, then, that Christians in their religious life have something in common--or Muslims, or any group, or indeed all men together. . . . What they have in common lies not in the tradition that introduces them to transcendence, not in their faith by which they personally respond, but in that to which they respond, the transcendent itself.
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> The traditions evolve. Man's faith varies. God endures.[3]

Smith is saying that revelation is not a bar of final judgment. He will not allow final authority to revelation. He touches on the age-old question of the priority of reason or revelation and seems to give the nod to reason: "My reason is not offended when I am told that God has revealed Himself or His will at a particular time or place. Only, I use my own judgment in assessing it."[4]

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[1]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 57.

[2]Ibid., p. 49.

[3]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 192.

[4]Smith, "Comparative Study," p. 46.

Cragg shows a great amount of sympathy for Islam and a deep knowledge of what Islam stands for. Regarding its understanding about revelation Cragg says that in Islam

> what is new is the completeness, so it is believed, of the monotheism, its custody in the ultimate community and its perfect expression in the culminating revelation.
> . . . . . .
> In the Quran . . . is the revelation to end revelation.[1]

Cragg sees how Muslims view themselves as custodians of final revelation;[2] how the Quran has a heavenly prototype;[3] how the revelation and the truth it brings in the Quran depends upon language.[4] Yet Cragg would not try to reach out to Muslims by interpreting such beliefs from a Christian perspective as false and to be disregarded; he would seek to enter their presence by the doors they have unlatched and the openness they portray.[5]

Cragg sees

> the Quran claims as the gift of the divine will, by an act of revelation final in history. . . . Islam is thus the world's most striking expression of what might be called documentary faith.[6]

The Muslim then makes this revelation a part of himself by memorising the Quran and reciting it. Such a characteristic means that "it constitutes in itself the revelatory reality," and "it is the revelation *per se* in its literal shape as a document."[7] This lays the explanation for the fact that the Quran is really an untrans-

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[1]Cragg, *Sandals at the Mosque*, p. 35. [2]*Ibid.*, p. 32.
[3]Cragg, *The Event of the Quran*, p. 51. [4]*Ibid.*, p. 18.
[5]Cragg, *Sandals at the Mosque*, pp. 25-26.
[6]Cragg, *The Mind of the Quran*, p. 14. [7]*Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

lateable book;[1] primarily it came to and for the Meccans who understood only Arabic--"The divine revelation was, after all, a sacred text."[2] This caused certain ramifications:

> The Arabic nature of the Quran belongs with its essential criteria, its revelatory status, its quality as 'miracle,' and its impact in a context powerfully attuned to the thrill of language and to the poetry of words.[3]

The Quran then addresses man and is to be inwardly digested; man is not thereby to begin investigating the nature of God nor get absorbed into metaphysics.

Cragg has said that as with Christianity, "the Quran takes God as utterly real and, therefore, in no necessary relation to 'proof,' but in urgent relation to recognition."[4] He sees the Quran as possessing divine authority because of the response of faith of the Muslim and what it says to their humanity.[5] Cragg thinks of the personal aspect of revelation which he refers to as a "co-operation" on the part of those receiving the revelation. He considers revelation as

> always an enabling of men's receiving and not merely a communication of Divine 'informing.' Revelation is always relational, answering to human anticipation, however revolutionising the answer it brings.[6]

He puts this even more succinctly: "Revealed solutions are of necessity entrusted to co-operative minds."[7] In fact Cragg would

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[1]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 181.

[2]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 126.

[3]Cragg, The Event of the Quran, p. 41.

[4]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, p. 131. [5]Ibid., p. 185.

[6]Cragg, Alive to God, p. 87.

[7]Cragg, Islam at the Crossroads, p. 34.

go so far as to make this a basis for the defining of revelation:

> But, in that it [the Quran] is not a riddle, it is certainly a responsibility requiring and pre-supposing, as all scriptures must, a readership that actively co-operates with its character. Revelation might well be defined as the divinely given material of such co-operation.[1]

Yet Cragg seems to come upon a sort of paradox in this. He indicates that for Islam there is an element of non-involvement on the part of a person. Cragg writes:

> It may be held, as it is in Islam, that divine revelation is more truly, more credibly, divine by its being independent essentially of human partnership, that--to phrase a simple formula--the more a thing is God's the less it is man's.[2]

Cragg does not try to resolve this paradoxical situation concerning revelation for Islam.

It is interesting that the Islamic view of the Quran does not lead Muslims into bibliolatry. Neither Cragg nor Smith ever considered this matter. The quality of the Quran in the eyes of Muslims is revealed in Cragg's reference to Dr. Muhammad al-Nuwaihi who said that the Quran is considered 'the acted, verbal utterance of God' and therefore "to admit human elements in the structure of the Quran is impossible to Islamic religion."[3] How bibliolatry was avoided may lie in certain factors. There is Smith's observation that "the Muslim community has held that the Quran, the word of God, is uncreated, eternal; that that word is an attribute of God Himself, not something different from Him."[4]

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[1]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, p. 39.

[2]Cragg, The Event of the Quran, p. 22.

[3]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, pp. 184-85.

[4]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 87.

This shows the Quran being closely linked to God and neither elevated above or made lower than God. Perhaps prevention was assisted by the radical iconoclasm of Islam. Smith also brings out the fact that the Quran reveals more God's will than His nature.[1] The Muslim lacked interest in theological and metaphysical religious questions so could escape the snares of making the book an idol.

Both Cragg and Smith appreciate and value the ethical and moral elements in the Islamic revelation. Cragg says that

> the demands of this rule [of God] are laid down in the given revelation. The whole system of faith, practice and behaviour, is designed to teach, actualize and perpetuate the responsive obedience.[2]

Smith approaches Islam with the same appreciation; for he faults one Islamic interpreter--Dr. Emanuel Kellerhas--at this point who is one with whom he disagrees: "The point here is that he seems to have missed the immense sense of dynamic moral drive in Islam, the centrality and vigour of the note of righteousness, the overpowering awareness of God's command."[3] With revelation the place where they acknowledge that Muslims come into contact with transcendence or God, both scholars point out the results of that contact which helps to confirm that revelation. Cragg sees Islam as it extended itself bringing all of its adherents into this bond with God through the revelation it carried.

The knowing of God is seen by Smith to make us aware of

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[1]Smith, "A Presentation of Islam," p. 221.

[2]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 53.

[3]Smith, "A Presentation of Islam," p. 221.

ourselves as persons; it affects the way we live. He finds this kind of philosophy within the Quran: "The Quran is concerned, and presents God as being concerned, with something that persons do, and with the persons who do it, rather than with an abstract entity."[1] Cragg in his study of the Quran finds the same element --that the reality of God gives meaning and existence to man.[2] He says the Quranic message is that God ought to be worshipped: "The whole urgency of the book is to require and achieve the human confession of God as vital to being human."[3] He thinks the refusal to do this is the worst offence one may commit against the knowledge of God professed. Likewise, knowing sin as against God "is the deepest element in the knowledge both of God and of ourselves."[4]

The revelation believed to be in the Quran is for the purpose of bringing Muslims under the rule of God which Cragg notes as the most urgent concern of the Quran.[5] This way of life is embodied within the meaning of Islam itself which is a complete surrender of oneself to the will of God. From the beginning the word "Islam" drew attention to the personal relation and content that his religion had for the Muslim or one who submits. Accordingly Cragg has it that "Islam is what the Quran defines and enjoins: it is what Muslims read and acknowledge."[6] For them it becomes always the question of a faithfulness to God; anything other is to fall into idolatry which is the worst sin and fate

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[1]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 111.

[2]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, p. 130. [3]Ibid., p. 131.

[4]Ibid., pp. 110-11 [5]Ibid., p. 24. [6]Ibid., p. 182.

imaginable to the Muslim. The Quran for Cragg reflects this condition. He sees this as a constant theme:

> The folly of idol worship, the ingratitude of the Divine neglect, the impoverishment of the world by the non-recognition of the signs of God, and the frustrations of the mushrikin, the people who commit shirk, or the alienation from God of all that is due to Him.[1]

In contrast to islam there is the use of kufr whose meaning pertains to the total rejection of all that has to do with God.[2] The result has been to make the Quranic outlook very iconoclastic which strives after "the cognizance of God."[3]

Smith would agree with Cragg's interpretation of the Quran concerning total commitment to God. He finds that the Muslim goes to the Quran and obtains his terms of reference for living in the world. These express the mind of God to him and the Muslim must with difficulty attempt to arrive at their meaning.[4] He sees that the Muslim is called to a commitment through his scriptures. In them he is confronted with God, and

> what the Quran presents is a great drama of decision: God has spoken His command, and men thereupon are divided, or, rather, divide themselves, into two groups--those who accept and those who spurn; those who obey, and those who rebel.[5]

So men have the same choice through the Quran--to accept the rule or reign of God, or else to go the way of idolatry.

Mankind is then challenged by Muhammad to read the Quran. This becomes the aim--"The Quran is, literally, 'the Reading', and

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[1]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 121.

[2]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, p. 153.

[3]Ibid., pp. 154-55.

[4]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 104. [5]Ibid., p. 112.

Muslims are 'the readers'."[1] The features found in the Quran are not just for Muslims but for everyone.[2] What it has to offer is "faith, identity, awe before God, cumulative destiny, unfailing known-ness to God, the danger of self-loss, and the final sequel";[3] and this is received by memorizing the Quran which thereby settles the revelation in one's mind.[4] Even in this modern age the Quran speaks particularly to man as one who stands before God;[5] at that point he is ethically challenged by the words: 'Guide us in the straight path.'[6]

But Cragg points out that the case is not just that simple. For the Muslim also takes into his accounting the power and his fear of the jinns and other demonic agents.[7] It is not only inwardly that he looks but also outwardly in order that the Muslim understand his religion. Cragg says "Islam cannot be defined without non-Islam: nor can it be practiced except in the pervasive sense of the distinction."[8] It has been seen how central and important the Quran is in the minds of Muslims, but for Cragg the Quran has not an absolute status: "So the Quran is definitive but not exclusive, final but not total, in the realisation of Islam."[9]

The Quran then does speak to man as both Cragg and Smith agree. For Smith this happens where faith is present and a pre-

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[1]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, p. 14. [2]Ibid., p. 183.
[3]Ibid., p. 108. [4]Ibid., p. 31. [5]Ibid., p. 78.
[6]Ibid., p. 85. [7]Ibid., p. 156.
[8]Cragg, The Event of the Quran, p. 163. [9]Ibid., p. 123.

requisite for God to act.[1] The islam of the Quran Cragg sees is a call for decision, and Smith sees it "vivid and dynamic--and personal: . . ."[2] From the Quran, Smith sees the terms come which a Muslim uses about his world. The terms about man's moral nature, Cragg evaluates as different from the Christian's view:

> The Quran recognizes the weakness of man and his forgetfulness. It is in these terms that it tends to explain his failure to achieve a steady Islam. . . . The Islamic view in general seems content to diagnose the wrongfulness of persons and society as arising from man's inherent feebleness rather than his active rebellion.[3]

Christian thought emphasizes on the contrary the rebellion of human nature against a holy and loving God.

The Quran then covers a large range of subject material that helps the Muslim to live in his world. So Cragg says "the real miracle of the Quran is its effective transformation of a pagan society, and this remains the text of its meaning."[4] Smith would agree with this sentiment. The quick expansion of Islam as it widened its borders attests to this meaning. In the very midst of Islamic life is the Quran.

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[1]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 90.

[2]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 113.

[3]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 122.

[4]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, p. 181.

CHAPTER IV

SMITH ON FAITH AND BELIEF

One of the religious subjects which Smith treats in depth is faith. This concept is relevant to both Islam and Christianity. Another concept--belief--Smith wants to distinguish from faith. He says that the western world has equated faith and belief.[1] In his estimation "faith is not the same as belief: is something richer, deeper, more personal; a quality of living."[2] Belief on the other hand for him "is the holding of certain ideas," "an intellectual activity."[3] He thinks beliefs or religious statements are conceptualizations of the faith of persons.[4] Belief has reference to the formulations of doctrine and dogma, as within Christian theology, which sometimes has served as the basis from which to judge other religions without really knowing them. Smith sees faith as that which the great religions share among them and which gives all of them contact with "transcendence." "Faith" is a word that is significant within Islam.

Smith writes about the relationship of God and man within the context of Christian love as follows: "We must learn, in our new situation, what has always been our primary task: To learn

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[1]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 181.

[2]Smith, "Religious Atheism" p. 53. [3]Ibid., p. 54.

[4]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 183.

to love both God and our neighbour."[1] It is according to such love that Gualtieri declares we find Smith's understanding about the faith of other men:

> Smith's evaluation of non-Christian faith . . . rests on his understanding of the Christian teaching of love: God's love for all men and the Christian's love for others. His particular insight into this love issues in the recognition of worth in the tradition and faith of others, more explicitly, the recognition that God redemptively meets men in them.[2]

Then later Gualtieri says that for Smith

> the Christian may confidently affirm such encounter with God in the religious faith of others because of his conviction that Christian faith entails believing 'that God loves all men equally, and reaches out after them wherever they may be, and loves them within whatever situation He may find them in.'[3]

Or again he says "Smith believes that to affirm God's universal love requires the recognition that truth, that God's saving presence, is given in the great world traditions and faiths."[4] Faith then for Smith becomes a common bond between Muslims and Christians. Gualtieri's words support this idea and so does Smith himself.[5]

Cragg in his writings does not show the same approach to faith as Smith. He does recognize that Muslims have their own peculiar religious faith which they assume is required.[6] In its classical Muslim understanding, Cragg said faith was a God-relat-

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[1]Smith, "Religions of Asia," p. 10.

[2]Gualtieri, "Theological Evaluations," p. 321.

[3]Ibid., p. 322. [4]Ibid., p. 324.

[5]"Above, p. 19."

[6]Kenneth Cragg, The Call of the Minaret (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1956), p. 264.

edness in all things.[1] In reading the Quran he finds there a differentiation between being Muslim and having faith.[2] He also saw the community within Islam detering persons from faith because it ascended to the primary position overshadowing faith.[3] Cragg reflects a more evangelical Christian view of faith. He does not suggest the need to revise its meaning as Smith does.

Smith makes statements to show what faith means for him or how he would define it. He uses faith as

> an orientation of the personality to oneself, to one's neighbour, to the universe; a total response; a way of seeing the world and of handling it; a capacity to live at a more than mundane level; to see, to feel, to act in terms of, a transcendent dimension.[4]

His final conclusion is that a conclusive or all inclusive definition of faith is impossible. Therefore he writes that "no one, Muslim, Christian, or philosopher, has ever been able satisfactorily to translate religious faith in words."[5] He would also include himself by saying "'faith' in my argument, as otherwise, is open to much further exploration."[6] He has not given a more traditional Christian designation to the meaning of faith in which it somehow has a reference to, attitude towards or trust element in Jesus Christ. Smith generalizes its context more: "Faith is

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[1] Ibid., p. 58.

[2] Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 218. [3] Ibid., p. 218.

[4] Smith, "Religious Atheism?" p. 54.

[5] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Historical Development in Islam of the Concept Islam as an Historical Development" (Montreal: McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies, 1958), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

[6] Smith, Meaning and End, p. 195.

the meaning that men find in life."[1] Since he does not qualify this meaning with any specific Christian reference, it may be used generally for any religious people.

Smith contends that faith is an extremely personal quality; this affirmation will help to explain the difficulty of understanding or defining faith, especially if we recognize the difficulty of understanding, let alone interpreting, another's inner experience. Faith with a personal quality has "many sorts of expression."[2] He does not conceive of it as being absolutely subjective, but one wonders if it is not radically individualistic, a tendency compatable to the Hindu frame of mind. He calls it "a living quality of the particular persons who may hold it, . . ."[3] Such persons reflect the basic meaning of "religion" derived from the word, religio. This is "the sense of piety that prompts a man to worship. It is innate in every man, and is the one characteristic that lifts man above the brutes. It is an inner personal attitude."[4] It is so personal that all persons within a religious community of the various traditions may not have identical faith. He sees that in the Muslim faith God has been in direct contact with persons who then formulate the tradition.[5]

Smith has used information supplied by comparative religion to derive relationships amongst religions and thus bring them closer together. His understanding of faith may have arisen from

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[1]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 159.

[2]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 185. [3]Ibid., p. 179.

[4]Ibid., p. 36. [5]Ibid., p. 164.

this source to become subsequently a common denominator amongst religions. This possibility is suggested by Gualtieri's judgment that Smith "affirms the fundamental subject matter of the comparative study of religion to be that human quality that he designates 'personal faith'."[1]

If religious faith has reference to the personal religious life of a person, Cragg would concur in this conclusion. He has been one to search at great depth into the religious life and practices of the Muslim. The titles of his books reflect the concentration he had made in this area--see The Dome and the Rock, The Call of the Minaret and Sandals at the Mosque. He enters as fully as he can into the experiences of the Muslim with a respectful and listening approach.

Smith believes the adherent of at least every major religion has contact with transcendence. In religion it is faith which makes for this--a religion "is a dialectical process between the mundane and the transcendent, a process whose locus is the personal faith and the lives of men and women, not altogether observable and not to be confined within any intelligible limits."[2] The encounter a Muslim has with transcendence through faith is direct and personal.[3] If this transcendence is equated with God, Smith would ask what it means to have faith in God or religious faith.[4] He would say that

faith is an active quality, one that commits the person and

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[1]Gualtieri, "Theological Evaluations," p. 99.

[2]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 187. [3]Ibid., p. 191.

[4]Smith, "Religious Atheism?" p. 53.

> by which he is caught up into a dynamic relationship with his Maker and his fellows. It is the ability to see the transcendent, and to respond to it; to hear God's voice, and to act accordingly.[1]

Cragg too would accept that an encounter with God occurs within Islam although he does not utilize the term "transcendence," but more the term, "God." By its nature he sees Islam as "urgently unitarian."[2] Islam was very iconoclastic so Islam rejected symbolism even after the danger of idolatry had passed. Cragg thinks one area where symbols may be used is in worship where Islam and Christianity say we must seek and serve God.[3] For Smith it will be there in his worship that man worships and apprehends God in different ways.[4] Smith sees the word 'God' as a symbol which refers to a Reality and through which one lives.[5]

Smith finds that religious faith is set within an historical context. He has carried on extensive historical investigation into the religion of Islam. He sees the man of religious faith as one in his history whether it be as a Christian or Hindu or Shintoist, et cetera. He confesses that "we have not answered, then, the query 'What is faith?' beyond asserting that the term refers to a personal quality of human life and history, . . ."[6] Faith and history are basic matters relating to Islam and Chris-

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[1]Smith, Meaning and End, pp. 111-12.

[2]Cragg, The Mind of the Quran, p. 160.

[3]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 179.

[4]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 10.

[5]Smith, "Religious Atheism?" p. 81.

[6]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 189.

tianity and should be considered in any comparative study of these religions.[1] In fact, in Smith's attempt to re-evaluate the term "religion" he has broken its meaning up into these two categories as follows:

> It is that what men have tended to conceive as religion and especially as a religion, can more rewardingly, more truly, be conceived in terms, of two factors, different in kind, both dynamic: an historical 'cumulative tradition,' and the personal faith of men and women.[1]

Smith thinks of history as important to the Muslim in his religious faith. He states: "Similarly the Muslim's faith is his personal awareness, which takes place on earth, in history, that outside of history there is only God, and that inside of history on earth his duty is to obey only God."[2] He would affirm that human religious history has a "transcendent dimension";[3] man is not confined wholly within history for it is open to transcendence through the spirit of man.[4] He sees that there is movement in history, that history is going somewhere. Smith emphasizes all the way through the personal element and gives it priority over the historical context.[5]

Cragg, like Smith, takes history seriously and accepts that both Islam and Christianity do too. He sees Muslims as successors of the biblical traditions of the Jews and Christians. He mentions that history shows God at work--"Islam stands square-

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[1] Ibid., p. 194. [2] Ibid., p. 192.

[3] Smith, "The Historical Development in Islam of the Concept Islam as an Historical Development," p. 9.

[4] Smith, Meaning and End, p. 161.

[5] Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 79.

ly in the Biblical tradition of God active in history and of history as the arena of personal significance, struggle, tragedy, judgement, and decision, not of abstraction and mere intellection."[1] But he sees history for the Muslims, not important for the historical facts,[2] but rather for "the sense of history"[3] and "the event of the Quran."[4] He would therefore bring out a difference of approach on the part of the Muslim from the Christian for the latter as in the incarnation of Jesus Christ starts from the historical event before proceeding to its meaning.

Smith thinks comparative religion is the better way to study religious traditions than the older methods provided.[5] The purpose and task involved is "to understand religious persons."[6] He thinks comparative religion "may become the disciplined self-consciousness of man's varigated and developing religious life."[7] One's religious tradition will influence the faith content he will have according to Smith--"Faith is induced by or through a religious tradition; but it embraces all of life. Accordingly, it changes, from century to century; and rapidly today."[8] As Muslims have their religious tradition, Smith would advocate that they utilise it to create the kind of faith required for this modern

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[1]Cragg, Alive to God, p. 38.

[2]Cragg, The Event of the Quran, p. 166. [3]Ibid., p. 171.

[4]Ibid., p. 178.

[5]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Mankind's Religiously Divided History Approaches Self-consciousness," Harvard Divinity Bulletin, XXIX (October, 1964), 14.

[6]Ibid., p. 17. [7]Ibid., p. 17.

[8]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 159.

day. For this is what Christians are having to do.[1] He would not see Christians having to share their religious faith with Muslims. "Faith" he sees as a term and concept in the Muslim scriptures and literature.[2] To their own sources he would send them.

Religious faith contains the element that God becomes all in all to man through his response and commitment. This helps us to understand why Smith is so opposed to the evangelical's approach to Muslims among others. Such Christians bear a message that Jesus is the only way to God and a 'yes' or 'no' decision is called for. Smith uses another approach:

> Over against this I myself tend to feel, both from my observation of the religious history of mankind throughout the world, and from my contemplation of God in the face of Jesus on the Cross, that the human response to God is not either/or so much as qualitative. . . . God finds some of us pretty tough to reach, I guess; but He leaves perhaps none of us totally untouched by His grace and splendor.[3]

He does not restrict a response to God to the Christian tradition in order to be valid.[4] Smith says he is not a Muslim because he differs from them "as to how best one knows what God's will is";[5] but each one must accept God's commands which are apprehended.

Cragg also accepts that "true belief in God is commitment to Him and to His purposes."[6] One has his knowledge of God as "experimental knowledge" and as experiential through historical

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[1]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 198. [2]Ibid., p. 111.

[3]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 120.

[4]Ibid., p. 119.

[5]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 114.

[6]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 179.

events where God reveals Himself.[1] For him such events are the Exodus, the Incarnation, the Cross and the Gospel history.[2] In his approach to the Muslim, Cragg says the Christian "has to commend this conviction by the quality of his own awareness of God and the reality of his own walking in this light"[3] for the sake of the goal "that 'religion may be wholly God's' and that 'God may be all in all!'"[4]

Doctrinal beliefs then do not become a major concern for Smith. It is rather a personal living faith which is his major concern. Neither does Cragg get bogged down in Muslim-Christian theological differences. They both try to find the Muslim's relationship to God through his faith, a faith which they acknowledge he has. The discussion of beliefs in terms of doctrinal differences would tend to divide the Christian and the Muslim where their efforts are bent on relating them. Mutual "faith" is that which assists this endeavour and Smith has treated it with lengthy consideration.

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[1]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 101.

[2]Ibid., p. 101. [3]Ibid., p. 102.

[4]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 137.

CHAPTER V

CRAGG ON CHRISTOLOGY

In any approach of a Christian writer towards another religious tradition, that person will have some attitude to Christology. Now Cragg shows a fuller Christological approach to Islam than does Smith. They both would accept as Smith did that the Bible contains the Christian revelation but is not equated with revelation.[1] The revelation, for Christians, they would say is Jesus Christ. Smith does not see a direct contact of the Christian with a Muslim through the person of Jesus. Cragg on the contrary does see the person of Jesus as relevant to the dialogue with Muslims. He speaks, for instance, of the "crisis which Christ brings into all religious form and fulfilment."[2] In his dialogue, he states that "the Christian must speak out of the deepest and fullest meanings of Christ."[3] Jesus Christ for the Christian, Smith would say, is necessary but not when approaching Muslims. Cragg is rather clear about his conviction that the Christian is going to men of other faiths in the company of Jesus Christ. He clearly says concerning this point: "Our true task is rather to bring to bear the different criteria in Christ for

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[1]Smith, "Similarities and Differences," p. 52.

[2]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, p. 29.

[3]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 88.

men's self-judgment both as to doctrine and to life."[1] He would point out that Christians are not just out for intellectual stimulation or mental development. It is the personal element which must be kept ever in view. Stemming from the love with which the Christian approaches the Muslim, "it has duties to the souls of all men and believes, as long as it is itself, that Christ is relevant to the needs and aspirations of them all."[2] We shall try to see how Cragg's understanding of Jesus Christ is a part of his approach to Islam.

Cragg recognizes that Jesus Christ is known to Muslims and that they have their own attitudes to him. They view Jesus as a teacher and prophet who stands after Muhammad and in whom God was acting.[3] He takes their views into consideration, but he remains a Christian who is ready to bring out differences, and not to gloss over obstacles that may arise. One place he says:

> Our true task is rather to bring to bear the different criteria in Christ for men's self-judgment both as to doctrine and to life. . . . We are its [the faith's] creatures and disciples. As such, we must be loyal in and to the crisis Christ brings into all inter-religion.[4]

This is not supposed to be a deterrent in going to the limit of investigation and interaction. He hopes for the mustering of "the prerequisites of complete spiritual encounter."[5] In doing this, Cragg, like Smith, would sit down to dialogue with Muslims.

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[1] Ibid., p. 91.

[2] Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 179.

[3] Cragg, Alive to God, p. 32.

[4] Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 91.

[5] Cragg, World Perspective, p. 80.

In communicating with them, however, he would not neglect giving what he believes the Christian has to give:

> Those who are committed to Christ as Savior and Lord are also committed to commending His salvation to all people and to all areas of their life. No fruitful Christian communication with other traditions can be built upon an abeyance of Christianity at its vital point.[1]

On his part then, Cragg takes the centrality of Jesus quite seriously in his approach to Islam. Elsewhere he has said: "Our Christianity, tested by its origin in Jesus as the Christ, means faith in this Messiah, as the clue to God and the answer for man."[2] Jesus becomes significant, for instance, through the Cross where Sin is borne and a word of liberation is declared, and an all encompassing grace lies and is realized.

Cragg suggests that there are ideas or beliefs in Christian understanding which may supply deficiencies Islam has. Man worships God who has given a self-disclosure. The Muslim's worship contains views about sin and idolatry. Cragg thinks "that Christian awareness of God, in self-giving to the world, has so vital a bearing on the central worship-conviction of Islam."[3] The Muslim by the Quran and in Islamic theology gives himself in worship through 'The Beautiful Names of God' in which "God is rightly described and addressed, denoted and adored."[4] Because this is the core for Muslims, Cragg thinks "the biblical faith in God as active in history, of God at work in his Messiah, of God as self-given to and among men, is an enlargement and fulfilment

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[1]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 180.

[2]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 46.

[3]Ibid., p. 134.

[4]Ibid., p. 134.

of the implications of his names."[1] Cragg points out a certain "vulnerability" of God within Islam which gives Christians an opportunity to relate to Muslims. It arises because the Muslim has a firm conviction of God as Creator, Law-giver and Revealer. Because of this, Cragg points out that

> despite all the attendant, and proper, insistence on sovereignty and immunity in God, there abides inherent 'vulnerability'--this standing of the power of God in the power of men--their power to repudiate, to gainsay, to diversify, or to ignore. Only by the reality of this 'exposure' to man does the validity of Islam exist as a faith and as an imperative.[2]

This for him offers a way to bring together Muslim and Christian relationships to God.[3] Thus Cragg portrays a desire to try to see bridges created between the two traditions.

God in acting manward is out to have man know and worship Him. It is the salvation of man towards which God's revelation and knowledge tend. Cragg sets forth his view that Christian faith begins in that "vulnerability" noted above, "but it understands that Divine vulnerability to man as more intimately open, more unreserved in the will to seek and to care and thus more tenderly set to restore the human waywardness."[4] He suggests that Islam, like Christianity, finds man related to God through grace. He finds a Divine-human encounter for the Christian and Muslim in history and action, revelation and event, devotion and commitment. Where there comes a knowledge of God there is salva-

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[1]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, pp. 87-88.

[2]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 137.

[3]Ibid., p. 136.

[4]Ibid., p. 137.

tion.[1] This must be more than something mental and intellectual. For the Christian, Cragg sees salvation in all realms where the intent is 'that God may be all in all.'[2]

Smith on his part does not use Christological considerations to bring Islam and Christianity closer together. His policy seems the decision to let the religions live and let live. He does, nevertheless, bring out comparisons which demonstrate for him similarities which they share. For instance he suggests similarity between the Muslim memorizing, apprehending and interiorising the Quran and the event of the Christian Communion where the Christian receives the body of Christ.[3]

In his understanding about the centrality of the Christian revelation as found in Jesus Christ, Smith says:

> Rather than saying that Jesus Christ is the full revelation of God, I would say rather that He is a revelation of God to me, and has been to many other people, though I know others to whom He has not been. I can quite truthfully say that Christ reveals God to me more fully today than He did twenty years ago, and can sincerely pray that this will become more true.

The first part of his words here give us a most important thought for this thesis. He limits the Christian revelation in Jesus Christ to those who accept it while not restricting revelation to any one religion. Personal faith is important for Smith's religious understanding; it seems that personal revelation is equally emphasized. He says--"I do not know quite what it might mean to speak of a revelation of God in general without some person to

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[1]Cragg, The Privilege of Man, p. 194.

[2]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 179.

[3]Smith, "Similarities and Differences," p. 57.

whom He is revealed." What he is driving at is clearly explained immediately afterwards:

> We have allowed ourselves to speak of revelation as if the term had meaning when it has a subject, rather than recognising that meaning for it requires both a subject and an object. Just as there can be no revelation that is not a revelation of something (or someone), so there can be none that is not a revelation to someone. There is no revelation of God except to particular persons.[1]

In the Christian's approach to his knowledge of God, the person of Jesus Christ is primary. I want to give some consideration of how Smith and Cragg deal with this aspect for their understanding of Islam. Smith uses his interpretation of his Christian background in order to express his conviction that Muslims have their knowledge of God:

> If God is what Jesus Christ has revealed Him to be, a loving, personal Father, searching out sinners to forgive them, yearning to bring into fellowship with Himself all His children wherever they may be, of whatever colour, in whatever land, of whatever community--then God is not remote from Muslims, pale, colourless and unattainable. If he is willing to suffer on the Cross for my sake, then He will not let Himself be frustrated by a theological proposition from reaching out to a sincere, devout, humble and pious member of the Muslim world who seeks Him.[2]

Cragg recognizes that in their worship of God Christians do differ from Muslims "in the gentler shape of a birth and a death, of a Father seeking and a Shepherd finding, of the Word dwelling among men, and of a Cross on a hill";[3] such is true because of Jesus Christ. Of him Cragg gives an important thought:

> Bringing together all we have pondered within Islam about a sure anti-idolatry and the human need for an authentic re-

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[1]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, pp. 91-92.

[2]Smith, "A Presentation of Islam," pp. 225-26.

[3]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 137.

> lation to God wherein all other worship may be truly renounced and excluded, we understand in the person of Jesus the touchstone of such knowledge of God.[1]

He thinks of signs used in the Quran and sees Jesus Christ as "a single, inclusive, living 'Sign'."[2] As a Christian he says: "God, we believe, undertakes the conditions of being humanly knowable, by taking the prerequisites of our knowing--humanity, time, place and history--and expressing His nature therein."[3] Smith does not accept that the only meaningful and saving response to God is to God in Jesus Christ; he rather uses the message of Jesus Christ to declare "that the ultimate, cosmic question is how men respond to God, not whether."[4] It is best to concentrate upon the nature of God in Cragg's opinion. He says "The Divine Name, always has the whole within it, whether or not its content is explicitly denoted in the way that Christians believe is the case when we say: 'Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ'."[5]

Cragg emphasises the significance of Christ for the Christian mission which derives from it: "It is to give itself that men may find Him."[6] He recognizes and sympathises with the Muslim's aversion to Jesus' designated 'Sonship,' but denies any interpretation of it as 'Divine paternity,' 'Divine duality,' 'prophetic pretension,' 'deification,' 'adoption.' He mentions the Quran's use of ittikhādh "meaning the exaltation of Jesus to

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[1]Ibid., p. 139. [2]Ibid., p. 140. [3]Ibid., p. 140.

[4]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 119.

[5]Cragg, Alive to God, p. 24.

[6]Cragg, Sandals at the Mosque, p. 142.

Divine status at some point in an initially human story"[1] which was the old adoptionist heresy in early Christian history. Cragg sees 'Sonship' as compatible with the Quranic titles for Jesus, 'servant' and 'Messiah.'[2] He points up another Islamic contrast with the Gospel record--the belief that Jesus ascended to heaven, avoiding death and the tomb. Such differences between Islam and Christianity regarding views of Jesus do not seem to call for comment by Smith.

For the Christian, "Word of God" has a sacred and meaningful reference to Jesus Christ and to the Bible, the Word or word of God. Smith has drawn the parallel of Jesus Christ as the Word of God with the Quran in Islam. Cragg does not make that point. Of it Smith wrote thusly:

> Rather, the parallel is to the Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ is the Word of God. Throughout the present discussion, this point should be borne vividly in mind: that the Muslim attitude to the Quran is the Christian attitude to Christ.[3]

It is helpful to look elsewhere to enlarge on his meaning. Smith uses this phrase--"Word of God"--for the Quran: "It is the Word (kalām) of God; it is not He nor is it other than He."[4] He has said that for those of these two respective religions, Christianity and Islam, Christ and the Quran embody divinity. In the Quran this is by its content, message, words and meaning.[5] Besides being the Word it is also believed to be the word by some

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[1]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 139. [2]Ibid., p. 139.

[3]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 41, n. 1.

[4]Smith, "Similarities and Differences," p. 57, n. 1.

[5]Ibid., p. 57.

Muslims while others do not so believe. To determine which view of the Quran is accepted Muslim belief Smith sees is a complex and delicate issue.[1] Smith understands the Quran to be "the word of Muhammad" and also "the closest approximation to the eternal word of God to which Muhammad was capable of rising."[2] Such it is for many Muslims. For Smith the Quran is the word of God on three levels--the "absolute and historical," the "theological and communal," and "personalist and existentialist."[3] He makes the connection on the basis of truth--"any statement is the word of God insofar as it is true"[4]--and gives the examples of a morally true and correct moral injunction, a true statement or a just command.[5] Truth for him is divine and to be orientated to truth will bring one towards God. Smith, therefore, shows that he proceeds in his understanding on the basis of his knowledge gained in other fields. Those noted before were history and comparative religion; here philosophy finds a place.

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[1]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 294, n. 85.

[2]Smith, Questions of Religious Truth, p. 93.

[3]Ibid., p. 84. [4]Ibid., p. 84. [5]Ibid., p. 85.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this study of the approaches of Smith and Cragg as Christians to Islam, I believe that through the various subjects considered a difference appears between them although generally it is not an extreme difference. Accordingly, Smith may be seen as appearing at the left in his religious thought while Cragg might be set at the centre or else somewhat left of centre. One senses though a mellowing in the religious as well as political thought of Smith since the early period as represented by his Modern Islam in India through till the time of his writings on comparative religion; yet he never made a far swing to the right as sometimes can happen. One's impression of Cragg's thought is that it has remained rather stable over the years. Both of them give quite a challenge to the modern Christian understanding and interpretation of Islam. They are both very helpful in many ways, but not all Christians would look upon them as representative. One must admit that they speak from very close contact with Muslims and the Islamic milieu.

Smith and Cragg have tried to bring Christians and Muslims closer together by their understanding and interpretation of Islam. Instead of trying to understand the essence or nature[1] of

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[1] Smith, Meaning and End, p. 12.

a particular religion, Smith has tried to think about the meaning of religion in general. He came to the conclusion that so far no definition of religion has met the test of adequacy.[1] Yet he sees "religion," or more correctly "religions," as being bound up with persons.

Cragg is more ready to begin with these religions themselves. However, he does not assume that the traditions have not undergone change and that we know them exactly as they are. Both men accept that a greater interaction is taking place between the traditions than ever before which must be taken into consideration. Smith may speak for them both when he says: "Throughout the world, each of the major religious communities of mankind is beginning to be conscious of itself as within the context--the developing context--of the others."[2] The result is to be able to practice a much greater acceptance of the religions standing closer together. As a result, Cragg expresses his mind that in the Church's vocation, "there are the two themes--identity in respect of its own past and in openness to the life of all."[3] Cragg would exhort Christians to be more Christian and to be less dogmatic. He counsels Christians in their approach to other traditions that "if across our religious barriers, we can learn and express in common this 'natural' gratitude, we shall be nearer to the communication of our Christian gratitude at the grace that is

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[1] Ibid., p. 11.

[2] Smith, "Global Context," p. 85.

[3] Cragg, World Perspective, p. 193.

beyond nature and in Christ."[1] One approach to people of other religions like Islam made by Christians has been to make converts. Smith according to the ideas presented would frown on this practice. Cragg on the other hand does not go that far, but leaves it vague as to how far it might be carried. He supports though "a revision of our understanding of conversion."[2]

Cragg's approach has a much more Christological orientation to it than Smith's. In the matter of conversion, Cragg's understanding is that "when we invite to conversion we mean first a re-orientation of personality into the Christ dimension in practical terms."[3] This would also echo a basic concern that Smith shows when he would reject conversion in terms of dogmas, doctrines and beliefs. Cragg would agree with this for in these "practical terms" he says "we need to see this human presence of the Church, not first as bearing a dogma for adherence but rather a life for experience, in a Christ for imitation."[4] In this person of Jesus Christ and the influence of him upon the Christian, Cragg sets forth that in the Christian faith which is not present in Islam. He writes that "for the covenantal of Judaism and the political of Islam it [the Gospel] offers the filial, as being the final form of the intention of monotheistic religion."[5] He goes on to speak of this aspect further:

The whole essence of the Christian distinctiveness, in new

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[1]Cragg, The Dome and the Rock, pp. 123-24.

[2]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 215.

[3]Ibid., p. 216. [4]Ibid., p. 217.

[5]Cragg, The Privilege of Man, p. 138.

> testament for old, in the Cross not the Hijrah, in the counter choice that both salutes and rejects the Jewish and the Islamic, lies in this conviction of sonship, in nature and through grace, as the ultimate religious experience.[1]

Such an aspect can include personal faith so emphasized by Smith but defines it through the person of Jesus Christ. Cragg suggests to Muslims that the Quran places an obligation on its people to come to grips with the New Testament, which will bring an understanding of Jesus. He wrote that

> Quranic doctrine of the continuity between itself and all previous 'scriptural' revelation makes Christian study an internal obligation of Muslim religious education, quite apart from its necessity as a means to communion. So many of the assumptions of Muslim belief are involved in the issues of Christian New Testament scholarship.[2]

Whereas Cragg finds a central focus in the person of Jesus Christ, Smith finds a more general important reference, namely, tradition. We find him saying

> Each religion . . . is the point at which its adherent is in touch, through the intermediary of an accumulating tradition, with the infinitude of the divine. . It is <u>the chief means</u> through which God takes hold of the person, in so far as that person would allow. (Italics mine.)[3]

He says this because of a basic belief that "God is creatively, redemptively at work in the religious life of all the major communities of mankind."[4] One might suggest why Smith differs from Cragg at this point of Christology. The difference may arise

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[1]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 145.

[2]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 176.

[3]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, <u>Islam in Modern History</u> (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 15, quoted in Gualtieri, "Theological Evaluations," p. 88.

[4]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 164, quoted in Gualtieri, "Theological Evaluations," p. 350.

because of a variation in their views of the person of Jesus Christ and of the Christian scriptures. Regarding Jesus Christ would be whether or not he is the supreme revelation or unique or only revelation of God to mankind and not just to those within the Christian tradition. Of those scriptures it will mean the view of their authority, once again for mankind, or for only those of the Christian tradition. Their particular views on these matters would affect their approaches to another religious tradition such as Islam.

It has been pointed out that both our men do see common features within Islam and Christianity which serve to forge links between the two religions. One way of viewing a link may be by a principle of "preparation" which Cragg suggests whereas Smith would not. Cragg shows that he proceeds on the understanding of their being more of a discontinuity between the religions than Smith does. Cragg expresses his view in this way:

> There is truth enough, from within Christian premises, in seeing a 'preparation' for Christian faith in the meaning of other religions, provided we see that they have the right not to view it, that way, and provided we explore and serve this understanding of ours with a properly sensitive humility.[1]

Through such relationships, Cragg sees a real meeting of minds and not just an academic study process.[2] Relationships will include direct personal contact with Muslims in working together and thinking through religious questions.[3] Smith would fully support this view for he was involved with McGill University's

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[1]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 80.

[2]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 179.

[3]Ibid., p. 175.

Institute of Islamic Studies which functions by personal confrontation conducted in an atmosphere where there can be a "temper of openness."[1] If Smith would not talk in terms of Christianity being a "preparation" for other religions, he more typically says: "Only as we learn to see God's activity in other movements and other communities shall we learn to serve Him well in and through our own."[2] For him this corrects another approach which he does not appreciate:

> While the monologue of evangelism with its 'we are right, you are wrong' conviction, and its 'be disloyal to your community and heritage, and join ours' invitation clearly affronts--and should affront--our fellow citizens of this globe at its profoundest, most central, most precious, most valid nerve.[3]

Both men contend that to achieve an adequate relationship and knowledge of religion it will require the demand of a concentrated effort. Cragg speaks for them both in saying "it must be waited, yearned and prayed for, as a hard and patient hope."[4]

In his approach to another tradition, Smith utters his conviction that "unless, I say, we can together solve the intellectual and spiritual questions posed by comparative religion, then I do not see how a man is to be a Christian or a Muslim or a Buddhist at all."[5] Cragg seems totally unconcerned with comparative religion as a starting place; he accepts himself as a Christian and then goes out to understand what a Muslim is. Smith

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[1]Cragg, World Perspective, p. 79.

[2]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 166.

[3]Ibid., pp. 154-55.

[4]Cragg, "Each Other's Face," p. 177.

[5]Smith, Meaning and End, p. 11.

seems to be grappling for some still higher essence of existence than what is available in religion to which he might relate the religious traditions. He says, "Neither religion in general nor any one of the religions, I will contend, is in itself an intelligible entity, a valid object of inquiry, or of concern either for the scholar or for the man of faith."[1] (Italics mine.)

If neither religion nor a religion is to be Smith's concern, I wonder if it is to be rather the study of "transcendence," for he makes this the term that seems to span the religions. He is happier with the use of the adjective "religious" and sees it related to transcendence:

> This has to do with a contention that living religiously is an attribute of persons. The attribute arises not because those persons participate in some entity called religion, but because they participate in what I have called transcendence.[2]

What Smith implies is that religious persons, whether they be Christians or Muslims, may approach one another because both participate in "transcendence." If this is what Smith is suggesting, it may be that such an approach does not take one very far for as Gualtieri observes, "a consistent understanding of transcendence does not seem to emerge in The Meaning and End of Religion."[3] It may be asked if the word "transcendence" takes one any further than the term "God."

One may wonder if Cragg is speaking to Smith's contention about "religion," at least indirectly. In what he says, Cragg tells us what he considers important in relating to another

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[1] Ibid., p. 12. [2] Ibid., p. 195.

[3] Gualtieri, "Theological Evaluations," p. 95.

religion:

> So we return to our starting point, not dismayed into a clamour for religionlessness, but ready to live with permanently unanswered questions, to refuse the over-simplification of a crude evangelism or an easy sentiment, and to undertake the double task of openness to all in compassionate realism and openness to Christ as the one necessary loyalty.[1] (Italics mine.)

He thinks of this openness as "the inward disposition of the open faith."[2] Cragg does not think the Christian should hold back in the face of pluralism, but that the right approach will come by proceeding on but "that the proceeding is in Christ, and with Him, and that no other securities can finally avail."[3] Cragg will retain his Christian convictions, but suggests that a little agnosticism may be required in approaching with our knowledge another religion: "Perhaps in the end our situation calls for a capacity to hold together the finality of loyalty to Christ and the will to 'concede' the other faiths, without asking for an answer how."[4] Smith does not appear to be as outspoken in the way Cragg is here in the first part, but he would wholeheartedly affirm the second part of Cragg's statement, I feel.

Both of these men are concerned with the social order in the world. Primarily, there is an urgent need for social justice. Smith in his early period of the 1940s[5] was not deeply interested in religious solutions, but later he was to say "Whether the countries of South-East Asia can achieve a better social order is a religious question, as are all questions of

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[1]Cragg, World Perspective, pp. 84-85. [2]Ibid., p. 84.
[3]Ibid., p. 48. [4]Ibid., p. 83.
[5]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Modern Islam in India.

'better' or 'worse'."[1] He thinks of "religion" in general terms, not particularly concerned whether the Christian faith alone has something to say or give or not. He only asks the question: "Can religion rise to these new meanings?"[2] He would seem to be allowing Islam to find her own solutions in the countries where she is.[3] Cragg also sees religion as related to the social order; he names "compassion" as religion's contribution.[4] He alludes to the Cross as reflecting the need for sacrifice and of a burden to bear which will challenge Islam for "it is here that Islam's resources both of life and doctrine face their largest question."[5]

Smith points out Islam's sense of community:

> 'To be a Muslim' does not mean to have certain ideas about God, the Prophet, the Quran, and so forth: . . . It means to accept membership at the present point in the developing tradition of the Muslim community.[6]

He envisages and tells of the primary need of world community today;[7] Cragg does not show such a global concern in his writings. Smith mentions how Muslim and western countries have possessed a common frontier making for constant direct contact;[8] he

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[1]Smith, "Religion and Social Change in South and South-East Asia," p. 7.

[2]Ibid., p. 8. [3]Ibid., p. 8.

[4]Kenneth Cragg, Counsels in Contemporary Islam, Islamic Surveys, 3 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh U. Press, 1965), p. 192.

[5]Ibid., p. 193.

[6]Smith, "Comparative Study," p. 55.

[7]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Christian and the Near East Crisis," Presbyterian Record, January, 1957, p. 16.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Importance of Muhammad," review of Muhammad at Mecca by W. M. Watt and Le Problème de Mohamet by Régis Blachère, in the Canadian Forum, September,

infers that these nations "can meet with mutual respect and understanding and together participate in the effective functioning of a true internationalism."[1] In all this he thinks that the Christian is obliged to seek a modern world society in which all persons may live.[2]

By now it should be clear that Smith and Cragg have a depth and wealth of knowledge about Islam. Whenever Smith refers to Cragg with regard to Islam he sympathizes with much that Cragg says, but does not gloss over their differences. Smith thinks of himself as part of the vanguard which incorporates new Christian thought and action, and in that work he appreciates Cragg's efforts.[3] The importance of this work is that it will be done in the world at large and not simply within a Christian or secular society. He calls upon Muslims to do the same. Even while retaining their individuality they will work on intellectual and spiritual questions such as comparative religion supplies and they will do it together.

Smith notes that some Islamic thinkers wish a return to the past. However, he advocates that the future of the Islamic world will depend upon how well "Muslims are able to re-express their Islamic faith in terms which will be meaningful and dynamic to those educated in modern ways and faced with the responsibil-

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1954, p. 135.

[1]Smith, "The Christian and the Near East Crisis," p. 17.

[2]Ibid., p. 17.

[3]Smith, "Future of Missions," p. 155.

ities of the modern world."[1] Cragg on his part would support the idea that Islam has a job to do in critically assessing itself by its own standards:

> These are God and judgment, the twin themes of the living Muhammad. And when he preached them it was the illusions which departed. The first 'counsel' to the idolatrous was to let God be God: it remains the perpetual text and crux of all His worshippers' debate.[2]

In their approach to Islam as Christians, Cragg and Smith have shown how they have been able to accept and appreciate much in the Islamic tradition. They have thrown out a challenge for others to do likewise. Smith's opinion is that "if the Christian faith is true, it follows that the Muslim faith is not so false."[3] For his part Cragg suggests "the way, surely, is not to see their persuasion of God as wanting and reject it, but as operative and engage with it";[4] and "it will be well to hold together the positive inward commitment and the open outward reach, 'with reverence and godly fear', and to ask this of Muslims and Christians alike."[5]

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[1]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Muslim World," Current Affairs for the Canadian Forces, X (February, 1956), 23.

[2]Cragg, Counsels in Contemporary Islam, p. 193.

[3]Smith, "A Presentation of Islam," p. 226.

[4]Cragg, Alive to God, p. 24. [5]Ibid., p. 28.

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