

famous Italian traveler of the thirteenth century, or of Hsuan-chuang, the distinguished Buddhist scholar of the T'ang Dynasty, to the Gobi?, "We must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

The time is ripe for all missionary-minded Christians to consider what we can do to win this greatest province of China to Christ.\* What Raymund Lull, the earliest missionary to the Moslems, said of Palestine is also true of the New Dominion: "It is my belief, O Christ, that the conquest of the Holy Land [and of Sinkiang, as in our case] should be attempted in no other way than Thou and Thy apostles undertook to accomplish it, by love, by prayer, by tears and by the offering of our lives." How shall we show our love for the neglected peoples of Sinkiang? Shall we pray earnestly for their salvation? Who will go forth and weep, bearing precious seed, so that he may come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him? Are we willing to lay down our lives for those whom we want to bring to Christ? We cannot feel unconcerned when millions of people south and north of the Tien-shan are still in darkness. The same old question is again clearly audible: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

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\*POPULATION OF SINKIANG IN 1944

<i>Races</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Uigur	1,522,331	1,377,842	2,900,173
Khazak	168,346	150,370	318,716
Chinese	115,128	87,111	202,239
Chinese Moslems (Tungan)	48,501	43,635	92,136
Kirghiz	30,679	34,569	65,248
Mongol	33,105	29,913	63,018
Taranchi	22,161	19,146	41,307
Naturalized emigré	6,567	6,841	13,408
Sibo	4,953	4,250	9,203
Tajik	4,545	4,322	8,867
Uzbek	4,163	3,803	7,966
Tartar	2,370	2,231	4,601
Solum	1,385	1,104	2,489
Manchu	376	294	670
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,964,610</b>	<b>1,765,431</b>	<b>3,730,041</b>

## ARABIA PHOENIX\*

(Reprinted by permission from *The London Times Literary Supplement* of July 13, 1946)

It is strange that not a full-orbed book has come out of polar travel; the world of eternal ice, tragic with heroic effort and lost endeavour, has yielded no more than would provide an anthology with sober and impressive passages. But Arabia, the home of Ishmael, whence came Islam and conquest, has a name—and how earned is a mystery—that has moved even the poets to songs of melancholy love and wistfulness, though they have not seen so much as Jedda, and might decline to go, if invited. It seems that Colonel Gerald de Gaury himself, whose delightful book prompted this reflection, while in hospital with wounds in the first world war, began to learn Arabic from a book left by his bedside. He doesn't say why. Whatever his reason, it was lucky for us, as the sequel shows. Since then he has travelled across Arabia from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea; and few Christians have done that. Therefore he does not share the superficial view of a voyager at a ship's side, who is overawed by the mass of what appears to be calcined desolation; instead, he closes the narrative of his journey by turning to Walter de la Mare to sing for him, that there may be no doubt about his sentiment. Only a poet could find the right words for it.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests;  
No beauty on earth I see  
But shadowed with that dream recalls  
Her loveliness to me:  
Still eyes look coldly upon me,  
Cold voices whisper and say—  
“He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,  
They have stolen his wits away.”

Colonel de Gaury, turning in distaste from the noisy vulgarity of industrial civilization, must have read a deal about Arabia before ever he landed on the island of Bahrein, to begin his journey. He knew what to expect. The valuable bibliography he appends to his story shows that. It has been remarked, and more than once, that tales of far countries have the same effect on some people as the moon in a certain phase, or the music heard by one listener alone. It is impossible to believe, when he hears it—keeping the matter strictly

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\* GERALD DE GAURY: *Arabia Phoenix*. With a Foreword by FREYA STARK. Harrap. 10s. 6d.

secret—that Pan is dead. He knows how that rumour began. It was put out by interested Ionian merchants. Such men become stern and rational when they hear of time wasted in Arcady, or any other seclusion where wheels do not profitably go round.

The author is too polite to say so, but he wants to get away from us; yet to show there is no ill-feeling, he lets us into the secret of making and serving coffee in the Nejdi style, knowing that to be as near Arabia as most of us will ever get. Misfortune so distressing deserves a little pity. We shall never be entertained in the Old Palace at Riyadh, shall find not so much as admission to a Beduin fellowship in a desert camp, so at least let us take coffee in the real right way—if we can get Mocha berries—while reading Freya Stark, the Blunts, Lawrence, Hogarth, Doughty, and this book. Yes, the Colonel's little book—descriptive of an historic event, however one looks at it—may be put with the classics of Arabian travel.

But the Colonel has a prejudice? Of course he has. Who hasn't? It goes as far as showing Islam in a nice light. After all, the bigoted Wahhabis let him alone. As a fact, they had to, for their King himself had given sanctuary to distinguished guests, and the Arabian lore of hospitality is sacred; but those priests, with their henna-stained whiskers and cruel righteousness, certainly let him see what they thought of kafirs. We learn that the peak of their fanaticism is past, yet a reader cannot help wondering how they might work upon the feelings of an ignorant community should he, an unimportant traveller, pause there to recover strength, all unfortified by luggage containing the gift of the Garter from one king to another.

The tolerance of the Wahhabis is nothing like that of the Moorish rulers of Cordova, in the days when Islam was a great intellectual power in the world, but he does not condemn them. The Colonel's kindly feelings for Arabia extend even to a prejudice in favour of its sunsets. "The colours are more delicate than might be expected, and the violence in the sky's colouring, seen in India and some other Eastern countries, does not appear often in Arabia. It is Mozart, not Wagner." Now, is a traveller who knows the Far East going to remain quiet under that? What, sunset over the China Sea, magnificent and terrible, merely Nordic grandiloquence? That is nearly enough to make a reader turn again savagely to Doughty, to quote a bit from the scene when the righteous knives were out after him. The retort would not be fair, but it would be human. Still, it must be remembered, even of Wahhabis, that other lands, where the skies of dawn and sunset can be suitably Mozartian, have had their puritans and their inquisitions.

Though our author must know that. He was only thinking regretfully of the simplicity of life in the desert, far away. For he admits in

a postscript that Old Arabia is changing at last. "Where we landed from a sailing-boat on the edge of the virgin dunes of the east coast is now an American industrial town, the centre of the oilfield of the Arabian-American Oil Company." The Wahhabis are going to learn something not in the Koran, evidently. Not date palms, goats, camels, mosques and the smell of herbs and charcoal fires, but quays, derricks, rigs, sheds, pipelines, telegraph-lines, power-plants, automobiles rushing about and hurrying gangs of workmen. Not the salutation, "Peace upon you," but "Okay, boy."

The colonel, in a sudden change of mind, seems to suggest that it may be all to the good. Arabia, he thinks, is coming on. "Arabia and the Arabs are now astir. He who visits the Arabian lands may yet see again that wondrous Arabian bird—a Phoenix." He tells us there are now motor roads across the desert; there are aerodromes; the King has completed the task of restoring his dynasty; there is a revival of Islamic teaching; irrigation experts from America are busy; the towns of Arabia are linked by wireless telegraph stations; the royal camp of hundreds of tents is mechanized; six-wheel lorries rumble through the wadis. As Shakespeare foretold: "The vasty wilds of wide Arabia are as thorofares now."

Well, is that the Phoenix? A remarkable fowl. We cannot say we admire it. Its nests are commonplace, marked by stains of black grease, and by many strong smells, none of them like the fabled incense of Araby. Is it better for the Garden of Eden to be a car-park? "Aircraft have landed at Al Bowaib, an hour by car from Riyadh." It might be Croydon, which also, like Riyadh, has an Old Palace. The transforming properties of magical petrol transcend the most powerful incantation of the Arabian Nights; yet its common result is not to make the desert blossom as the rose, but to change an oasis or what not into concrete and tarmac. This comes about through the logic of necessity, though other names have been found for it.

The colonel is sure Arabia's lutes and forests are thus to be improved. Even the Beduin is in the right way to become machine-minded, like the rest of a forthcoming generation.

"There are over fifteen thousand miles of regularly used car-tracks in Arabia; and where we painfully made our way through the Hejaz valleys are well-metalled roads,"

So all is for the best, apparently, as the Phoenix reappears. Alas for the myrtles, apricots, pomegranates, palms, fountains and doves when the explosive engine arrives, and with it the mind that loves the music of racing pistons above the music of nightingales. But is the colonel only advising us, ironically, that there was once a serious crisis at Tours and that we may expect another?

—*London Times Reviewer*

## THE MOORISH SCIENCE TEMPLE AND ITS "KORAN"

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In "Black Gods of the Metropolis,"\* Dr. Arthur Huff Fauset presents evidence as to the character and practices of five Negro cults in the northern cities of the United States, namely, (1) Mt. Sinai Holy Church of America, Inc.; (2) United House of Prayer for All People (Bishop Grace); (3) Church of God (Black Jews); (4) Moorish Science Temple of America, and (5) Father Divine Peace Mission Movement.

This review-article is especially concerned with the chapter on the Moorish Science Temple of America. The author gives a sympathetic treatment of this cult. Because of the difficulty he had in using a copy of the Moorish Science "Holy Koran," due to the esteem of the members for this document, his study and interpretation of the movement may be supplemented by the material in this article. Dr. Fauset's chapter contains testimonies and observations of people familiar with the movement. This article will present further conclusions.

It was in 1937 that Hartford Negroes were told of the Moorish Science Temple of America by a leader from the present headquarters of the movement in Brooklyn, New York. He convinced many Negroes here that the Moorish cult was the true religion of the Negro. The group now meets in a home on the corner of Capen and Main streets. A large room there is called the Holy Temple. A platform holds the pulpit. Chairs are used for seats. A picture of the late Noble Prophet Drew Ali, the founder of the faith, hangs prominently on the temple wall. The picture shows the prophet in full oriental regalia—fez, linen trousers, shawl and sash. On the opposite wall is a Charter from the State of Connecticut, issued in 1938, declaring the organization to be a corporation without capital stock. The third important item is a set of printed laws, called Acts of Moorish Science Temple of America. Act Six deals directly with the racial issue. It states, "With us all members must proclaim their nationality and we are teaching our people their nationality that they are a part and partial of this said government and know that they are not Negroes, colored folk, Black people or Ethiopians because these names were given to slaves

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\* *Black Gods of the Metropolis*. Negro Religious Cults of the Urban North. By Arthur Huff Fauset. Publications of the Philadelphia Anthropological Society, Volume III. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1944. pp. 126. \$2.00. There is a second edition.

Our readers will remember articles on this cult in *The Moslem World* Vol. XXV, pp. 40-44 and Vol. XXXII, pp. 55-59.

by slave holders in 1779 and lasted until 1865 during the time of slavery. This is a new era, all men must proclaim their free Nationality. In order to be recognized by the government in which they live and the nations of the earth this is the reason why Allah the Great God of the Universe ordained Noble Drew Ali the Prophet to redeem his people from their sinful ways. The Moorish Americans are descendants of the ancient Moabites who inhabited the Northwest and Southwest shores of Africa."

At the end of the Acts is a prayer to Allah: "Allah the Father of the Universe, Father of Love, Truth, Peace and Freedom. Allah is my protector, my guide and my salvation by night and by day."

Act Six has caused much debate in the Negro community from the beginning of the movement in Hartford. To most Negroes it has caused much amusement, because the average Negro is more interested in dignifying the name "Negro" than in escaping from it.

In the Moorish Temple on Main street the Sabbath is observed on Friday. But Sunday School is held on Sunday at one o'clock. At the Friday worship service a reader presides. He is a layman who is one of the leaders of the movement. The two highest local officers are the Grand Sheik and the Grand Sheikess. Music is not important in the service. Tunes of the spirituals and other hymns of familiar Negro music are used, but the words have been changed to fit the new teaching. The service is open for discussion and members may talk on receiving permission from the presiding officer. The subjects discussed deal mostly with racial advancement.

When the movement first started in Hartford a large number of Negroes left the churches to which they had belonged. It is said that hundreds of Negroes joined the movement. Some were dissatisfied with their churches. Others joined the movement because it was something new and others because it offered sick benefits. Some were attracted by the type of services conducted and the special dress worn by the membership, which was colorful and indicated rank. Persons of another faith are not barred from the services. The Negroes who have joined the cult believe they have found the real religion because it provides for spiritual needs and their emotional expression, and for racial advancement through communal rather than individual business enterprises.

On pages 45 and 46 of his book, Dr. Fauset reproduces the front cover, the inside cover and page one of the book, "The Holy Koran," which contains the central teaching of the cult.

On page 2 there is a picture with the following words below it: "Sultan Abdul Aziz Ibu (*sic*) Suad (*sic*) / The Descendant of Hagar, now the Head of the / Holy City of Mecca." The picture is one of 'Abdu 'l-'Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, King of Saudi Arabia.