

QUOTATIONS ON ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION (PART 2 OF 2)

Rating: 4.0

Description: What notables have said about Islamic Civilization and Culture. Part 2.

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Published on: 18 Jun 2007

Last modified on: 18 Jun 2007

Phillip Hitti

‘Short History of the Arabs.’

“During all the first part of the Middle Ages, no other people made as important a contribution to human progress as did the Arabs, if we take this term to mean all those whose mother-tongue was Arabic, and not merely those living in the Arabian peninsula. For centuries, Arabic was the language of learning, culture and intellectual progress for the whole of the civilized world with the exception of the Far East. From the 9th to the 12th century there were more philosophical, medical, historical, religious, astronomical and geographical works written in Arabic than in any other human tongue.”

Carra de Vaux

‘The Philosophers of Islam,’ Paris, 1921.

“Finally how can one forget that at the same time the Mogul Empire of India (1526-1857 C.E.) was giving the world the Taj Mahal (completed in 1648 C.E.) the architectural beauty of which has never been surpassed, and the ‘Akbar Nameh’ of Abul Fazl:

‘That extraordinary work full of life ideas and learning where every aspect of life is examined listed and classified, and where progress continually dazzles the eye, is a document of which Oriental civilization may justly be proud. The men whose genius finds its expression in this book were far in advance of their age in the practical art of government, and they were perhaps in advance of it in their speculations about religious philosophy. Those poets those philosophers knew how to deal with the world or matter. They observe, classify, calculate and experiment. All the ideas that occur to them are tested against facts. They express them with eloquence but they also support them with statistics.’

...the principles of tolerance, justice and humanity which prevailed during the long reign of Akbar.”

Marcel Clerget

‘La Turquie, Passe et Present,’ Paris, 1938.

“Many proofs of high cultural level of the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent are to be found in the development of science and law; in the flowering of literary works in Arabic, Persian and Turkish; in the contemporary monuments in Istanbul, Bursa, and Edirne; in the boom in luxury industries; in the sumptuous life of the court and high dignitaries, and last but not least in its religious tolerance. All the various influences - notably Turkish, Byzantine and Italian mingle together and help to make this the most brilliant epoch of the Ottomans.”

Michael the Elder (Great)

Quoted in ‘Michael the Elder, Chronique de Michael Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d’ Antioche,’ J.B. Chabot, Editor, Vol. II, Paris, 1901.

“This is why the God of vengeance, who alone is all-powerful, and changes the empire of mortals as He will, giving it to whomsoever He will, and uplifting the humble beholding the wickedness of the Romans who throughout their dominions, cruelly plundered our churches and our monasteries and condemned us without pity, brought from the region of the south the sons of Ishmael, to deliver us through them from the hands of the Romans. And if in truth we have suffered some loss, because the Catholic churches, that had been taken away from us and given to the Chalcedonians, remained in their possession; for when the cities submitted to the Arabs, they assigned to each denomination the churches which they found it to be in possession of (and at that time the great churches of Emessa and that of Harran had been taken away from us); nevertheless it was no slight advantage for us to be delivered from the cruelty of the Romans, their wickedness, their wrath and cruel zeal against us, and to find ourselves at people. (Michael the Elder, Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch wrote this text in the latter part of the twelfth century, after five centuries of Muslim rule in that region. Click [here](#) for a relevant document sent to the monks of St. Catherine Monastery in Mt. Sinai, 628 C.E.)

Sir John Bagot Glubb

“Khalif (Caliph) Al-Ma’mun’s period of rule (813 - 833 C.E.) may be considered the ‘golden age’ of science and learning. He had always been devoted to books and to learned pursuits. His brilliant mind was interested in every form of intellectual activity. Not only poetry but also philosophy, theology, astronomy, medicine and law all occupied his time.”

“By Mamun’s time medical schools were extremely active in Baghdad. The first free public hospital was opened in Baghdad during the Caliphate of Haroon-ar-Rashid. As the system developed, physicians and surgeons were appointed who gave lectures to medical students and issued diplomas to those who were considered qualified to practice. The first hospital in Egypt was opened in 872 AD and thereafter public hospitals sprang up all over the empire from Spain and the Maghrib to Persia.”

On the Holocaust of Baghdad (1258 C.E.) Perpetrated by Hulagu

“The city was systematically looted, destroyed and burnt. Eight hundred thousand persons are said to have been killed. The Khalif Mustasim was sewn up in a sack and trampled to death under the feet of Mongol horses.

“For five hundred years, Baghdad had been a city of palaces, mosques, libraries and colleges. Its universities and hospitals were the most up-to-date in the world. Nothing now remained but heaps of rubble and a stench of decaying human flesh.”

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