

PREPARE

MUSLIM DEATH AND BURIAL
ARAB CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS STUDIED IN
A VILLAGE IN JORDAN

BY

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PREFACE

This treatise aims at preserving notes on Arab and Muslim tradition and is based on studies in the field. While working on my book, I felt the need of returning once more to the Holy Land as I found it necessary to complete and verify my material, and to see the changes in the last years. Besides, I should greatly appreciate renewed personal contact with the land and its people.

In 1958, my wish came true. I was granted an international fellowship by the Elin Wägner Foundation, Stockholm, for which I am most grateful. Professor Johannes Lindblom, Lund, Sweden, was appointed supervisor of my studies.

In 1959, I left for Jerusalem, Jordan, where I stayed for four months (March-June).

I was happy to meet some of my former friends: Mrs Bertha Spafford Vester, Head of the American Colony, who, on my first visit in 1925, suggested Artas, a village south of Bethlehem, as a suitable place for my anthropological field work; and Mr Wehbe, my Arab teacher at the Newman School of Mission in Jerusalem. Mr and Mrs Wehbe had both retired after their life-long work in different schools. They were now staying in Bet Jala, near Bethlehem, as they were not allowed to live in their house in Jerusalem (Israel).

I had not been in Jerusalem since 1931, and after this long interval it was necessary for me to make new contacts.

Dr Knut T. Gundersen and his wife, both Norwegians, showed great understanding of my work and took much interest in it. Dr Gundersen, Director of the German Lutheran Schools for Arab children in Jordan, who later took up work at the Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, U.S.A., kindly introduced me to the Arab teachers at the German Lutheran School in Bethlehem. I had the opportunity to listen to their opinions on different subjects, as even during their vacation, they used to come to the school to exchange thoughts and viewpoints. The Headmaster of the

School, Mr Judy F. Docmac, helped me with my research work. When school started again, Mr Docmac suggested that I work at his house. There I was most kindly welcomed by his wife. To quote a man from Jerusalem: Arab hospitality is legendary. As to myself, I met great kindness in all quarters, for which I am most thankful.

My sincere thanks are due to *Societas Scientiarum Fennica* and to Professor HENRIK ZILLIACUS, Editor of the Series *Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum*, Helsingfors.

For recommendations and assistance in various ways I am indebted to Professor BERTEL APPELBERG, Helsingfors, Professor K. ROB. V. WIKMAN, Åbo, Professor HELMER RINGGREN, Åbo, Professor JOH. LINDBLOM, Lund, and Mrs BARBRO ALVING, Institutör of the Elin Wägner Foundation, Stockholm.

I am especially grateful to Miss Alice M. EAGER for helping me with the English language and proof-reading, and for her useful suggestions during the years.

The never failing interest and support of my late brother, WALTER GRANQVIST, is a memory I dearly cherish.

HILMA GRANQVIST

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INTRODUCTION

My present book, *MUSLIM DEATH and BURIAL, Arab Customs and Traditions Studied in a Village in Jordan*, is a continuation of my earlier publications in the field of Palestinian Muslim anthropology, and completes my trilogy of the three great events in human biography. The preceding books in this series are: *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village*, 2 Vols, 200 and 366 pp., Helsingfors, 1931 and 1935; *Birth and Childhood among the Arabs* (Studies in a Muhammadan Village in Palestine) 289 pp., Helsingfors, 1947; and, *Child Problems among the Arabs* (same subtitle as the preceding one), 336 pp., Helsingfors, 1950.

This book, like the previous ones, is based on local residence and study, and the same method has been followed throughout. The milieu is the same, the Arab Muslim village of Artas, south of Bethlehem. A list of the inhabitants of the village is included in my statistics contained in *Marriage Conditions I*, and in *Child Problems among the Arabs*. The statistics cover a period of a hundred years, 1927 inclusive; that is four to five generations, as far back as the people questioned could remember.

In my previous books I have described the women in Artas who gave me valuable assistance in 1925—31. In the present volume they are also frequently mentioned. For practical reasons, I again include some short data since this book may be read independently, though belonging to a series.

Alya Ibrahim and Hamdiye Sanad were two women from Artas, both great sources of information on ancient customs, and on all the daily happenings in the village. Other people mentioned in the book were likewise villagers from Artas, unless a different origin is given.

My principal co-worker was Sitt Louisa, as she was called in the village. Actually her name was Marie Louise Baldensperger. She was a French citizen, born on December 1, 1862, in Jerusalem, where she spent all her life. In 1848, her father, Henry Baldensperger, came from Elsass to Jerusalem to work as a missionary.

Emile Baldensperger, Sitt Louisa's brother, born in 1858, also gave me valuable information. He was a bee-keeper in Jaffa, but now and then he came to Artas where the family Baldensperger owned a house in which I stayed with his sister.

I had been looking forward to revisiting the principal region of my field work in the Holy Land. When I finally returned, in 1959, I fully realized how fortunate I had been in having had the possibility to stay in Artas at a time when circumstances for anthropological research were especially favourable. Now there were great changes and alterations. My thoughts went back with gratitude to my former co-workers, and I missed them profoundly.

Sitt Louisa had passed away many years ago. Her grave was on «the other side», on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, Israel. Alya and Hamdiye were no more, nor was Emil Baldensperger among the living.

The Baldensperger house had been sold, and was now owned by Arab villagers, two brothers, who lived there with their families.

Many of the people who had set their stamp on the village had passed away. A new generation had grown up to cultivate the vegetable and fruit gardens. Young women in their national costumes, now, like in former days, came to fetch water from the spring.

I called on Father Salvatore Bandak, Arab priest of the Convent in Artas. Thanks to his kindness through the years in sending me brief notes with news from Artas, I never completely lost contact with the village.

The number of villagers had risen, partly due to increased nativity, and partly to Palestine refugees having settled there. In 1927, there were about 500 people in Artas. In 1960, it was calculated that there were 1 500 inhabitants, which includes 200 refugees.

In this connection I should like to point out that, when I say «t o d a y», in the present volume, I refer to a period between the two World Wars. In the heading of this volume I mention *J o r d a n*, the official name of the Arab part of Palestine and Transjordan combined. (In daily life the former is often called the West Banque, the latter the East Banque.) Many Palestinian places, mentioned in this book, lie in Israel since the division in 1948. (See Index: Geographical Names.)

In 1959, my four months' journey to Jordan (compared with my other visits to Palestine) was not a long-term research period. This time I mainly aimed at verifying my notes on certain points.

The greater part of the material in this book, like in the former ones, is a direct translation of the oral reports in Arabic given by the village women, especially Alya and Hamdiye. Important expressions and phrasings, formulae, proverbs, general rules and songs were checked on the spot (as regards the language), in 1927, by Elias Haddad, an Arab teacher in Jerusalem. In 1931, Ibrahim Ata, an Arab teacher in Bethlehem, helped me in the same way.

Notes in the language of the culture studied are always of value in themselves. My notes in Arabic (dialect) will be handed over to a library to be available for students interested in the subject; the Arabic words are both transcribed and given in Arabic letters.

In the present book, *ʿAin* (ʿ) is indicated, but not if it is the first letter of the word. The points indicating heavy consonants are marked: *ḥ ṣ ḍ ṭ ḏ ḏ*. Like in anglicized words of Arabic origin (e.g. sheikh not *šēḫ*) *»dh»*, *»gh»*, *»kh»*, *»sh»* and *»th»*, each represent a single Arabic letter.¹ This form of transliteration is natural in a book which, it is to be hoped, will reach a wide circle of readers of anthropology.

I am greatly indebted to Mr Docmac for rewriting most of my Arabic material in Arabic letters (1959), and for his suggestions and help in checking difficult terms and dialects. Mrs Docmac sometimes took part in the resulting discussions on old customs, sharing her knowledge with us, especially of expressions concerning women.

Parallel customs among Christians in Bethlehem and Beit Jala were pointed out to me by Judy Docmac, and several of them are quoted in this book. He kindly introduced me to Khalil Jubran Jubrail, a dispenser in Bethlehem, who supplied me with some interesting facts about ancient customs.

Talks with Mr and Mrs Docmac in their home, and with other intellectual Arabs, revealed that much of olden times was still known, yet tradition had lost its significance in many respects.

Even the village women were reluctant to tell of old customs — at least to an outsider.

In 1959, I met two Arab students of tales and traditions:

Dr Tawfik Canaan, a veteran in this field, was an old acquaintance, who has published numerous articles on manners and customs in the Holy Land. He was staying at the Augusta-Victoria Hospiz (Mount of

Olives) which has been turned into a hospital for refugees. During the Palestinian war, his own house was in 'No man's land', and if it still existed, which he did not know, it would now be in the part of Jerusalem belonging to Israel. Dr Canaan was poor in health, but in spite of having lost his home, his library, collections, and manuscripts, he was still active, lecturing and writing on folk-lore. He greatly deplored the fact that such slight interest was taken in traditional tales and customs in the present day while there was still a possibility to collect information concerning ancient times.

In Bethlehem I met Mr Issa Massou, M.A., who was working on his thesis »Religious Folklore of the Bethlehem District in Jordan». In Spring 1963, he was awarded the degree of Ph.D. by the London University, and is hoping to see his thesis in print before long.

I came into contact with some other Arabs interested in folk-lore, but unfortunately they were too much involved in their daily work to find time for serious studies of this kind. Stress has found its way even to the Orient!

Times have changed greatly. The Arab way of thinking, Arab habits and customs, views and ideas are different, mainly for two reasons: firstly, the Palestine conflict, the Arab tragedy, and secondly, the modern trend. There are negative and positive changes, shadows and lights.

The Palestine Arab tragedy is universally known. When Palestine was divided, about 900 000 Arabs living in the territory which is now called Israel, became refugees. Of the 180 000 Arabs who remained in Israel, 20 000 lost their homes.

The world, it is true, has taken on a certain responsibility with regard to the Palestine Arab refugees.

Cut off from their homes and their work, the refugees have to live on what the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) can give them. High birth rates have increased the Arab refugee population. In 1961, they numbered 1 100 000, and of these more than half were living in refugee camps and huts, on a ration of a bare minimum. About 10 per cent are Christians, the others Muslims.

The Arabs living along the Armistice line, 181 000 souls in 111 villages, have lost most or all of their arable land. Because they have homes of their own, they are not strictly considered refugees. The UNRWA is not authorized to help them.

The Bedouin, a semi-nomadic people, largely of the Beersheba district

and the Negeb, are in a similar position. They are in great need, but do not qualify for UNRWA relief.

Various Christian Churches and institutions are doing helpful relief work. The Quakers, the Lutherans, the World Council of Churches, the Catholic Apostolic Mission, and other philanthropic institutions assist in clothing the refugees. Men and women from various countries, deeply concerned about the refugees, have made it their task to give them human sympathy and understanding in their distress. They have endeavoured to mitigate their needs and sufferings, and to renew their faith in human dignity, to encourage those who have given up hope.

The most optimistic among the refugees have comforted themselves by saying: »A passing dark cloud with fair weather to follow!»²

But in 1965, 17 years have passed since the disaster, and the refugees still remain refugees, and there seems to be no solution to their problem.

People living under such abnormal conditions as these refugees, cannot, in their isolation, keep up their customs and traditions which are closely connected with work, home and happiness. Their minds and attitudes have changed, they are bitter, and consider themselves the victims of injustice.

In their thoughts the refugees dwell on their lost villages, their homes, and their graves, their vineyards, and their gardens with their »golden» trees, as they call the orange trees. Doomed to a life of idleness and poverty in refugee camps, they feel they have no future. The young people, so I was told, are even more bitter than the old ones.

Most of the Palestine Arab refugees live in Jordan. The total population of Jordan is 1 500 000, and more than one-third are refugees on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency rolls; besides these there is a considerable number not on the relief rolls. In addition to the great refugee problem, Jordan has almost insurmountable economic difficulties.

The government of Jordan and other Arab host countries have done what they can to help the refugees. In a country poor in water it is a problem to provide suitable camps. Housing for those who do not live in camps is another problem, increased by the fact that unemployment prevents the refugees from renting houses. The cost of education for the children is partly defrayed by the government.

Great moral courage is required to live through disaster and suffering of great length without injury to body and soul. Their religion is a source of power to the Arabs, both Muslim and Christian. Another source of moral power is their conviction of having been subjected to injustice.

Still another source is the knowledge of the high and advanced Arab culture in former days which reached even the south of Europe.

In spite of all these difficulties, Jordan, like other countries in the Arab and Muslim world, is a rapidly developing country. Life and customs have changed enormously in recent years.³ Buses and cars have replaced camels, asses, mules, horses. Even the Bedouin and the peasants make use of these modern means of traffic. Travellers arrive and depart by aeroplane.

In Jerusalem, practically all Muslim women have discarded the veil. Both men and women often appear bare-headed in public, in the western fashion.

The stores are filled with imported goods from west and east, and modern service and packing has been adopted.

Both Arab and foreign literature is available in the bookshops. I had never before seen weekly illustrated magazines in Arabic, and now they were being sold in the bazaars and streets, like the daily newspapers. The wireless has become immensely popular and even taxis are equipped with apparatuses. I remember how deeply impressed I was by hearing the news about King Hussein arriving in the U.S.A. in an aeroplane conducted by himself — while I was in a taxi half way between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Houses of beautiful handhewn stone are being erected in European style, and there are some modern hotels of international standard. Interior decoration of the homes has changed, too. The handy small tables of former days have been retained. But those who used to sit on a rug on the floor in their childhood homes, eating with their fingers from common bowls, now sit on high chairs round a table laid in the western way. Even the religious rites have been influenced. In many mosques, calling the Muslims to their daily prayers goes via loudspeakers. In Jerusalem I saw Mecca pilgrims in their white robes set off on their pilgrimage by bus.

How different things are now. I remember that there were camels and donkeys in front of the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem, and now (1959) there were only motorcars and buses. In 1925, Mrs Lydia Einszler took me to Ramallah to show me a typical Arab village. When Ramallah is mentioned to-day, no one thinks of an old-fashioned village. A modern city has grown up near-by which may well be compared with Jerusalem in significance, as to daily life.

The process of change is proceeding at different speed in the various

places and social groups. In general it is more rapid and perceptible in the cities than in the villages, or among the Bedouin.

»You should make note of the great role of the cinemas in present times», said the wife of a doctor in Jerusalem to me. The cinemas are favourite places of entertainment. In little Bethlehem alone there are three picture-houses, the most recent one seating 1 000 persons. Unfortunately, it is not only the best films that find their way to the Holy land.

A well-known Arab in Jerusalem said to me one day: We Arabs are conservative. We retain what is old and good. But we are also modern, and adopt modern improvements.

In a letter of Nov. 23rd, 1960, Mr Docmac answered some questions that I had asked him:

»Names of boys and girls have changed, both in Christian and Muslim families. This is due to the progress in all phases of life.

You are right, mosquito-nets are not needed because there are no mosquitoes because of DDT and the new advanced way of looking after people's health.»

I recollect a visit to the Teachers' Training College in Ramallah where women teachers are trained, and their reaction to my statement that I wanted to see the changes that had taken place since my last visit. — »Changes! yes, that is good.» The young and clever teacher — Miss Adawia Alami — who made this remark, had been studying in U.S.A. and written a thesis called »Misconceptions in the Treatment of the Arab World in Selected American Textbooks for Children» for her M.A. degree.

Miss Olga Wahbe, the Administrator of the Teachers' Training College in Ramallah, gave me the report to read that she had sent to the U.S.A. on Feb. 29th, 1956. In 1952, she had been on a State Department Foreign Exchange Programme with a view of starting Training Centres in Jordan. After having written that »the Government and Municipal authorities in Jordan are faced with great difficulties in coping with increasing demand of the population for education,⁴ esp. after 1948», and describing the founding and development of the Institute, she finished by saying that she was glad to know that the Americans were becoming more interested in »our problems of the Arab world and also in our Progress.»

In 1963, The Rev. H. Adkins, B.A., Sub-Dean of the Collegiate Church of St. George the Martyr, Jerusalem, Jordan, also teacher of St. George's School, Jerusalem, Jordan, kindly checked the following paragraph for me and made some additions:

It may be mentioned that annually about 4 000 Arabs and Armenians sit for the Jordan or London Matriculation examination.⁵ While comparatively large numbers go on to universities in Beirut, Cairo, England, or America, it is increasingly difficult for the rest to find suitable posts within the country, though many go to other Arab countries such as Kuwait or Saudi Arabia.

The Arab awakening, so much spoken of, is highly a cultural awakening.

Before going over to my treatise, I feel I should mention some of the new cultural trends, and point out the endeavours made towards progress and change, so characteristic of the present Arab and Muslim world. Efforts to achieve a western standard do not exclude keen interest and increased demands with regard to the Arabic language, and the Arabic, as well as the Islamic literature.

But the knowledge imparted in schools and institutes will dominate and push aside local usages, customs and traditional lore. The difficulty in obtaining authentic information is increasing day by day with regard to old and oral Arab and Muslim tradition.

MUSLIM DEATH AND BURIAL

FACTORS AFFECTING MORTALITY — FIRST SECTION

This section is based on material collected in 1925—1927. As no adults died in these years, my description is based on information obtained in the village of Artas.

Some rules, rites, and preventive and curative measures aiming at prolonging life (in a more or less magic way), and other factors influencing health and mortality are first given.

A general presentation of Muslim death and burial customs follows, and some cases describing individual human reactions to death are included.

Finally, instances of unnatural deaths are reported.

FACTORS AFFECTING HEALTH — MORTALITY

MAY DEATH BE FAR FROM YOU!

During my first stay in Palestine, 1925—27, there were no deaths among adults in Artas, and thus no immediate reason for discussing Muslim death and burial. But in January, 1926, I took up the matter with my women in the village. I have made a note of Sitt Louisa's attitude to Alya when I told them about my interest in customs connected with death. Feeling very low, Alya was not inclined to talk about matters of this kind.

Sitt Louisa explained to Alya that deaths in general were concerned, not hers personally, by any means.

— No, thou wilt live long! she assured her.

When Alya, happening to have a cold, sneezed loudly, we hurriedly paid her compliments. We said: Thank God, *il-ḥamd lillāh!* and expressed our good wishes concerning her health. Then Alya smiled. Had she not, herself, quoted the proverb: »He who sneezes will not become a corpse?»

According to Arab and Muslim views, sneezing is a sign of health.¹ And Sitt Louisa and I did not neglect to emphasize it. We tried to cheer her up and to encourage her to tell us about death and burial. It was all much against her will. Finally, however, she described some of her experiences. Weeping, Alya told us of her sister dying in the First World War, in Transjordan, far away from home, and repeated the wailing songs for a woman who dies alone among strangers. — No one likes to dwell on the thought of death. Life is valuable. Death is cruel.

If an Arab has to speak of something unpleasant, unclean, or immoral, he will use an expression or a gesture which shows that he, personally, or his family, have nothing to do with it. Or he will use a formula to divert evil from those he is speaking to.

If he mentions the word death, he will say: »May it be far from you!» Then he can go on.

SOME VIEWPOINTS

When a man dies, it does not mean only extinction of a man as an individual. Society loses a member; an empty space is left, large or small, as the case may be. Customs in connection with death and burial are influenced to some extent by ideas concerning the relationship between the individual and society.

SITT LOUISA once said: »An Arab is never alone. When he was born he was in company, when he dies he will be in a still larger company.»

With these words, based on life-long experience, she actually brings out an important feature of Arab life.

In towns, people associate with their neighbours.

There is a saying: »Ask about the neighbour before ye rent the house.»

And: »Better is a neighbour who is near, than a brother far away.»²

SITT LOUISA: »The neighbour is of great importance. He gives one salt, if it is needed, and other things.»

In towns, people depend on their neighbours in many respects. The fellaheen, too, realize the value of good neighbourship and this is seen from the wailing songs.

Fellowship between people is occasioned by unsafe conditions in the country, by the necessity of uniting because of a common enemy. Occasionally a man may have to join a stranger or a stranger group for fear of robbers and other dangers during a journey.

An advice is: »Find a companion before ye take the road.»

It is usual for people to move in groups. They should not do so only in betrothal and wedding processions, or other festivals, but also in daily life; the men together, and the women together, on their way to work in the fields and orchards, or to market their products. Women always go together into the wilderness to gather herbs or wood.

In the villages, the men meet every night in their clubs. The women meet on their way to and from the well, or the spring, where they go to draw water or to wash their clothes.

In a little village, everybody knows all about each other. Life is rich when shared with others. The closer the fellowship between people, the more are they concerned with each other. This is true, particularly in an Arab village where strong ties of kinship exist and the sense of

fellowship is keen; within the family, within the clan, and also within the village. This may lead to solidarity but easily also to the conviction that there is no happiness except within their own circle.

He who must leave his father's house is to be pitied.

The bride weeps when she has to leave her own family, her blood relatives; a woman married in another place is a cut-off woman, she is a stranger wife and will always remain a stranger.

A man who for some reason has to stay in a foreign country is pitied for having to be absent from his home, even if only for a short time.

If someone is in prison — which is not considered a disgrace, but rather an honour — his relatives must visit him daily, if possible; it is their duty.³ And when he is let out, there is a celebration, like for a man returning from a long journey. Night after night, each family in turn slaughters an animal to celebrate his return. They eat and enjoy themselves in honour of a long lost family member.

The parable of the prodigal son has traits characteristic of oriental life of to-day. The father has a calf slaughtered. They eat and make merry quite like in the present-day Arab life. In the parable, the father says: And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry. Later the same evening the father repeats: It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again.⁴

This is an extreme expression of the idea that a man is alive only when he remains among his own people.

To-day, the Arabs pray: »May God give every stranger a safe return to his own family!»

If death is near it is said to a person who is away from home:

Oh, thou stranger of the house

Oh, thou who makest my bowels feel pain

Come home!

Go to thy village, thy country

Do not die as a stranger!

— Shall I die as a stranger of this house

Though my people are many

The carrier of my bier will only do it

By pleading and begging.

He should be at home, in his father's house, surrounded by his own people, and especially when his last hour is approaching. He should be buried with his forefathers, in their grave.

However, people have died away from home in a stranger place:⁵ men on a journey, or at war; women married to stranger men. Sometimes they have been buried far away from their own people, in stranger earth.

This is considered a great calamity, but there is an explanation. The dust for his body had been taken from that very stranger place. Of a woman it is said: »Her dust drew her».

From the earth is obtained the dust of which man is created,⁶ but it is a loan only. The earth is a strict lender who demands the return of the loan after some time. The earth, the permanent owner of the dust, summons the man, the temporary owner of the dust, but does nothing for the reunion. The man himself shall return to the place from whence his dust was taken. He must take it back to its rightful owner. Man is of dust, and to the very part of the earth from whence his dust was taken must he return.

In my book, *Birth and Childhood among the Arabs*, I have told of the idea that the angel Gabriel takes the dust from which a man is to be created and puts it into the mother's womb. He does not always bring it from the native village, but sometimes from a distant place or even from several places. Thus a man does not know from where his dust has come and, consequently, he does not know where he is to die, or where he is to be buried.

A Muhammadan tradition says: No one knows in what land he shall die. This is known to none but God. No one knows when he is to die. God is all-knowing. God alone knows the fate of man.⁷

God's knowledge does not only mean prescience; the belief that God is all-knowing is closely connected with the belief in predestination.

Man must submit to whatever life has in store for him, whether good or evil. It is from God. That is fate, *kismet*, *naşib*. Everything is pre-determined, and must happen as written in God's book from the very beginning. A man, like an actor, must perform the part allotted to him, without altering it himself. Yet there is an important difference. An actor is not responsible for word or deed in the play he is acting in, whereas a man, acting the part of his own life, is responsible for each word and for all his actions.

As a matter of fact, unhappiness, sickness, and death are often considered a punishment for sins committed. A man draws punishments upon himself and upon others for his own wrong-doings.⁸

It seems as if the order of events might be deranged in some instances in spite of fatalism.

In the following, a kind of celebration for the deceased will be described. It takes place on the first Thursday after his death. But in the case of a murdered man, the celebration is held on the first Wednesday, the reason being that death was not from the Lord, but from man, or, literally, from the servant or slave. It seems as if the underlying idea were: God might have allowed him to live longer had not man intervened.

There are some beliefs and practices connected with a murdered or decapitated man. Barrenness can be prevented by drinking blood taken from such a man, or by stepping over his body. A wife who has prematurely ceased to bear children may become pregnant if she steps over his grave, or takes stones from the grave, puts them into water and washes herself in it. Life — new life — may be gained from the life⁹ of which a murdered man has been robbed.

The sacrifice of an animal contains the same idea: the life of a victim can redeem or save life. If a man thinks that his life is in danger, he vows to sacrifice an animal so as not to be deprived of his old age. Or, he may make a sacrifice for a near relative or a family member who is dear to him, so as to save the person concerned from premature death. The animal is a substitute for him who, otherwise, would have to die.

An expression belonging here is: »May God lengthen thy life!»¹⁰

A pleasant, joyful, and easy way of living keeps a man healthy and vigorous, whereas a hard, laborious life, filled with grief and afflictions consumes a man's strength and diminishes his chances to live a long life on earth.

In an Arabic verse it is said that to marry young girls, ride on thoroughbred horses, and walk among green things lengthen a man's life;¹¹ and to marry widows, travel through deserts, and take part in funeral processions shorten a man's life. — Women, horses and thresholds may be sources either of happiness or of unhappiness.

There is a strong belief in the power of words and wishes expressed. The Arabic language, both solemn and everyday, contains innumerable good wishes for prosperity. Greetings, compliments, thanks, congratula-

tions are not only formal words. They convey a blessing. It is a wish that all may be well — with themselves and their friends — and that they may all live long on earth, in their own land.

Not only in biblical times were there reasons to desire a long life «upon the land that God giveth». In Palestine life has always been difficult for its inhabitants; likewise in more recent times, even to-day. As far back as people remember there have been disturbances and troubles. Catastrophes of various kinds have kept the population constantly on the move. Because of an enemy, numerous people, often whole villages — have had to leave their homes for periods of long or short duration. Wars, famine and poverty have compelled the people to leave their native villages. But, in better times they returned when danger was over — they, or maybe their descendants.

Yet, even in calm and peaceful days, the happiness of man may be threatened in various ways. Sorrow and illness find their way into their homes.

SICKNESS

The nearness of death is acutely felt when diseases, with periods of long suffering, appear. But not all ailments, not even the severe ones, result in death. Yet even minor troubles are taken seriously — as a warning. God visits me, say the sick.

A sick man should not be left alone.¹² Villagers come to sit by him. Relatives and friends come to comfort him. If a sheikh is ill, they come even from distant parts of the land.

In theory, a sick person should be strengthened and comforted in his weak condition by having many visitors around him. It will prevent him from feeling deserted. The villagers want him to recover, and this restores his vitality, encourages him and gives him confidence.

In Marriage Conditions, I told of a villager who lost his bride in spite of great expenditure in connection with marriage — he had given part of the bride price, gifts, etc. The bride was given to another man. The villager was deeply affected and one day, in autumn 1926, he was said to be dying. All the men of the village assembled in his house, as they are wont to do when someone is about to die. In a case like this a man needs the sympathy and encouragement of his fellow-beings. His injured feelings and his dignity were restored. He recovered.

The Arabs believe in a relationship between psychological factors and

the cause of disease. Fright and horror, for instance, are considered to cause leprosy. A shock may be a precipitating cause as well as a remedy.¹³

In my previous books, in different connections, I have treated sickness and the people's ideas of cause and remedy. The various items are easily found under their respective headings in the text and in the Index.

Here I give only a few viewpoints and some supplementary remarks.

Sickness is as a rule considered due to supernatural beings and causes: to God — to demons and witchcraft.¹⁴

The e y e is one of the most dangerous causers of sickness. The evil eye — also the admiring eye — may be harmful.

How often do not the women mention the e n e m y. Jealousy and envy are injurious. Evil people may inflict wounds by means of magic and by curses.

A man may even bring unhappiness and destruction onto himself, his own family, his descendants. He may do so by deed or by word. Evil actions or (false) oaths may bring disaster. An oath is a conditional cursing of oneself.

Curses and self-malediction have brought destruction to whole families. When expressed, curses as well as blessings are considered physical powers with constant effect.

MEANS OF PROTECTION

The preventive means used against evil influences and sickness are more or less of a magic or religious kind.

People try to protect themselves by saying God's name, by magic formulae, incantation, »surrounding with God's name» — sometimes combined with fumigation; by amulets, verses from the Quran, blessings, prayers, holy vows, and sacrifices.

HEALING

The belief in supernatural powers is uppermost, even in rational treatment of man or animal. Man gives the medicine, but God heals the sick and diseased.

In the following case animals are concerned.

In my Diary, on a Sunday in June, 1930, I wrote: Sitt Louisa and I went out at sunset for a stroll in the village. We met several villagers and talked to them. Then we wandered up to the canal, walking westwards

for a while, and looking down onto the village. On our way back we met Mhammad, Isma'in's son. He greeted us in the usual way. High up in the mountains, a shepherd was seen with sheep and goats.

»That is our shepherd», said the young man. Then he went on to tell us that the sheep suffer from worms, causing bleeding sores. To relieve them we crush the root of *Luf*¹⁵ and spread it on the wounds.

And that heals the sheep, said I, but the young man corrected me: »God cures them.»

And in the following case a man is concerned:

Sheikh Salem from Shiyukh came over to the village to cure Khalil Ayesh who had had a stroke. «And he cured him. — No, he gave the medicine, but God cured him.»

THE BONESETTER

A man who is to cure a woman — especially if he must touch her — begins by expressing an adoption formula, thus making her his *sister*.

In spring 1931, SITT LOUISA told me of the following incident.

»Halime Ali had hurt her foot badly. They called in Abd il-Razzaq, a man from Jabal il-Nar, in the neighbourhood of Hebron. He is a bonesetter.¹⁶ This power is hereditary. All members of his family have been or still are bonesetters.»

At the time there was an English lady with Sitt Louisa. She, too, had hurt her foot. The Jerusalem doctors were 'unable' to help her. She did not improve. And now this bonesetter was in Artas for the sake of Halime Ali.

HAMDIYE said: »If there is something wrong with the lady's leg, ask her if she would like the bonesetter to put it right for her.»

When the man was asked to do so, he said: »Very well. Why not?»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »And he did it beautifully. There were clean towels, etc. And there the lady sat looking like a queen.»

Then she told me more about the sheikh and the English lady:

»Abd il-Razzaq entered and approached her. He said: 'I have a thousand sisters (meaning his women patients), I must make brother- and sisterhood with thee, too.'

He said the formula: Thou art my sister in God's book . . . thus adopting her as his sister. For she had to uncover her leg and he would see her knee. In the case of a sister, it does not matter.

He gave his orders: 'Boil some water, and give me a piece of soap!

We must rub the foot with it. And bring me a piece of white material, and another one for a bandage! Bring me some flour, not Australian, but home-grown! And bring me butter — home-made! Then he made a dough of flour, and butter and eggs.

And now comes the worst. He gripped her heel, and I put my arms around her to hold her down. Then he set the bone by pulling her foot with a jerk.

Before starting his operation he said: 'In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful! O Lord, thou who healest, heal this woman!'

And this pleased the English lady. Then he spread the dough over her leg, bandaging it firmly.

He said to her: 'Do not loosen the bandage before it comes off of itself! It will come off of itself when the foot is healed. Rest peacefully until then! And I tell thee: Then thou wilt be able to stand on thy foot, if God so wills!' He spoke with authority and power.

We offered him a cup of coffee, but he would not have it. He accepted three shillings, however, without raising any objections.

And he went on to Halime Ali. And she too was cured. He did it for God.

He was a very pleasant man. I liked him very much. He spent the night in the men's club — the club of Abu Shahin — and was given food and drink.»

It should be observed here that, in the case of the English lady, the Muslim physician used exactly the same method as when treating a native woman.

Sometimes a wanderer with a curative power may heal even a stranger of another belief — in these days, like in olden times.

FADDA SA'ID HAS A STROKE

»Fadda was paralysed because of scoffing at a female derwish. She had laughed and mocked. Then came her punishment.

The female derwish said to her: 'I shall show thee!' — and her tongue was tied.

Sabha Musa found Fadda lying on the ground. Her hand and foot were paralysed.

The female derwish and her husband were begging. It is not dishonourable for a derwish to do so.»¹⁷

On June 20th, 1930, at the celebration of the Great Feast, I wrote

in my Diary about a visit to the Shahin quarter: Fadda is coming. She has almost recovered from her stroke. The problem of cauterizing was discussed. With a heated nail, they burn a cross on the breast. Fadda did so, and she improved greatly.

Leaves of grape-vine are put on the wound.¹⁸

BINDING OF KNOTS

In this connection I was told about the custom of tying a rag or a cloth to a tree. This is called binding of the evil.

SITT LOUISA: »In order that one gets healed.»

HAMDIYE: »And when thou leavest, then thou tiest a knot to a branch of the tree, and sayest: 'Stay there thou evil!' This is said three times. The sickness must pass out of the patient's body, because it is 'fastened' to the tree.»

At the mosque in Bet Ta'mir I saw a tree hung with such rags.¹⁹

ISOLATION OF A SICK PERSON

ALYA: »A sick person may be doomed to complete seclusion for a certain period.»

SITT LOUISA: »Contrary to the seclusion when the sick person is allowed to walk about.»

ALYA: »For seven days everything must be done 'indoors' for a sick woman. The woman who serves her is one who has stopped menstruating. The sick woman must eat unleavened bread without salt, and roasted wheat. And honey.

If the patient is a man and his mother is not alive, some other old woman ministers to him. They must make brother- and sisterhood. He must adopt her as a foster sister.»

SITT LOUISA: »That is, if he is twelve years or over.»

ALYA: »When he comes out of seclusion he is like a dead man, utterly powerless. They bring him a young pigeon and cook it for him to taste. Then he continues his diet. For forty days he eats unleavened bread and honey. After fifteen days they add some salt, a fourth of the usual amount. And after forty days he is allowed to eat mutton and drink sheep's milk, if available. He eats marjoram, *zā'tar*.»

The serving woman must wear special garments. No air is allowed to penetrate into the room of seclusion. No cat, no bird, no one and

no thing is allowed inside. It is not good to speak. It is not good if someone is present when bread is made. Cow dung only may be used for heating or fumigating — not wood, as it gives off flames.

HEALING BY SHEIKHS OR DERWISHES

Ever since olden times people have consulted a sheikh, a magician, a reader of the stars, when misfortune or sickness has gained a footing in the home. Or they have asked a holy man, a derwish, to help them, or to heal the sick person.

There are different orders of derwishes.²⁰ Some have power over scorpions and serpents. There is, for instance, the order of the sheikh Irfa'i, who was a snake charmer. Also his followers have power over serpents. If a serpent appears, the people bring a sheikh belonging to this order; they lift up their hands and call out: »O Sheikh Irfa'i!» The serpent hears the snake charmer being summoned.

Sitt Louisa knew a man of this order. His name was Abu Nizha; and he was a gardener in Wad Ehnén. He wore a white woollen turban, the turban of his order. SITT LOUISA said of him: »A mighty philosopher! I think he has such a powerful voice that he makes the snake disappear — and perhaps he also has a certain power over animals. He hypnotizes them.»

In Artas I was told that the saliva²¹ of certain derwishes has a curative power. Of the negro derwish, Zalame, in our village, it was said: »To cure a sick woman, he fans her with his mantle.»

In severe cases people often have to go to another place to seek help from men who are known to have the power to heal²²; or such a man is brought to the village.

SECLUSION OF DERWISHES

A derwish may isolate himself in order to get into contact with a demon who has caused sickness. A derwish can drive out the demon from a man possessed. A derwish, and other men with supernatural gifts, can see the demons and give them orders. He may even have a demon in his service.

ALYA: »Mhammad Ibrahim Ayesh has power over the demons. He goes into seclusion. But the demons have conquered and stricken him.»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »Mhammad Ibrahim Ayesh has recently become a ruler of this kind over the spirits.»

But according to Alya's words, mentioned above, he cannot have been very successful.

SITT LOUISA: »Formerly, sheikhs from outside were consulted.»

A story of the seclusion of derwishes on account of Sa'da il-Zir's sickness:

She was a Bedouin woman of the family il-Zir, and wife of Mhammad Isma'in. I was told of this incident on several occasions. Several versions have been included in my earlier books. This is another version.

ALYA: »Mhammad Isma'in had sexual connection with his wife under the fig-tree. They did not ask to be forgiven, nor did they name. They have to say: Ye people of the earth! We are under your protection. From this day, Mhammad Isma'in's wife, Sa'da il-Zir, was subjected to fits. The fellaheen thought that she was possessed by a demon. They called on a sheikh to drive the spirit out of her. This sheikh was Mhammad il-Qfaffi from Kharas.

ALYA said of the seclusion of derwishes in general: »The seclusion may last seven days. The derwish takes with him: seven barley-loaves containing bran, water in a dark-blue Gaza-jar, and a rattle of dates.»

She went on to explain: »The demon fears a jar of this kind. They fear a blue jar, a dark pitcher, and a white cock with ten toes.»

SITT LOUISA: »Bluish-grey, the donkey's colour. The jars of Hebron are red, pale brown, or café-au-lait.»

ALYA: »The barley-bread must contain bran, because that the demons do not eat. Nor do they like durra since the time it stuck in the throat of the sheikh, the head of the demons.

Dates are the food of the prophets. Dates are blessed. The demons have no power over dates and garlic.»

Then ALYA related of Mhammad il-Qfaffi, the sheikh who came to relieve Sa'da il-Zir, and how he went into seclusion.

»He closed the door upon himself, and the people went away. He created smoke. The demons came, and kept coming, on and on.

The head of the demons said: 'There are guests, it seems, and I have no message.'

The sheikh said: 'I want' — and he named a demon. They said: 'He is a flyer.'

He said: 'Ye must bring him here.' These demons always ride on chairs.»

SITT LOUISA: »A row of chairs, and the Sultan in the midst. The sheikh, Mhammad Qfaffi, wanted the demon who had taken his abode in Sa'da il-Zir. They said: 'He is a flyer', he flies like a bird, like a butterfly.»

ALYA: »The demons said, 'He cannot be brought here.' But they brought him.

The sheikh said: 'What dost thou want from this woman?' The demon said: 'I did not come to her, she came to me.' The sheikh said: 'How was that?'

He answered: 'I was sitting beneath the fig-tree and beneath me was the water. She came, she and her husband. Did they have to step on me? Her husband got up, and I went in to her.'

He said to the demon: 'Get out of her!' The demon replied: 'I shall not come out.'

— 'Get out!'

— 'No, I will not! This is my booty.'

The sheikh was plagued by many plagues.

They came slowly, slowly, piling up cotton wool right up to his neck.»

SITT LOUISA: »Gradually, little by little, cotton wool fell over him.»

ALYA: »They wanted to set fire to the cotton wool so as to choke him with the smoke. The help of God is nigh, always. A dog ran along the wall. And the demons fled from the derwish's seclusion.»

SITT LOUISA: »When a dog runs on the wall, the stones fall down. This frightens the demons.»

ALYA: »Then he, the sheikh, went to the mosque to proclaim the time of prayer. He fainted. People n a m e d God's name over him, and he stood up and entered the house of Mhammad Isma'in. He said: 'These demons do not belong to me. They are not under my hand. They are of another kind.'»

As he was not successful he returned home again.

They turned to the sheikh Abu S'ud, of Jerusalem, »who interpreted the dream for the Sultan Mahmud». The sheikh tried to expel the evil spirit, but the spirit refused to obey him.

SITT LOUISA: »Abu S'ud had no power over the demon because they were in fault.»

ALYA: »The demon said: 'I will not leave her. I will not go out from her until I have taken her life' — *lit.* her soul. Then Abu S'ud went

back to Jerusalem. He sent his servant, and the servant remained in the house until God took her soul.»

SITT LOUISA: »Literally, God took what He had given. When a woman's children die, the people say: God took what He had given. God gives for a time only. Abu S'ud's servant was a demon that he could send wherever he wanted.»

When the sick woman, Sa'da il-Zir, died, this demon took some money from the house of her husband, Mhammad Isma'in, and took it to Jerusalem, to Abu S'ud.

ALYA: »The demon-servant took 3 pounds. He said: 'Please, Sir, she is no more, she has passed away.'»

But out in the village of Artas, Mhammad Isma'in and his family members had no idea of how the money had disappeared.

ALYA: »He searched for the 3 pounds in order to buy the death clothes for Za'da il-Zir. It was not found, and they quarrelled.»

SITT LOUISA: »When Mhammad Isma'in did not find his 3 pounds, he suspected the women of having taken it, and there was a great to-do (Heidenlärm).»

ALYA: »Then came the message from sheikh Abu S'ud: 'My servant brought me 3 pounds from your house when Sa'da gave up her ghost.'»

Thus the mystery of the lost money was solved.

Another case of seclusion for exorcising an evil spirit is as follows.

ALYA: »When the wife of Absiye was performing her ablutions she did not ask to be pardoned or forgiven, and she did not say: 'I seek refuge in God.' The devil took possession of her. She became like mad, she picked up her skirt before the people. The Algerian cured her. For this reason he went into seclusion. He drew out the devil from her.»

ALYA also told me of Sheikha Sliman, an Artas woman, who was possessed by a demon.

»Sheikha, the wife of Musa Ahmad, was possessed by a spirit. She went to wash herself in a corner; she sprinkled hot water over herself; it fell on the face of the demon; she neither asked his pardon nor begged to be excused. From the day the hot water had been spilt on the floor, she had had epileptic fits. They brought the sheikh to her. He said to her people: 'The woman went inside, washed herself in a corner, and sprinkled hot water which fell on the face of the demon.' The demon said: 'She sprinkled me with boiling water and I struck her in a rage.' The sheikh

said to the demon: 'Come out of her!' — 'I will not come out of her! Either she dies or I die.' The demon died.»

ALYA remarked: »Those who have fits, epileptics, are attacked by a demon.»

Women are more in danger of being attacked by demons than are men. For instance, in connection with sexual intercourse, especially if it takes place out-of-doors; for instance, in the garden, when not protected by their clothing, when bathing, when easing nature, and in many other instances in daily life. The demons are present everywhere and always ready to seize the opportunity of harming someone. People are able to protect themselves by repeating a formula of protection, the name of God, a prayer, or begging pardon. And man must be careful not to injure the demons. The name of God, or begging pardon is a warning to the demons to withdraw in time, so as not to be injured.

IMPURITY

A ritually unclean person must not come into touch with a holy thing.

There are many things which a ritually unclean woman must not do.

She must not visit sick people or a woman in childbed, because she will harm them. If someone has sore eyes, and an unclean woman stares at him, it is not good.

She must not pray nor fast during Ramadan. She must not enter the place of prayer, or visit holy places or sanctuaries; if she does so she will be punished.

If an unclean woman comes into contact with something holy, it will bring illness and unhappiness to her.

The unclean woman does not join the pilgrimage to Nebi Musa. And in Nebi Musa cohabitation is not allowed between pilgrims, whether married or single.

»A pilgrimage demands purity.»

If an unclean woman, even if she is a close relative, comes near a dead person after the latter has been washed, she defiles her or him. Nor may she sew grave clothes, or touch them, lest she harm the dead person. Purity must be observed in connection with the dead.

A ritually unclean woman is a danger to others and to herself.

A man, again:

He must not take part in a funeral, because he is unclean. An impure man must not walk in a funeral procession. He must perform his ablutions before praying for the dead. The derwish must push him away from the bier.

An impure man must not enter the place of prayer. It is a great sin. He must not pray or fast. If he has to swear an oath, he must be pure.

He who reads the Quran must not touch it if he is impure. He must not take part in the *dhikr* ceremony if he is impure.

The man who is not ritually clean must not kill a sheep or a goat — not even a chicken. If he has to slaughter a sheep or a goat, they ask: »Art thou pure or impure?» — He says: »By God, I am pure.» If he is impure he does not speak at all.

An impure man must not plough, for he is unclean. People say of him: »So-and-so is unclean to-day! The plough is broken.» He must not spread the wheat on the threshing floor. The heap of corn, he must not touch it until he has washed himself.

As seen from the prohibitions for ritually unclean persons, quoted above, ritual cleanliness is demanded not only for h o l y and religious actions and things (touching and reading the Quran, saying prayers, sanctuaries, religious feasts and pilgrimages) but also for many actions in daily life which non-Muslims would consider profane: slaughter, ploughing, portioning wheat on the threshing floor. In one way life in a Muslim community is more sacred and hallowed than in that of several other religions.

RELIGION AND HYGIENE

No wonder baths and washings play a great role in the life of Muslims. There are different kinds of baths.

There is the bath taken as a c u r e, e.g. in the River of Jordan,²³ or in the water of old medical springs: in Tiberias, and in the valley of the river Zerka, near the Dead Sea. M a g i c baths are given to little children. Women take magic baths to cure themselves of an ailment.

There are baths for cleanliness. In some large places, e.g. in Nablus and Gaza, there are public bath houses which are much appreciated by men and women alike. They go there in groups, men and women on different days, or at different hours. The ceremonial bathing of a bride or a bridegroom, attended by friends and relatives, takes place in a

bath house. In the villages, the bride is bathed or washed by her mother and her sisters at home on the wedding morning. Village women wash themselves at home sitting on the ground or on the floor.

Washing of hands, including pouring water over the hands of a guest, after — or sometimes even before a meal — may perhaps be included among the profane washings.²⁴

Then there are the washings required for ritual cleanliness.

The great ritual washing, *ghusl*, the washing of the whole body, removes the great ritual impurity. It must be performed after sexual intercourse, by women also after menstruation and childbirth.

The ablution, *wudu*, preparatory to prayer means washing of certain parts of the body. It is also called the small ritual washing, because it removes the small ritual impurity.

ALYA mentioned the rules for washing after menstruation.

She washes herself in her own house. She must be bareheaded so as to be able to wash her head, standing upright, holding the water jar in her hand, and pouring it over the whole of her body. And she says the two forms of prayer of the washing for God. — Exalted is He!

Filth makes a person ritually unclean. A woman who takes care of a babe in arms is considered ritually unclean.²⁵ In this case it is her clothes which are defiled.²⁶ A woman who has washed herself after menstruation puts on a better dress, even her best dress. This is an invitation to her husband, »begging for intercourse», but also to show other people that she is now clean.

Sometimes a woman is careless when washing herself and omits calling God's name, or neglects begging pardon. She should have thought of uttering a protective formula, knowing that demons are present everywhere. If she has poured water over herself without previous warning — so that the demon may withdraw in time — and some of it splashes on a demon, his anger is aroused. In consequence, she is struck by madness or epilepsy. Or, as the people put it: »she is possessed by a demon.»

Washing may be risky. Alya reminded me of how afraid people are of washing small children. The midwife, Sabha Isma'in, said: »There are children whom one can bath and there are others whom one does not dare to bath.» Knowing that Sitt Louisa had a cold bath every morning, Alya had often warned her never to neglect the name of God before bathing. — »Any kind of bath is dangerous», Alya assured me.

Thus there are the two conceptions of bath or washing: its necessity and its danger.

Washing before prayer is obligatory. When I was out in the village of Artas I was often awakened in the morning by my neighbour, Ali Khalil, calling to his wife to get up. The next moment I heard him gargling loudly. He was washing prior to his morning prayer. The men in the village started their day by washing and praying.

Even the ordinary ablution, preparatory to prayer, includes cleansing of hands and feet, of face, beard, neck, teeth,²⁷ mouth, ears, nose — all openings of the body, in a definite order.

It is true that the quantity of water used is often so little that the washing is more or less of a symbolic kind (but not in such a high degree as the baptism among Christians). Among Muslims ablutions are performed every day and even several times a day (before prayer).

I should think that the Prophet should be credited for making his followers wash each day, all the more so as Islam originated and expanded in the desert countries where there is great scarcity of water.

Even if the reason for the daily washings and baths among the orthodox Muslims differs from that of Westerners of to-day, even if chiefly a ritual purification is demanded, it means, in practice, «the putting away of the filth of the flesh». The washings as a religious duty do not exclude their hygienic value.

Also, it would be of interest to hear modern experts on physical training give their opinion on the benefit of the series of bodily movements in connection with Muslim prayer, which are performed every day, and five times a day, by every adult man and even by some of the women.

RITUAL MOVEMENTS ACCOMPANYING PRAYER

Before the worshipper begins his prayer he, loudly or inaudibly, expresses his intention to perform a certain number of «bowings» or «bendings».²⁸

Introduction or The Standing

1. He stands upright
2. opens his hands
3. touches the lobes of his ears with his thumbs
4. lowers his hands, folds them with the right hand placed over the left one

B o w i n g (s)

5. He bows from the hips with hands on knees
 6. assumes an upright position
 7. sinks gently onto his knees
 8. touches the ground with his hands, nose and face, remains in prostration for a while
 9. rises onto his knees, sits on his heels
 10. counts on his fingers
 11. a second prostration
 12. returns to a standing position
- One bowing, *raka'*, is then completed.

T e r m i n a t i o n

13. He turns his head to the right, and then to the left, each time looking over his shoulder.

Nowadays, when gymnastics and sports are so highly valued, it should be remembered that, ever since the times of the great Prophet, such daily bodily exercises have been incumbent on the Muslims in connection with their religion, their prayers.

Excluding the religious factors there remains the rhythmical programme, the bodily exercises.

Ritual washings and prayers are performed with a view to the life hereafter, yet from the profane viewpoint they promote physical health, public welfare.

DIETARY HABITS AND TABUS

(INCLUDING COFFEE, TOBACCO, ALCOHOLIC DRINKS)

Certain religious rules influence the dietary habits. Like in the Old Testament, pork and blood are forbidden.²⁹ Meat from an animal which has not been slaughtered in accordance with the ritual is forbidden. Each year there is a month of fasting.

Every-day food is vegetarian: bread, wheat, barley, lentils; leaves of some wild plants; olives, olive oil, fruit. Milk and milk products and fruits are sold in the markets. Eggs belong to certain feasts. A saying is: »Saturday egg is a medicine for the eye.»

Coffee is a highly valued drink³⁰ but mostly made by, and for the men in their club, especially when guests are present. Coffee is not a daily drink. It is served on festive occasions, and then generally to the men only. No children, no young women, but some old women may be given coffee at a wedding or at a circumcision feast. After a woman has given birth to a child she is given coffee; in that case it may be considered a kind of medicine.

The Arabs in Palestine smoke tobacco. Postcards and photos showing a Bethlehem woman smoking a waterpipe at a party were sold in Jerusalem, but I myself have not seen native women smoking tobacco. The men generally smoked pipes and waterpipes, but the use of cigarettes was spreading.

There are some Muslims who demand total abstinence from tobacco.

Here I should like to quote a story told by EMILE BALDENSPERGER.

»A Bedouin sheikh riding his horse — this happened in Transjordan. A woman who felt the smoke of his pipe asked to be allowed to draw a whiff.

— 'If thou dost kiss me!' She was startled and said: 'Oh, no!'

— 'Then thou canst not', he said, and rode off.

— 'Stop! I must have a whiff. I consent.'

The sheikh was shocked. He threw his pipe onto a rock, smashing it into bits, and said:

'If a whiff from a pipe can make a woman forget her honour, then — forbid me to smoke!'

From that moment he never smoked again.»

— And why do you not smoke? said I to Emile Baldensperger.

In his funny way he replied by telling me a story:

»I once met a Palestinian Bedouin in the Plain of Saron. I offered him a cigarette.

— I am surprised that thou dost smoke, being a civilized man. Dost thou not know from where the tobacco comes?

— No, I do not.

— The tobacco is the dirtiest plant on earth. With thy own hand thou fillest thy pipe. With thy own mouth thou smokest the tobacco. That is neither duty nor good manners. When Satan saw the face of God for the first time, he was so frightened that he got diarrhoea, and therein — the plant grew.»

Another of EMILE BALDENSPERGER's stories is:

»A man rode on horseback from el-Taiyibe to the Jordan region. He had a mortal enemy in the Bedouin tribe, called Abid Miryam.

When he was riding along a narrow passage he saw his mortal enemy standing on the road with a gun in his hand.

The rider thought: If I turn, I will be shot like a coward — in the neck, or in the back, and everyone will know of it.

Then he summoned up his courage and rode on towards his Bedouin enemy — smoking his pipe.

There was a wind blowing from the west that carried the smoke right into the Bedouin's face. The rider was drawing nearer and nearer now, and at any time, he would be shot, he thought. But the Bedouin remained standing, like hypnotized, allowing him to ride by.

When the rider was at some distance, the Bedouin called to him: 'I have something to tell thee, and by God and the Prophet nothing will happen to thee.' The rider turned back.

The Bedouin said to him: 'Thou knowest that we are mortal enemies. When I saw thee I had it in my heart to shoot thee. But the smoke of thy tobacco came straight into my nose, and as I had no tobacco with me, and was longing for a smoke, the revenge in me died down; I was enjoying the scent of thy tobacco. Now I must confess to thee that I am ashamed of having forgotten my revenge because of the tobacco, and I swear by God and the Prophet to abstain from smoking in the future. And I promise to be friends.'»

Hanna Musa from Bir Zeit told EMILE BALDENSPERGER a story.

»In the village of Silwad there was a family. The wife had her cooking pot on the fire. The children were sitting around, weeping, and saying: 'Mother, give us to eat! We are hungry. Is the food not cooked yet?' She said to the children: 'Be patient! God will send us something.'

Then the village sheikh passed by. He heard the children complaining and saw the cooking pot on the fire, and then went on.

On his way back, the children were still in the same place, still complaining. He went up to them. — 'Why were the children complaining? Was the supper not cooked yet?' The mother burst into tears, saying: 'Oh sheikh, I will tell thee the truth. It is pebblestones that I cook in the cooking pot, and I do it only to quiet my children.'

The sheikh was greatly moved and went home straight away to send

her flour for bread. He promised to let her have some wheat each day until better times.

Another day, some time later, the sheikh passed the house in the evening and again heard the children complaining as before. He went up to the woman in rage, saying: 'Have not my people sent thee any wheat?'

She wept, and knew not what to reply.

He sent for his people and said to them: 'Have I not commanded you to send this woman some wheat each day?' They swore they had done so.

Then the husband approached. The sheikh asked him: 'Hast thou received the wheat?' He seemed to be highly embarrassed, and replied: 'Thanks to thy goodness, the wheat comes daily to my house. But I am a heavy smoker of tobacco and have no money for which to buy it. So I have sacrificed my family to buy tobacco with the wheat.'

The sheikh rebuked him severely: 'Shame on thee, letting thy family starve for the sake of (thy passion for) tobacco.'

The man was truly ashamed of himself, and took his tobacco pouch and pipe and threw them into the fire. And he swore by the Prophet and by God that he would never smoke again. He even went so far as to say: 'If any of my descendants dare smoke, they shall be cursed.'

And still to-day there is a clan in the village whose members do not smoke because of an ancestor having sworn: 'Cursed be he who smokes!'

Abstinence from smoking is based on religious and moral grounds. Social-economic reasons play a role. In large groups, in towns and villages, and among the Bedouin, tobacco as well as coffee is a luxury which cannot be afforded in everyday life. Life is hard.

This is not the place to take up the question of the injurious effect of smoking on the physical health, or the role of nicotine in the origin of certain illnesses, for instance, cancer of the lung and diseases of the heart.

To day this question is widely discussed by scientists all over the world, but I should only like to point out that, in this problem, East meets West, eastern folklore and modern medical theories unite.

Arab Muslims have vineyards. When the vine-leaves are fresh they are made into rissoles, filled with minced meat and rice. Like all fruits, fresh grapes are sold in the market, but some are dried and eaten as raisins. Juice is made of the grapes, but not wine, as the Muslim tradition forbids drinking of wine.³¹ Not only temperance, but total abstinence is

demanded. As long as the Muslims strictly follow their religious traditions there will be no alcohol problems among them.

A story from Arabian folklore was told to me by EMILE BALDENSPERGER; he had heard it from a native.

»The devil planted the vine. Then a lion came and watered it with his urine. Then a peacock came and did the same. Then a monkey and finally a pig did the same.

This is interpreted:

The vine gives grapes, and grapes give wine. When a man drinks wine — the first glass makes him feel as brave as a lion. The second glass makes him proud as a peacock. The third glass makes him foolish as a monkey. And the fourth glass makes him roll in the mud like a pig.»

Like wine, according to the people, certain kinds of food may be mentally injurious.

People who have eaten mule flesh are apt to become frantic. Both Mhammad Khalil Ode and Khalil Mhammad Khalawe were soldiers in Yemen for ten years. They had to eat mule flesh, and when they returned home they were observed to have fits of frenzy. Their wives understood them. They knew the reason for their 'madness'.

Mother's milk may be harmful in certain cases. People are especially afraid of a negro woman's milk. A child suckled by a negro woman, even if on one occasion only, is liable to have fits of unreasonable crossness and sudden outbursts of fury throughout life. »Poor thing,» they say, »he cannot help it. He has had a black woman's milk.»

On the other hand, the effect of mother's milk is healing, especially of sore eyes.³²

When it is said that Saturday egg is medicine for the eye, it is in a magic sense. Eggs are used for magic purposes, at childbirth, for instance. Sometimes an egg is broken on the forehead of a camel carrying a bride or a dead person. This is for fear that it may stumble and break its leg.

BLINDNESS AND EYE DISEASES

The villagers know more about the evil eye and its destructive effects than of the diseases of the eye. There must have been several cases of blindness in Artas although I was told of a few only. Of a man it was said: He was blind as a bat before he died.

This is what I myself experienced:

A young unmarried man was blind. Alya went blind in her old age, but it seemed as if she could still distinguish some colours. She said she noticed when I was wearing a green woollen jacket, and she loved it because she loved green, the Muslim colour. Three other people in the village lost their sight in old age: Sabha Jedallah, Sara Khalil, and her brother Mhammad Khalil (Shahin clan).

DISEASES AND GENERAL MORTALITY STATISTICS

In exceptional cases people have consulted a doctor. The information I have of diseases and causes of death is incomplete, and often unreliable, from a medical point of view. Doctors were not required to issue death certificates.³³

A few killers mentioned are: epilepsy, leprosy, pestilence, hydrophobia, smallpox. In Artas there was one case of mad dog bite.³⁴ The young girl who was attacked was Ne'ome Abd il-Salam. Her father took her to Egypt to be cured, but she died there. »Her dust drew her.« It was said that the family originated from Egypt.

Several men were killed in the wars. Murders will be spoken of later.

Death rate statistics similar to those in my book *Child Problems* cannot be compiled with regard to adults, as no records of dates of birth and death exist. People did not even know their own age in years.³⁵ Thus longevity cannot be assessed nor can it be said with certainty whether men or women live longer.

DEATH

TIME AND PLACE OF DEATH

It is said of the time of death:

»Friday is a good day to die on. He who passes the night of Friday in his grave, for him are all Friday prayers!» — Friday is the special day of prayer among the Muslims.

And:

»He who dies in Ramadan, the Month of Fasting, may be sure of entering Paradise. He who dies in Ramadan will be released from torment and examinations.»

»Happy he who dies in Ramadan, for Ramadan protects him from all evil!» said SITT LOUISA. She added impulsively: »May God give us such a death!»

It is said of the place of death!

»Happy is the man who is buried in Jerusalem! The Well of Souls is there» — beneath the Temple Area.

And:

»Privileged is he who dies in Mecca. There will be no torment and examination.»

SUMMONING RELATIVES TO A DEATH BED

ALYA: »If someone is dying, they summon the relatives of his own flesh and blood, and if they live in another village, they send a messenger to fetch them.

The messenger says: 'So and so, a man, or a woman, wishes thy presence.'»

SITT LOUISA: »Then they understand, they know.»

The people who have received the message make themselves ready to leave and hurry to the death bed. Other people, also, who live in the same place, like to join them to show their sympathy.

ASSEMBLING IN THE HOUSE OF THE SERIOUSLY ILL

When those coming from outside of the village arrive, they find the villagers gathered around the dying person. Men and women are sitting there. The house is filled with people. But this is as it should be.

Nobody wants to die alone. When the hour of death is near, he wants to feel that he is among his own. And friends and acquaintances should be there. But not the foolish ones who make trouble. He wants to be comforted by the presence of the good and the noble, by people who know what ought to be said and done when the soul is about to leave the body.

I should think that there are worthy people everywhere who can help the dying and guide the departing soul.

IDEAS ON DEATH

There are many traditional sayings on death. As time passes they have acquired the meaning or character of general truths and laws in the minds of the people.

Such sayings are:

»Death is a Sultan. The sleep — or, the sleep of death — is a Sultan.» By this saying, the Muslim Arabs mean that death is the supreme ruler who must be obeyed by man without a word of complaint. Man must submit to God's will.

Yes! »Death has its rights», someone says. Another one adds: »Death is an honour, (lit.) protection, and to flee is a cowardly shame».

An expression often heard at a death-bed is: »God demands the return of what He has given.» — God gave man his soul, He wants it back.

And the earth wants the dust of which man was created. The expression: »Her dust drew her», has already been mentioned.

»Finished is the oil in the lamp». — The people see the flickering light of life. They explain to the grieving mother: »If there is no more oil in the lamp, how can he live?»

»This is the limit of his life. Life is limited.» — Man knows that the days and the years of his life are measured.

Another saying is: »It is written on his brow, or forehead, written that he will die of this illness.»

A variation or continuation: »Good and evil are written on his forehead.»

And: »Thy good — deeds — in this world will benefit thee in eternity.»

Someone says: »The leaf has fallen». The others agree with him. Everybody knows what it means. They have all heard of the tree, called *il-Mintaha* or the Tree of Souls (*shajarat il-rwāḥ*). It is the tree of life in Paradise,¹ on the leaves of which are inscribed the names of all living men, each man having his own leaf. When a man's leaf has been loosened, he is doomed; when it falls, the end has come.

If death is delayed there may be a change of people in the house. Some villagers may leave and others may come. There are some men whose duties cannot be delayed. Even if they do not do their ordinary work on such occasions, they may have their animals to tend to. Women have their housekeeping and their small children to care for. But all the villagers are aware of what is happening in the house of death. Whatever the people are doing, the closeness of death is in their minds.

There is an expression which says:

»That which was distant has come near.»

The sound of the wings of death goes through the village. Who is next in turn? No one is safe. It may be anyone, someone loved, they think, one and all.

»Nothing is nearer than the step of death. — Death is closer than the tooth is to the tongue.»

But people do not only repeat traditional ideas of more or less religious or 'philosophical' character when a person is about to die, as is seen from the following.

THE LAST WILL

The Arabs state their last will in the presence of witnesses. Someone with authority asks the dying man for his final orders.²

ALYA:

»They ask the dying one: What is in thy mind? Hast thou any debts? Is there anything not arranged? Is there anything urgent that I can do?

He who has a message, tells them about it. He who has no message, says: I owe nothing, nor does any one owe me anything. Thank God!»

Case 1. — Khalil Ode

I have two versions of Khalil Ode's death.

The first one is a note I made in 1926, in Artas.

People think it comforting for a person to die in the arms of a relative or friend. A woman may support a dying sister or a mother, or even a brother. A man may support his dying brother or some other male relative. — »He died in my arms», is an expression sometimes heard. When Khalil Ode fell ill and died unexpectedly, his cousin, Ali Sliman, held him closely. No one believed the end was approaching. Ali Sliman said: »I think thou art pretending to be ill to find out who really loves thee.» But Khalil Ode answered with dignity: »That which was distant has come near.»

»But thou hast all thy children. Wilst thou lay the burden on us?» the cousin said, not reproachfully, but to encourage him. Khalil Ode replied: »If the father dies, God is the representative.»

Khalil Ode had two wives: Sara and Dhabla. He said to the former who was the older of the two: »Thou must see to the children! Dhabla is young. She will not remain a widow. She will not stay in this house. And Isa, my son (by her), is only forty days old.»

He rapidly grew worse, and presently everybody realized that his hour had come.

A year later Alya gave me another version of his death.

Foreboding of Death

ALYA: »When Khalil Ode lay on his death bed, the men around him said: He is changed.»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »A dangerous change.»

ALYA: »Oh father! Terror consumes me!» cried his son who had the presentiment of death.

Order Given to His Wife

ALYA: »Khalil said to his wife, Sara: 'The sins of the children are on thy neck! Thou art responsible for them. Dhabla (his second wife) will not remain unmarried.'»

Shrieking and Wailing Forbidden

ALYA: »The men were gathered round Khalil Ode. And Ahmad Isma'in complained: 'This winter the women mourners will come and plague me.'»

Khalil Ode replied: 'I f o r b i d their coming and their lamentations. The sin is on your neck, if ye let mourn for me.'»

As will be seen later, Ahmad Isma'in disapproved of the women exhibiting their sorrow, shrieking and wailing, especially by those coming from other places.

Debts

Khalil Ode's affairs were rather muddled. He had borrowed a sum of money from Barazan, a Jew in Jerusalem. The rumour that Khalil Ode was near death reached the Jew. He hurried from Jerusalem to Artas hoping to have his loan settled. But he was not successful.

»As befitting, Ahmad Isma'in asked the dying Khalil about his affairs in the presence of the other men.

'What dost thou owe and what hast thou'. — 'Now Barazan is here. He expects his money. See, there, he is waiting for his money!'

Before Khalil Ode had time to reply, the Jew shouted: 'O Khalil, I shall lose my money. My wherewithal is away with thee!' Khalil Ode said: 'God has decreed and decided.'

Ahmad Isma'in: 'What shall I do for thee?' Khalil Ode: 'What is customary among the people, that ye shall do for me.'»

And having said it, he passed away. Or, as ALYA put it: »They sought him and did not find him.« No words would reach him. He had gone.

Some of the Artas people have occasionally been heavily in debt. Owing to their poverty, they have been obliged to buy things on account from the tradespeople in Bethlehem or Jerusalem. This is why Khalil Ode owed some money to Barazan, the Jew from Jerusalem.

The man described in the next incident had got into similar difficulties. He had borrowed money from a Christian, called Jubra'in il-Batarseh, living in Bethlehem.

CASE 2. — AHMAD JEDALLAH

And ALYA again related some scenes from the death bed of another relative of hers, Ahmad Jedallah, her father's brother's son.

Orphan's Rights, or Duties towards Orphan

Ahmad Jedallah had had five brothers: Mhammad Jedallah, Mustafa Jedallah, Atallah (Odtallah) Jedallah, Abdallah Jedallah and Sliman Jedallah. Of these, Mhammad died a leper without children. Later also another of them, Abdallah Jedallah, died. And Abdallah's son Mhammad died, leaving two children, a boy and a girl. Mustafa Jedallah, the eldest

living brother of the family, was responsible for the fatherless children. As their representative, he had to protect and take care of them. But instead of looking after their rights, Mustafa took advantage of being their guardian. His brothers were greatly troubled. When Ahmad Jedallah was dying they went to him to appeal for the fatherless children. Apparently they hoped that Mustafa Jedallah, who was also present at the death bed, would listen to them and his dying brother. Atallah Jedallah was the spokesman.

ALYA: »When Ahmad Jedallah was near death his brothers came to him and Atallah said: Mustafa has removed a boundary stone on the property of the orphans.»

SITT LOUISA: »He has removed a boundary stone to his advantage, and the orphans are the children of Mhammad, son of Abdallah Jedallah.»

ALYA continued, quoting the answer of the dying man to his brother: »Oh Mustafa! It is a sin on thee to touch the property of the orphans.³ Bless thy children! — A house of justice (righteousness) benefits the descendants. A house of justice is better than a chest filled with money or precious goods.»

Ahmad Jedallah begged his brother, Mustafa Jedallah, to consider his actions for the sake of his own children. Wrong-doings bring curses on the children. Good deeds bring blessings.

Debts

Then Ahmad Jedallah spoke of his own rather embarrassing affairs.

Ahmad Jedallah who had no sons had promised his daughter, Nijme, a fig garden on her wedding day. Now, on his death bed he spoke of it.

His words according to ALYA were: »The fig garden is for my daughter Nijme, but it is now in the hands of Jubra'in il-Batarseh.» This Christian man in Bethlehem had lent him money, and he had pledged the garden because he could not pay his debts.

Ahmad Jedallah comforted himself by the thought that he had a claim on his son-in-law, Nijme's husband.

ALYA: »He said: Abd il-Nebi owes me 30 pounds.»

He had turned especially to Ahmad Isma'in expecting him to make a decision. However, Ahmad Isma'in pointed out that the burial expenses would rise to the same amount as his son-in-law's debt. »Ahmad Isma'in said to him: »And thy wedding after thee requires 30 pounds. May thy life be long!«

Often, when a man is old or approaching death, people wish him a long life. And so did Ahmad Isma'in. Very tactfully, he used the word wedding, instead of burial.

Wailing Women

The funeral having been mentioned, Ahmad Jedallah said: »I will not have any wailing by the women, no shrieking and crying with lamentation, no weeping or rending of garments. — I will have nothing of their mourning.»

SITT LOUISA: »He means dirty clothes, and so.»

The custom is that the women omit to wash their head cloths, by this means exhibiting their sorrow. The dying man — and later one of his brothers — forbade his women relatives to wear soiled head cloths, and to appear with unkempt hair.⁴ The lazy women must wash their cloths, he said. He knew that Ahmad Isma'in, too, disapproved of these pre-Muslim ways of women exhibiting their sorrow.

Wife

Hearing of Ahmad Jedallah's affairs, Helwe As'ad, one of the women present, felt unhappy and anxious about her sister, Sa'da As'ad, who was the dying man's wife. »Do something for Sa'da», she admonished. He said: »But the property — all that I have — is tied up in the house of Batarseh.»

Helwe As'ad appealed again: »Do something for Sa'da! Name a piece of land!» Ahmad said: »It is reserved. It is enough that she has the house.» Sa'da and Ahmad had no sons, and for that reason it was not evident that she had the right to stay in her husband's house after his death.

ALYA: »Ahmad Jedallah said: 'Keep the house for Sa'da as long as she lives. And anyone she likes, one of her brothers or male relatives-in-law (*min nasayibha*) may live with her in the house.'»

Weakness of Body

Sensing the approach of death in his feeble limbs he recalled for a moment his former vigorous days, his days of health. Looking at his right hand, he mockingly addressed it.

ALYA: »Ahmad Jedallah says to his hand: Bravo, thou right hand of mine! Hast thou not slaughtered ninety-nine animals, and now thou failest!» He is conscious of his inability to help, or to be of assistance to his friends.

Obligations towards Relative in Strangeness

Beside him was a relative to whom he spoke.

ALYA: »'Abdallah, my brother's son! I have done nothing for thee, and yet thou hast been absent for fifteen years.' And Abdallah, who had been a soldier in Yemen, answered: 'We only wish that thou shouldst get well!'

SITT LOUISA interpreted the words of the dying man, Ahmad Jedallah: »Among the people it is regarded as if the good deed he spoke of was an actual fact. The good-will was there.» — Great importance is attached to intention.

ALYA finished her account of this incident by saying: »The dead one does not make friendship with the living. The blow of a man leaves its mark.»

SITT LOUISA: »One can see when a man has been gravely hit.»

People recognize the premonitory signs, they have seen numerous deaths in their time.

Case 3. — Orders regarding Marriage in the Family

A strong-willed, despotic man, who has not had time to carry out some of his plans, may be able to do so by stating his last will, in spite of his family being averse to his intentions.

Musa Shahin had decided that his daughter, Sabha, should marry Isma'in Hasan, his brother's son. When he was severely ill, he feared that there would be no marriage, for Sabha disliked her cousin, the man whom her father had chosen for her.

ALYA: »And Musa Shahin was dying, and the whole clan was gathered around him. And Ahmad Isma'in was also there. He said: 'I leave it to thee, oh Ahmad Isma'in! Let no one take Sabha, except my brother's son.'»

Sabha's brother tried to help her to bring the affair to nothing. But it was all in vain. Being the executor of their father's will, Ahmad Isma'in forced Sabha into the marriage her father had arranged for her.

This rather complicated incident is given in detail in my work *Marriage Conditions*.

Case 4. — Too Late

I have told also of how unhappy Alya was in her second marriage with Nofal, a sheikh in Surif, so unhappy that she could not stand life in his home, but left him and returned to her home village. When she

had been away from her husband for three years, she learnt that Nofal was nearing death. Two men from Surif came to Artas with a message from him. Nofal says: »Bring the Artas woman to me so that she, at least, passes before my eyes!»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »He had a bad conscience and felt guilty.»

Alya obeyed his summons but arrived too late. He had died already. »We found him in the burial place», she said.

TOWARDS THE END

The Last Food

The weaker a person grows, the more concerned are his relatives with his last wishes.

He may long for some special food, for instance. Sick people sometimes do.

ALYA: »The sick, what is in his mind, they bring him. Honey is medicine in both ways, whether he dies or recovers.»

Facing Mecca

When they see the end approaching, those present follow the customs and ceremonies due on the occasion of the death of a Muslim.

The sick one himself may say: »Turn me toward the South!» Or, someone present at the death bed may say: »Turn his cushion so that he may lie with his face toward Mecca.»

ALYA told me about it, saying: »That is right, *ḥalāl*.»

SITT LOUISA: »It is praiseworthy and pious. For one can only say the Muslim creed facing Mecca.»

ALYA: »He wants to have the witness and the creed. Witness that there is no God but God, and that Muhammad is the Prophet of God! Those present repeat these words constantly, *bihallilu*.»

In a death song it is said:

May God help me

When I am turned toward the south

May loving people surround me

And say

There is no God but God.

May God help me

So that on the day of my death
The good people may be with me
And say
God is eternal.

F o r g i v e n e s s

The dying one says: »Forgive me for what I have failed.» Answer: »May God forgive thee and purify thy conscience and relieve thy body from the fire of hell.» — They beg forgiveness and forgive.⁵

F a r e w e l l

They say to the dying as a farewell: »Good-bye! Go in the peace of God! — May God give thee peace!» He answers: »May God protect and comfort you!»

People express the wish: »May God grant that we meet in Paradise in the gardens of God!» The dying man [or woman] says: »May God grant that only good follow you! May God grant that we meet each other in the gardens of Paradise! God grant that thou and I eat from the fruits of Paradise!»⁶

Further, they send greetings by the dying to the dead of Artas. — »Greet Ahmad Jedallah! Forget not so and so!» Other people warn the eager ones saying: »Do not burden him too much!»

But people continue their farewell greetings.

ALYA: »They say to the dying: 'Greet those who have gone before thee!' At last the one concerned says: 'Ye burden me!'⁷

All are present at that moment, men as well as women, and even the unclean woman may be present. That does not matter, but the unclean, whether man or woman, must not touch the grave clothes.

Some of the people weep when saying farewell.

G I V I N G U P T H E G H O S T

ALYA: »They drop into his throat. This is a procedure they must not forget. It is a duty. They must always drop water into his mouth before he expires. They say: Drop water into his throat!» — Literally: Into his soul or ghost!

ALYA: »Dropping of water into his soul is a pious and good deed.»

She used the Arabic word *ḥalāl*, the opposite of *ḥarām* which means unlawful, 'sin'.

SITT LOUISA: »They say of a soldier who dies without anybody moistening his throat: 'What a misery for his mother!' Unhappily, she exclaims: 'Who dropped water into his mouth as he was dying?' It is not good to die thirsty.»

ALYA: »His spittle is dry. The water dropped into his throat will moisten his soul, or ghost.»

The soul has to leave the body in different stages, and the departure is made easier if the mouth and throat are often moistened.

ALYA: »From the same place as the speech comes out, from the same place the ghost comes out.»

At that stage the death angel Azrail is already there. He comes to earth to take the soul and carry it to heaven. Azrail is also called the »Capturer of Souls.»

ALYA: »He cannot be bribed. There are people who have begged for mercy. But Azrail says: 'I am the servant who acts under orders. It is not in my power to loosen or to bind.'»

ALYA added:

»When the soul is to come out, Azrail draws it out of his body, holds it on the palm of his hand, and ascends with it to the seventh heaven.»

Now a soul brought to heaven may have a good or a bad smell. If God says: »O what an aroma!»⁸ the dead person, *lit.* the owner of the soul, lightens up. His face is all Light. But if He says — and that is for the miserly, the stingy in this world: »What is that foul odour, return it to his face,» then the face of the dead person looks cross. He does not belong to the righteous people. The angels, also, side with or against the soul.

ALYA: »If his deeds have been good and pleasing before the people, the angels say: 'O what a fine perfume, from where comes this good scent?' If there is a bad smell, they say of the soul: 'Throw it into hell!'»⁹

ALYA added: »That is what the preacher tells us, *ḥadīth il-khaṭīb*».¹⁰

She had heard also a sheikh say: »The drawing out of a soul from the body — having seventy seven blows is easier than that.»

But the agonies of death vary in different people. Some have an easy death and some a more violent one.

ALI KHALIL once said: »The good, their souls depart like birds, they have a peaceful death.»

ALYA: »He who gives up his spirit calmly — his angels are merciful. And if his angels are bad, he is furious. He throws away his cover and gets out of his bed. As he has troubled the people in this world, so the angel now troubles him, his soul.»

A person suffering from fever may rave, but his behaviour is not ascribed to his physical condition. It is not looked upon as the result of his kind of illness. It is considered due to his earlier conduct in life. It is a moral and religious punishment for his behaviour in this life.

Watching a person on the threshold of death, people think of themselves and sigh: »May our death angels be merciful!» Also on other occasions people pray that they may be saved from an evil death.

A prayer — often said at night is:

God give that our angels are merciful
And our death an easy one!
God, the Lord on the Throne, have mercy upon me!

There are many angels to be afraid of.

DEMONSTRATION OF GRIEF

In the beginning of 1926, while I was in Artas, I summed up what I had heard and seen concerning mourning and the behaviour of women immediately after a death.

As soon as the last breath has been drawn, the women present give vent to unrestrained sorrow.

Each time a new woman enters, she beats her breast, saying: »Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!» The women loosen their hair and tear at it. Hamdiye told me that she had pulled out a handful of her hair on the death of her brother. Now, she continued, I would not be so foolish.

But a woman takes pride in expressing her violent sorrow. And she knows it will be spoken of in the village: »She beats herself hard.»

Women tear their dresses. They blacken their faces and their hands with soot, and sometimes they even put dust and ashes on their heads.

And they sing their wailing songs. One of them is the leader. She takes up a song and the others fall in. And some of the women beat their breast alternately with the left and the right hand. And the most violent of all is the closest woman relative. While crying, lamenting, and shrieking she starts to strike her face and to tear at her hair frantically.

Then someone intervenes, catching hold of her hands at the crucial moment, to prevent her from injuring herself.

And then, again, wild cries of distress penetrate the village. »Oh my grief, *yā ḥaṣṣrti!* Oh death, *yā wardaḥi!* My sun has gone down, *ghābat shamsi!*»¹¹

Alya recollects the death of sheikh Salem Ethman in Artas. Twenty women came from el-Khadr, the neighbouring village, to lament and weep over him. Weeping loudly they loosened their hair, jumped up and down on the earthen floor, whirled about, slapped their faces, all the while singing their mourning songs. Thus did the twenty stranger women, and Salem Ethman's mother and his sisters, and his wives, and all the women of his flesh and blood.

I myself saw women sitting in the street in Jerusalem, weeping for a man who had died. Beside them were a red fez and death clothes which they had bought. One of the women was wailing loudly, lamenting her loss. Was she a mother, or a sister, or a widow? Holding two corners of her kerchief, she twirled it quicker and quicker.

The other women joined her, singing and weeping and crying. The most desperate woman beat her breast and finally her face. And then the woman in front of her caught hold of her hands and held them until she was calm again. Calm for a moment only. Then the wailing went on and on as before.

In Artas I was told that the English authorities had forbidden wailing and lamenting in the streets of Bethlehem.

»Actually, the Muhammadans are not allowed to mourn too much¹²,» said SITT LOUISA.

Alya and Hamdiye agreed with her. Had they not had such and such a preacher in the village, who declared that loud mourning only hurts the deceased. And the important men of the village have forbidden this horrible shrieking and wailing connected with, and announcing death. If Ahmad Isma'in hears it, he will be furious and rush out to stop it. — »An ax on you shrieking women! he cries. Did ye give him (or her) a single drop of water while he was alive? Why all this wailing now?»

My women were so eager to condemn both shrieking and wailing that, at the moment, I got the impression that this was a custom of bygone days.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

URGENT BURIAL

ALYA quoted a saying: »Three things are urgent.»

SITT LOUISA: »What things?»

ALYA: »The marrying of a ripe virgin. — And the meal for the guest.»

SITT LOUISA remarked to me: »He has perhaps travelled far.»

ALYA: »And the burying of the dead.» SITT LOUISA: »His honour demands it. He must be buried quickly, so that he shall not smell.»

On the day he dies, he must be put into his grave. Only if he dies in the evening may he be buried on the following morning. There are certain things that must be avoided or not done after sunset, and burying is one of them. But it is horrifying to have a dead person above earth, especially in the darkness of night. They keep watch by the corpse.

SITT LOUISA: »He must never be left alone. Birds and animals might touch him.»¹

Since burial is an urgent matter, there are a lot of preparations to be done immediately. The grave must be put in order, the grave clothes must be bought and prepared, there is the washing of the dead, and other ceremonies.

THE GRAVE

About the man who goes to prepare the grave it is said:

Thou who art going down the rock
With the axe in thy hand
Weep over thyself
And let the people be!

ALYA: »There are people who ask for a new grave, a grave for themselves alone. And what they desire must be fulfilled.»

When a new grave is made, the foundation is first laid. To get the right size, a man of the same stature as the deceased must stretch him-

self out on the ground to be measured for the length of the grave. Marks are put at head and foot.

The supporting sides are built up of stones. The threshold and its supports are made. The roof consists of great flat stones.

»The grave is like a small house», SITT LOUISA added, smiling.

To the grave belongs further a large stone which is called the 'door' or the 'gate' of the grave. »This is for fear of hyenas and enemies,» said ALYA.

Although the grave is completely made of stone, it actually is a hollow in the earth; or a cave in the mountain. It may even be hewn into the rock.

In a mountain village like Artas the grave is often a natural cave in front of which a large stone is placed or rolled to serve as a 'door'. Such graves are not used for one person only.

According to ALYA few men have been given a new grave.

»No one but Salim, son of Musa Shahin, and Dahud, son of Khadr Ehsen, have been given a new grave,» she said.

Yet sometimes even a child may have a new grave. I attended the funeral of a little girl who was laid into a grave of her own. I have some photographs of the occasion.

SITT LOUISA: »If someone has recently been buried in the grave it must not be opened. No bad smell should be allowed to escape.»

When the deceased is laid in an old grave, the bones of those who have died before him are pushed aside to make room for him.

ALYA: »Many people say: I should like to be with this one or that one. My mother said: I want to be with my co-wife. There is a common grave for relatives.» — For grave Alya used the word *fusqiye*, lit. fountain, well. Compare the Well of Souls.

She gave the names of women buried in that grave:

	Born in	Husbands of Sa'd clan	Alya's
1. Sabiha	Surif	Ibrahim Ode's wife	father's wife
2. Eshe Abu Hlal	Abu Dis	» » »	» »
3. Salma Sanad	Artas	» » »	mother
4. Ayshe il-Ammuri	el-Khadr	Jedallah Ode's wife	father's brother's wife
5. Fatme Abu Hlal	Abu Dis	» » »	» » »
6. Mas'ude	Artas	» » daughter	» » daughter
7. Sabha	Artas	Khalil Ibrahim's daughter	brother's daughter
8. Halime Kanaan	Artas	Sa'd Ibrahim's wife	» wife
9. Fatme	Halhul	Sa'ds wife's mother	» wife's mother
10. Helwe il-Naser	Abu Dis	Ehsen As'ad Reiya's wife	relative-in-law

The table shows that the women of the same family or clan, either born in Artas or married to villagers, and related to one another, have found their last resting-place in the same grave. Fatme, the ninth woman in the list, was an exception. She had come with her son, Kanaan, to Artas, where he married into the Sa'd clan, i.e. Alya's clan. Fatme was buried in the same grave as her son's wife's relatives. His daughter, Halime Kanaan (Nr. 8), was buried there, too.

Their grave was a natural cave, a cave in the rock.

In Artas there is a grave which differs from the others. It is built on the ground and shaped like a cube.

ALYA: »This tomb is ancient, *qubbe qadime*, it is from olden times. Even the sheikh did not consider it a proper grave.» She explained: »It has no foundation and has no earth above it.»

Several villagers were buried there: men and women, but not in the same chamber.

ALYA: »The stone seat, *maṣṭabe*, facing north, is for the women, and the one facing south is for the men, and between the two there is a stone wall, lest they might see each other.»

Alya mentioned the names of the people buried in this tomb, *qubbe*. One man was from the Sa'd clan. The others were men from the Rabaya and the Shahin clans.

But as ALYA said: »Since the murder of Salem Ethman, none of the Shahin family have consented to be buried there.»

The murdered man was of the Rabaya clan and two Shahin men were suspected of being the murderers. Thus hatred arose between the two clans. Before the murder, men from the Shahin clan had been buried there, and also the oldest Negro, Abdallah. The Negro family in the village consider that they belong to the Shahin clan. The oldest Negro, Abdallah, was a slave bought by Shahin.

Some wives of the Meshani and Rabaya clans were buried in that tomb (*qubbe*), too.

In the village, the members of the clans live close together in their own quarter or street, and after death, a man likewise wants to be with his relatives.

ALYA stated: »Every clan has its own burial grounds, *ilha-maqbara*.»² But there are exceptions.

According to ALYA, old Khalawe, the oldest member of a branch of the Meshani clan and well known in the village, did not wish to be buried with his own people, the Meshanis, but with men of the Sa'd clan.

Alya and Sitt Louisa told me about Fatme Awwad of the Shahin clan. Her relatives did not want to have her among them because she had sinned. She was a fallen woman. The Ode family of the Sa'd clan decided: »We shall have her.»

SITT LOUISA: »They were happy to help the deceased woman — to do a good deed.»

As the woman was not of their family, they were not responsible for her actions, and their deed brought them respect. They considered it a privilege.

Some women from Artas were buried at Rachel's Tomb, near Bethlehem, where the Ta'amre Bedouin have some graves.

ALYA: »All grown up people are buried at Rachel's Tomb (*qubbet rahīl*).³ All small children are buried in Bethlehem, in the *I n f a n t s' g r a v e s* (*qbūr itfāl*).

SITT LOUISA: »Ever since the time of Herod.»

The expression, the *I n f a n t s' g r a v e s*, may be explained as a local tradition, an echo of the story of the massacre of the innocents as told of in the New Testament.⁴

GRAVE CLOTHES

Everyone who dies should be given a shroud.

ALYA said: »That is a decree.» She used the word *Sunna*⁵, and added: »That is *ḥalāl*. The shroud is a duty (*il-kafan farḍ*).»

The word *ḥalāl* is generally translated as 'lawful', but I have sometimes found it to mean 'righteous'.

HAMDIYE: »If someone dies and there is no shroud, the blunder is great.»⁶

Yet there have been cases when people could not afford grave clothes.

HAMDIYE: »In the East — in Transjordan — it has happened that many people have not been given a shroud. They have died like gipsies.»

She may have meant some Bedouin, she may have meant some Artas people. In times of famine and war people have sometimes had to leave their homes and their own country, and cross the River Jordan. And then it happened that people were too poor to fulfil their duty to their dead. Not to be able to afford grave clothes means times of distress. Nobody should be as poor as that.

To give someone dying in poverty his death clothes is considered a good deed for which a reward — *ajer*, a reward from Heaven — may be expected.

People may even prepare grave clothes for themselves while still living.⁷ Alya, who was a widow without children, had her own death clothes ready, and was very proud of it. — People would not have to get vexed for having to give her a shroud!

Hamdiye made me a set of women's grave clothes which has served well to complete my notes.

In my DIARY, the 24th of January 1927, I have written: Hamdiye is making grave clothes for me. A stitch for tying up a goat in, she says, and laughs, meaning that peasant women make such big stitches that one might tie up a goat in them. She herself used small tacking stitches.

Men's Grave Clothes

Long white garment or shirt, *thōb abyad*, also called the robe of justice or right(eousness), *thōb il-ḥaqq*.

Green garment, shirt or kaftan, *thōb akhḍar* or *ṣāye khaḍra*, similar in shape, to cover the white one.

Girdle, *zunnār*.

White cap, *taqiye bēḍa*.

Thin white muslin cloth, *shāsh abyad*, folded like a turban around the cap.

Apron or loin cloth, *wazret il-ghusl*, placed beneath the body before washing, after which it is removed.

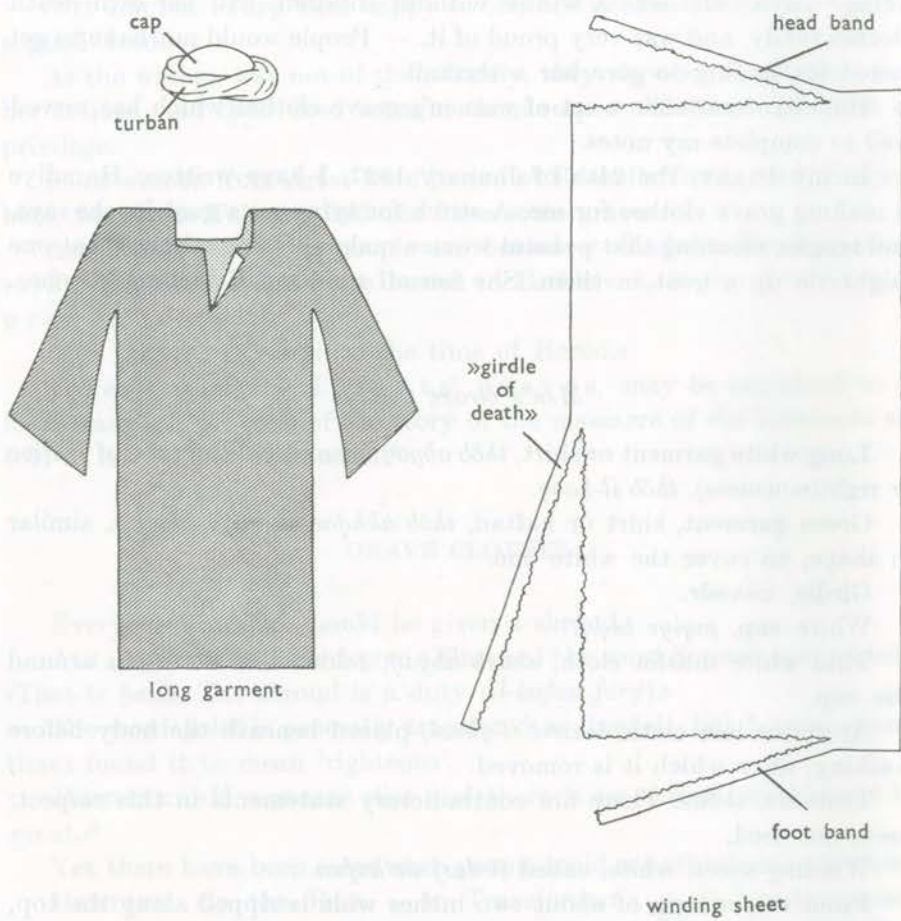
Trousers, *il-bās*. There are contradictory statements in this respect: used, not used.

Winding-sheet, white, called *il-darj* or *kafan*.

From this a strip of about two inches wide is ripped along the top, for a head band, and along the end, for a foot band. A third strip is ripped lengthwise to the middle. This strip has a special name. It is called the girdle of death, *iḥzām il-'aya* or *shdād il-'aya* or the girdle of dust, *iḥzām il-ghabba*. In the grave, the top strip is untied, but not those tied round waist and feet.

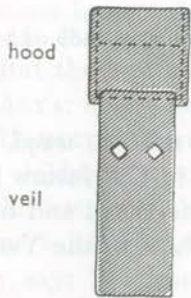
As no coffins are used, the winding sheet replaces a coffin. The word *kafan* is used for the winding sheet but also for the complete set of grave clothes.⁸

GRAVE CLOTHES FOR MEN AND WOMEN



green

cut
2

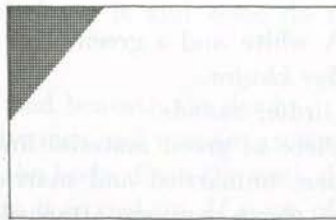


hood

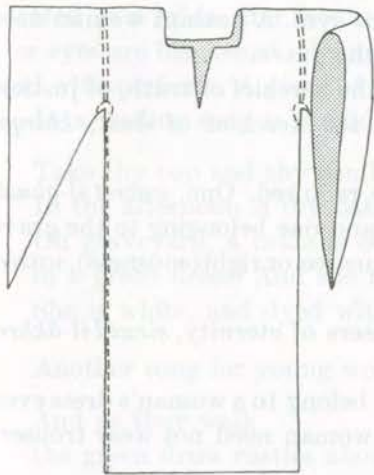
veil



back
of
hood



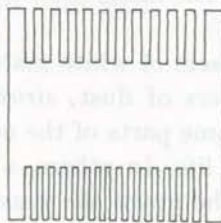
head kerchief



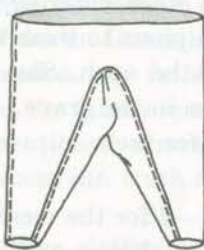
long garment



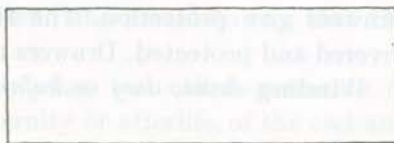
head kerchief
when put on



wooden comb



trousers



loin cloth

Women's Grave Clothes

A white and a green shirt or garment, *thōb il-ḥaqq* and *thōb akhḥar*, or *ṣāye khaḍra*.

Girdle, *zunnār*.

Piece of green material lined with white used as a hood, *wuqā*. All women, unmarried and married, wear such a hood in the future life. Coins, cheap ones, are attached to the hood over the forehead and nose. Thus among those of the Qais party but not among those of the Yemen party.⁹

Green veil, called *burqu'*, for all females, like the one used by Egyptian women. The veil is attached to the hood so as to cover the face of the deceased woman. Openings are made for the eyes. A peasant woman does not wear a veil, except as a bride and in the grave.

Head kerchief, of thin material, called the kerchief of truth, of justice, or of right(eousness), *khirqat il-ḥaqq*; or the kerchief of dust, *khirqat il-turābi*.

Aprons or loin cloths, white. Two are required. One, *wazret il-ghusl*, to be removed after the washing process, and one belonging to the grave clothes. The latter is called the apron of justice or right(eousness), *wazret il-ḥaqq*.

Trousers of white material called trousers of eternity, *sirwāl il-ākhre*, or trousers of dust, *sirwāl il-turābi*.

In some parts of the country, trousers belong to a woman's dress even in daily life. In others, a living peasant woman need not wear trousers but in the grave she must do so.

SITT LOUISA: »She must wear trousers. She could not possibly step into eternity without them. She must be decent when entering eternity. A Jewess in Jerusalem once said to me: 'It is so pious to wear trousers!' Drawers give protection. The flesh should not be open. She must be covered and protected. Drawers means protection in the grave.»

Winding sheet, *darj* or *kafan*, the same as for men.

Other articles: Squares of cloth, white, 2—3—7 for the menstruation period; soap, a comb, needle and thread; perfume, henna and gold-leaf.

ALYA: »Perfume is for the good of the dead one, *ḥalāl*.»

SITT LOUISA: »Perfume — nowadays Eau de Cologne — is sprinkled on the body in the grave. They open the great cloth, the winding sheet, to do it.»

HAMDIIYE: »Perfume is sprinkled before they tie the winding-sheet. Perfume is not always used. Some people have it and some do not.»

But there must always be henna.

ALYA: »Some people strew henna over and beneath the dead.»

HAMDIIYE: »Henna is given to everybody: men and women, grown-ups and children. Dried henna is strewn over the body, from the neck down to the feet, inside the winding sheet before it is tied up. If some of the henna is left over, it is put under the arm of the woman to be buried. And they say: 'Distribute it among those who are before thee!«

A maiden girl is painted and gilded, but not a married woman.

HAMDIIYE: »A virgin who dies is considered a bride, and she is decorated as a bride. Her face is painted and gilded, gold is strewn over it. Her eyes are blackened. Henna is dusted over her body, and she is sprinkled with perfume. A piece of soap and a comb are put in the grave.»

In a wailing song it is said:

Take thy cup and thy comb in thy hand!
In the afternoon is thy bath and thy feast.
Oh graveyard, a bride is coming to thee
in a green dress. And she is gilded, adorned with gold.
She is white, and dyed with henna.

Another song for young women begins:

And as they walk
the green dress rustles about her feet.

The grave clothes are green and white.

Green is the Muslim colour, the colour of life, in this connection the colour of death. Green is also the colour of innocence. When ALYA used the expression 'my father's house is green', she meant to say that the honour of the family was blameless.

As mentioned above, white grave clothes are called garments of righteousness (*lit.* truth or justice), of eternity or afterlife, of the end and of dust.¹⁰

The grave clothes must be made of new material.

When the material for the grave clothes and other articles have been brought to the house, the shroud is made by a *p u r e* woman, a woman past the menopause. While she is still working on the clothes, other women heat the water to wash the body.

WASHING OF THE DEAD

The Body

In general, people do not undress for the night. They just ungirdle themselves. In the morning they girdle themselves again and are ready to begin their day's work. When a woman gives birth to her child she is dressed as usual — in an old dress — but wears no girdle. When someone is ill or dying, the ordinary clothes, and even the head-covering is worn.

After death, according to ALYA, people say: »Tie him!»

SITT LOUISA: »Tie him under the chin and over the head!»

ALYA: »For fear that his jaw may drop. It is terrifying if his mouth is open. So his jaw is tied up with a kerchief.»

During the process of washing, a loincloth only is worn to cover up the nakedness of the body. Soap and a certain kind of sponge, *lif*,¹¹ a vegetable sponge, is required. And, of course, water.

HAMDIYE: »Water cleanses both the living and the dead.»

Place of Washing

ALYA: »Salem Ethman — they washed him at the door of the mosque.»

SITT LOUISA: »They lifted off the door and washed him on it.» But this was an exceptional case.

I was told by ALYA: »Washing of the dead is done at home. Only Salem Ethman, who had been murdered, was washed at the mosque, under the mulberry tree, for in his own house people assembled from five villages: his own relatives, and relatives of his wife, Alaya, and twenty riders.»

SITT LOUISA: »People from Artas, el-Khadr, Bethlehem, el-Weleji and Bet Ta'amir. Government people, and soldiers from Jerusalem, were there, too.»

It was an exceptional case in another respect as well. The deceased was circumcised in connection with washing of his body. As his circumcision had been omitted during his lifetime, they had to do it after his death.

SITT LOUISA: »Uncircumcised he cannot enter Paradise.»

Another time I was told by ALYA: »Most people are washed in their own house. All women are washed at home, in the house. The door is removed and laid on four stones. They wash the dead on the door. — And the children on two boxes.»

SITT LOUISA: »Usually the kind used for transport on asses.»

The Washer

ALYA: »The man or woman who washes the body gets a reward for it, and is given the soap and the washing cloth, the loin cloth, everything that is wet.»

Of a dead man, ALYA said: »His own people wash him first, and then the preacher does so.»

A woman is washed by a praying woman.

A praying woman is a woman in the menopause. At an earlier age her periods of impurity prevented her from serious fasting and praying. When a woman has ceased to menstruate she can, for instance, attend to a sick woman who is isolated as a cure. Washing of the body is another of the »praying» woman's tasks.

ALYA: »When a woman has died her dear ones wash her, but women only. And then comes the professional washer of the dead — a woman who fasts and prays. She does not start until she has made her own ablutions. Washing by the loved ones comes first. They remove all hair from the body of the deceased.»

SITT LOUISA: »When the deceased is to be washed, a neighbour must offer her services¹² and say: I shall wash her.»

HAMDİYE said: »The sister or the sister's daughter is the first one to wash the deceased. And then the professional washer, a praying woman, comes.

Little children are washed by the midwife.»

SIGNIFICANCE OF WASHING

As already mentioned, the process of washing is divided into two parts: washing of the whole body, and ablution for prayer.

ALYA: »First there is an ordinary washing. If a man has had two wives he is washed twice: two cauldrons with hot water must be used. Then follows the ablution. The preacher washes the deceased, as for prayer.»

The intention, *niyah*,¹³ to perform the ritual of ablution must be said aloud, or within the heart only.

Washing of each part of the body is done separately, special words being said in connection with each act.¹⁴

They wash him beneath, saying: »I seek refuge in God from the accursed Satan. In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful!»

A preliminary washing of the h a n d s, three times: I seek refuge in God . . .

The m o u t h, three times: My Lord, give me to drink from the cup of the Prophet(s)!

The n o s e, three times: Oh God, my Lord, let me savour the scent of Paradise.

The f a c e, three times: I intend to perform the duty of ablution for prayer, and submit myself to the face of God and His Prophet.

The h a n d s and a r m s to the elbow.

The r i g h t hand and arm: May God allow me to hold my book in my right hand. May Muhammad be my guarantor.

The l e f t hand and arm: My Lord, let me not carry my book in my left hand, or behind my back.

The (f o r e) h e a d three times: May God have pity upon my old age (*shaiḥi*) and protect my shame (*'aibi*), cover my nakedness.

The e a r s, three times: With my ears may I hear the voice of the caller to prayer in Paradise.

The n e c k, three times: May God give me a necklace from Paradise and free my neck from the fire(s) of Hell.

The f e e t to the ankles.

The r i g h t foot: O, my Lord, keep my right foot, and the feet and steps of my parents, firmly on the right way (*ṣirāṭ*).¹⁵

The l e f t foot: O, my Lord, make firm my left foot and the feet and steps of my parents. — And rescue me and them from the sufferings in the grave and from the pain of the fire.

Finally: My ablution is completed, *lit.* stamped. My heart is purified with praise of God.

Then they pray over him.

Occasionally they take the deceased to the mosque, if a man, and pray over him there, but prayers are always said over a woman at home.¹⁶

I was present when they prayed for a little girl. »Turn toward the south!» the preacher said. He stood up with some old men and prayed.

MORE ABOUT WASHING: CEREMONIES AND FORMULAE

ALYA: »They wash the deceased three times with cotton; a deceased woman is also wiped with cotton.»

SITT LOUISA: »Wiped beneath. All openings of the body are cleansed. She also told me that the openings of the body: the nostrils, the anus,

are stuffed with cotton,¹⁷ whether of a man or a woman. In this connection she reminded me of the saying: 'Character impressed by mother's milk cannot be altered by anything but cotton and grave clothes.'»

ALYA: »They put cotton wool between the toes and between the fingers and under the arm, in the armpit. And they put cotton wool behind the ears but not into the ears so that the deceased may hear the *talqīn*.»¹⁸ Asked to explain the last word that Alya had used, she said: *il-qra'ye*,¹⁹ the reading. The deceased should be able to hear the words used at the funeral: the calling of God's name, the reciting, the instruction and the prayers said during the ceremonies.

For a man, his friends, the villagers, commence a *dhikr* ceremony²⁰ outside his house. The people standing round the body cannot see the performers, but they can hear them repeat God's name over and over again, they can hear them exclaim: God is living, God is everlasting, God is living (*allāh ḥay, allāh dāyem, allāh ḥay*)!

In a death song the wish is expressed:

May God give that when they wash upon me
The good people will help me
And say: God is eternal.

During the washing of the deceased the people inside the house call upon God's name praising Him, they perform the *tahlīl* ceremony. Those present repeat the creed, *bihallīlu*.²¹ There is no God but God and Muhammad is the Prophet of God — God bless and save him (*ṣalla-llāhu 'alayhi wa sallam*). They finish: In this creed may we live, in it may we die, and in it may we meet the face of God.

CEREMONY OF INSTRUCTION

A moment's silence follows. All eyes are upon the preacher.

He tells the deceased that the death angels Nakir and Nkir shall visit him in the grave, and stresses the importance of him being able to prove that he is a believer, a faithful Muslim. For this reason he must know the Muslim confession of faith, word by word, as it is now repeated to him. If he does not know it, he will be punished and tortured by the two angels.

Talqīn, the Arabic term for this ceremony, means *i n s t r u c t i o n*. Further details will be given in connection with the ceremonies at the grave.²²

Surely the people think the deceased will be comforted by the name of God, and by the creed continuously repeated by his friends and by the preacher. It will make it easier for him when the death angels, Nakir and Nkir, question him regarding his faith. He must assure them that his life and death had been that of a true believer, a true Muslim.

BEARING WITNESS

The preacher appeals to the community, the people assembled, to give their judgment on the deceased. This ceremony, like the previous one, may be postponed till the interment, but it often takes place in connection with the washing of the dead.

I have a note in my Diary: As long as the deceased is still in the house, the preacher turns towards those present and says: »Oh, honoured assembly! What have ye seen, what do ye know of this man, or this woman?»

To quote ALYA: »When he is taken from the washing board and laid into his grave clothes, they say: 'What do ye testify of this deceased?' They say: 'We witness only good (*khēr*). If he has been bad, they say: 'Bury him and be silent!' And silent they are.»

Another time ALYA said: »When putting on the grave clothes it is said: 'What do ye witness of this man, or, of this woman?' — 'Nothing but good.' But in the case of a fallen woman they are all silent.»

SITT LOUISA: »The evil deeds of the dead shall not be mentioned. Leave it to God! Let God judge!»

Someone invokes God, saying: Thou Beneficent, Thou Merciful! Thou Forgiver of sins, even the great ones!

— And what says the preacher?

ALYA: »And while the washer washes the deceased, the sheikh says:

He who did not pray on Thursday

He who did not pray or drive away Satan

May he be plunged into Hell

And the others — enter Paradise — in the grace of God!»

By the ceremony of testimony, the people express their opinion and give their judgment on the dead. It may strengthen the deceased, his mind. Their words may give him courage to meet the hardships he must experience.

INDULGENCE

If a man has neglected his religious duties, if he has not regularly performed his prayers, if he has not given alms as stated by the Islamic law, he has brought debts upon himself for which he must suffer in the life hereafter. Yet there may be an atonement even after his death by performing a ceremony called deduction of prayer (*tasqīṭ* or *isqāṭ il-ṣalāt*)²³, which means reducing the great debt incurred by omitting prayer. A substitution for omitted prayer (*tasqīṭ* or *isqāṭ il-ṣalāt*), or the settling of his account regarding prayer can be provided.

ALYA says: »This ceremony is for those who have not prayed; for those who have prayed, it means increased blessing. Thou payest some of thy — religious — debts in this way. For instance, a debt of 1 000 piasters (10 pounds). By means of this ceremony the debt is reduced by half, but half of it is still owing.

And he, for whom it is not performed, must make his ablutions with fire, and with fire rinse his nose and mouth, and wash his forehead (face) and his ears, and wipe his neck therewith. — All with fire.»

If someone has omitted to pray in this world, prayer in eternity will be torturous.

ALYA: »All that is done here with water, must be done, lit. touched, there with fire. In the future life, when praying, he must stand and kneel alternately on burning-hot stones, and touch them with his palms and forehead. Each part of the body that should touch the ground during the ceremony of prayer must, in eternity, touch the scorching stones.»

SITT LOUISA: »If a person has neglected his prayers in this world, he must perform his ablutions with fire, and standing or kneeling on fire, he must pray.»

It seems as if this ceremony did not often take place. I heard only of five instances.

ALYA: »This ceremony was performed for Muhammad Khalawe.»

SITT LOUISA: »He had prayed much, yet it meant increased blessing for him.»

ALYA: »The other three men were: Mahmud Ethman and Ahmad Jedallah and Muhammad Kanaan. Also for the mother of Ahmad Isma'in, the rite was performed. Although she had prayed, she desired it.»

— Is everyone entitled to the ceremony?

ALYA: »A person who is rich, who has the means and some property,

who is free and independent, and who can permit himself some things, for him the ceremony may be performed. He orders it beforehand.»

— When should the ceremony be performed?

ALYA: »After he has been washed and laid in the shroud, and while he is still among his people and able to hear them. The soul does not depart until the body has been laid in the grave. The deceased is able to understand everything, but he cannot use his tongue.»

P r o c e d u r e

The ceremony takes about half an hour, an hour, or more. I have the following notes which include a variety of descriptions.

ALYA: »The women: wife, daughter, and mother gather their ornaments into a sack. Different kinds of ornaments: bracelets, chin-chains — two to five or six — caps with coins attached. All are dropped into the sack which is tied and stitched up. It is given by one of the women to a man, and she says: 'I trust in thee.' The man says: 'Hast thou presented it to me?' — 'Yes, I have given it to thee.' These words are repeated three times.

In his turn, the man gives the sack to the preacher who blesses it and passes it on to the next man. The man who takes the sack says: 'Hast thou presented it to me?' The preacher says: 'I have presented it to thee.' These words are repeated three times.

Then the sack is passed from man to man. Everyone hands the sack on to the next one. The (ceremonial) words are repeated each time. Three times.

Finally the sack is handed back to the preacher again. Then money is given 'for his soul', the soul of the deceased.

If the preacher is a noble man, he says: I forgive him — meaning I will not accept any money. Then the others think that shame would fall upon them if they were to accept money. And they, too, say: We forgive him. Then all the money is given back to the family. In the opposite case it is distributed.»

Another time ALYA said of the ceremony:

»They collect these ornaments. They are worth about five hundred piasters (half a pound). They put them into a sack.

'How much are they worth?' someone asks. — 'Five hundred or four hundred piasters'.

Half of this sum is produced in small cash and distributed among

the deserving. The sheikh is given twenty to fifty piasters. That is his fee or reward. The remainder is distributed among the deserving and the poor.

And as regards the ornaments, everyone recognizes her own. They are all returned to the owner.»

Not feeling satisfied with Alya's description, I asked her to tell me again about the ceremony. And here is what she said:

»They sew up the sack of ornaments. Then someone says: 'How much are these ornaments worth?' — 'Five pounds.' A relative of the deceased produces it and it is exchanged for piasters which are to be distributed later. Ten to twenty men take part in this ceremony. The preacher must first have the sack, he prays and blesses it.

The sack is handed from one to the other. The one who takes it says: 'Hast thou given it to me?' And the one who gives it says: 'I have presented it to thee.' They distribute money among the deserving.»

SITT LOUISA: »Among relatives and other people who are there.»

ALYA finished: »And the sack is returned to the 'owner of the house', the head of the house of the deceased, and each one gets his own back again.»

These accounts given by Alya are general descriptions and explanations of the ceremony called *d e d u c t i o n o f p r a y e r*.

HAMDİYE told me of a ceremony of this kind in Ein Karim, where she was present.

»A woman died in Ein Karim. On the day she died her son had to join the army. Before leaving he made arrangements for the funeral and attended the ceremony of the *d e d u c t i o n o f p r a y e r*.

He said to the villagers: 'People, bring the grave clothes! People, heat water! People, dig the grave!' They brought the grave clothes, and hot water, and dug the grave. They washed the woman and shrouded her.

Then they called in the men, and the preachers, and the sheikhs. Her house was large, and soon filled with men and women. The son said: 'People, collect what we need! Let us start (the ceremony)!'

The women collected ornaments. One woman removed her bracelets from her wrist. Another woman, wearing a chin-chain, took it off for the collection. A third offered her cap with coins attached, and so on.

The daughter of the deceased asked: 'How much is thy chin-chain worth? — How much are thy bracelets worth?' The answers were: 'Four pounds, five pounds,' etc. Each woman took off some of her ornaments

and gave them to the collector. She asked: 'How much is this ornament worth?' And the woman concerned evaluated her bracelets or rings or ear-rings. — 'They are worth so and so, this ring is worth so and so', or she mentioned how much money she had on her cap.

'We must count them, so as to know what they are worth.' And the sack was found to be worth sixty pounds. The girl had sewn it together for fear that something might disappear.

She took the sack to the preacher. Then he said: 'Give me what thou hast!' She said to him: 'If thou pleasest!' Taking it from her, he said: 'Hast thou presented it to me?' She said: 'Yes, I have presented it to thee.' The question and the answer were repeated three times.

Then the sack was passed round from man to man, from woman to woman. The men were in the front rows, and the women behind them. Finally the sack was returned to the preacher.

The mourning relatives took it over, but before doing so they offered the preacher money for the soul of the deceased.

The son of the deceased took out five pounds and offered it to the preacher, saying: 'This is recompense and reward. For my mother.' The preacher said to him: 'Thou art a soldier, so this is all for thee. And as regards thy mother, I forgive her, and may God forgive her!'

The preacher turned to those assembled, saying: 'O, ye good ones who are present! Will ye forgive her, or take something?' And nobly the people answered: 'We forgive her, and may God forgive her!'

And again the preacher turned to the people calling them to bear witness of the dead woman, as is the custom. 'O, ye good ones who are present. What have ye seen of this woman?' They said: 'We have seen nothing but good.'

Then she was lifted up and carried to the grave.»

The preacher exempted the son from the expenses and the alms to be given after the ceremony. He felt compassion for him having to be a soldier. Military duty has been considered a severe handicap and hardship.

Yet some alms were given. A woman is allowed to have money of her own, and, before she died, the woman told her son to distribute one and a half pounds which she had saved up for the purpose.

HAMDIYE: »She had said: 'My son, I want to scatter the money on my grave. For the poor and those in need.'

And when the grave was closed, the son came forward with the money, the one and a half pounds, in his hand.

— 'Oh ye gathered! Who can change it?' They brought him small

change. He scattered the coins on the grave. And the poor and those in need were allowed to take of it.»

With a touch of sarcasm Alya asked Hamdiye if she too had got some money. — «O no», replied HAMDIYE, greatly shocked, «I should have been ashamed to take it.»

Alya, who probably was jealous of Hamdiye — of what she had experienced, and of the account she was able to give — looked pleased at having been able to annoy Hamdiye by her ironical remark. These women were both good narrators and sometimes envious of one another.

It is evident that Hamdiye made her observations in Ein Karem with a sharp eye. She recounted things in a descriptive and lively way. Maybe she boasted slightly when saying: the house is large, there were preachers and sheikhs and much money was shared out. Her account was dramatic, the son called up for military service had first to make arrangements for his mother's burial.

ALYA: «At a burial there is the deduction of prayer, *tasqīl il-ṣalāt*, and the *dhikr* ceremony, the repetition of the name of God and the profession of His unity. They call on God and they honour the memory of the deceased.»

Concluding Notes

From these accounts it is not quite easy to draw conclusions as to the meaning and idea of the ceremony.²⁴ Friends and neighbours give their ornaments for the ceremony, but not as real gifts; they are returned to their owners after the ceremony. Yet the gifts are not only fictitious, I should think. They are rather to be considered as pawns for the gifts to be distributed from the property of the deceased. The partakers of the ceremony show the deceased confidence. They show themselves ready to be responsible for him. The circulation of the sack from man to man, from woman to woman, and the repetitions of the formulae belonging to the ritual, probably aim at effecting a condensed magical stress.

It seems as if the preacher and the partakers of the ceremony had the right of ownership to part (one half) of the money gift to be spent and distributed from the deceased's property, for their service of intercession.²⁵ Is this the reason why it is said that half of his sins, of his omitted prayers, is forgiven by means of the ceremony?

But if the preacher and the people are good and noble people, they liberate him from the duty to give them some money — the fee for the preacher, the reward for the partakers. They forgive him and hope that God will show mercy, too, and forgive the deceased for his sins.

The other half of the sum should be given as alms to the poor and needy. Although in certain cases the preacher may exempt the person, whose duty it is to give the sum, from his obligation. This happened, for instance, in the last case mentioned when the son of the woman who died had to leave for military service which, as such, is held to be a great misfortune and disaster.

May be that even the intention to give is sufficient, and that the readiness and will to sacrifice something is taken into consideration.

TABUS

In the rites and ceremonies performed after the death of a man or woman, the preacher plays an important role. He conducts the prayers. He gives advice and information and explains the Islamic ritual. When the last services are performed, he stresses their importance, and prepares the deceased for eternity, for the events in the other world. He keeps order among the people and warns them against injuring the deceased — or themselves.

It is related that, late at night, old Tobi buried a Jew²⁶ who had been killed in Ninive. Tobi did not enter his own house, but lay down by the wall because he was impure after having touched a dead body.²⁷ — Of one who has vowed a vow of a Nazarite it is said (Numbers VI. 6): »All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord he shall come at no dead body». And VI.8: »All the days of his separation he is holy unto the Lord.» — Leviticus XXI. 1—4: »And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people: But for his kin, that is near unto him, that is, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother, And for his sister, a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband; for her may he be defiled.»

Thinking of how often many Old Testament views or customs coincide with those of to-day in the Holy Land, I asked ALYA: — Is a deceased considered impure?

Almost offended, she replied: »A deceased is not impure! Do they

not wash him with warm water and soap and a sponge! Do they not wash him as if in preparation for prayer!»

It may here be remarked that the persons who handle the deceased are ritually clean, they have purified themselves.

It has previously been mentioned that the »praying» woman who washes a deceased woman has first made her own ablutions.

And in the case of a man, according to ALYA: »Before the preacher performs the ablution preparatory to prayer upon a deceased, he performs his own ablutions.» — So do those who assist at the ritual act.

ALYA: »The men who pour water over the hands of the washer must also have made their ablutions.»

By ritual washing and prayer the deceased is purified and sanctified, and thereafter he shall not be defiled.

ALYA: »The preacher washes upon him as for prayer, and nobody is allowed to touch him afterwards.»

Even if Alya exaggerates, the true fact is that there are people who are not allowed to, or should avoid approaching the deceased, or touching them. Those are: unclean persons, and, with certain exceptions, those of the opposite sex.

As to unclean persons, the prohibition concerns both men and women, but actually women are more affected, being unclean for three different reasons.

ALYA: »The impure woman, impure after sexual intercourse, and the lying-in-woman, and the menstruating woman, must not come near the deceased. Nor are they allowed to make the grave clothes, or to touch them. A woman commits a sin if she is present when unclean.»

Only those who were forbidden to marry him or her are allowed to touch the body.

ALYA: »After a man has been washed as for prayer, his wife must not touch him. But his mother may do so, and his sisters, his daughters, his father's sisters, his mother's sisters, the daughters of his brothers and his mother-in-law. Likewise, his daughter's daughters, his sister's daughters, and his foster sister. All these are innocent.

As to a deceased woman, innocent for her are: her brother, and her brother's son, and her father, and her father's brother and her mother's brother, and her father's father and her mother's father, and her son. And those who are forbidden to touch her are: her husband, her brother-in-law, her father's brother's son, her mother's brother's son, and outsiders.»

Not defiling is the touch of all those whom the deceased was forbidden to marry.

»And all those who touch the deceased must have performed their ablutions. At the burial everybody must be pure.»

LAST FAREWELL, FUNERAL PROCESSION, INTERMENT

HAMDIYE: »Before he is washed, his wife bids him farewell. Before he is wrapped in the shroud, his sisters, his mother, and his sister's daughters bid him farewell. They say: 'Go in peace, in God's protection! Greet those who have gone before thee! Many greetings!' Women kiss a dead woman, saying: 'Go in peace, oh sister, protected by God. Greet them who have gone before thee!«

And ALYA said: »Only those women whom he was forbidden to marry may bid a man farewell and kiss him. They say: — This is the last farewell.»

The last farewell is said both to men and women.

Finally the winding sheet (*kafan*) is tied.

ALYA: »The sheikh says when all is over: 'Take the bier away!'» She explained: »They carry the dead in a carpet, or on a bier consisting of a carpet attached to two poles by a headcloth. They make the bier themselves.»

SITT LOUISA: »A child is carried over the shoulder.»

I, myself, saw a father carrying his baby daughter in his arms to the grave.

ALYA: »When the body is carried out of the house and the bearers step over the threshold, the relatives call out: Oh, my father! Or, Oh my brother!« — whichever the case may be.

I have a note from 1926 — when a woman dies: She is in the house. They put her on the bier. They carry her shoulder-high, and crossing the threshold, the women present are heard to trill. As at a wedding.

ALYA: »They trill for all women, young and old.»

— Why do they do so, I asked, and ALYA replied: »It is lawful, right and good.» She used the word *ḥalāl*.

ALYA added: »But they do not trill for the men. And when the bier is lifted up, they trill. And when the body is carried over the threshold. For all women they trill.»

SITT LOUISA: »But not for little girls.»

ALYA: »All are willing to carry the dead.»

Everything that is done for the dead, even to walk in the funeral procession, merits a reward from heaven (*ajer*). Everybody is willing to serve the deceased by carrying them to the grave.

A woman should be carried by her brothers, even if she is a married woman. When a married woman dies she again becomes a member of her father's house. Her husband cannot bury her.

ALYA said of the throwing of mantles over a woman in the house: »The brothers, the father, the father's brother throw their mantles over the dead woman for fear that stranger men may look at her.»

SITT LOUISA: »Many mantles. Not even the length of her body may be seen.»

There is a wailing song in which the dead woman sings:

Oh! who shall lay me in my tomb
And drive the stranger men away from me.
Oh, my brother, throw thy mantle over me!
Come to me before the stranger men come!

A man may first be taken to the mosque where prayers are said over him, or he may be taken straight to the grave. A woman is carried straight from the house to the grave.

SITT LOUISA: »Women do not go to the grave when a child is dead, but everybody goes when an adult is dead.»

ALYA: »In olden days there were no women at the grave except the waterbearers.»

It is still not considered proper, especially for young women, to go to the grave, but some of the old ones do so.

It may even be dangerous in some cases. Thus, a woman who has lost children in their infancy must be very careful. A woman who asks the preacher for an amulet to protect her from disaster is warned by him against going to the grave.

ALYA: »Those who carry amulets should not go to the house of the deceased. A woman whose child has died is not present at the burial, nor does she eat of the funeral meat. It is not good for her to pass the burial ground.»

And, of course, an unclean woman must not take part in a funeral.

ALYA: »Everyone at the burial must be — ritually — clean.»

SITT LOUISA: »Those who have to touch the body must have made their ablutions. This they do before the prayer over the deceased.»

ALYA: »An impure man must not walk in a funeral procession. He may not take part in a funeral, because he is unclean. The derwish must push him away with the bier.»

She told me about Hasan Ehsen. He was unclean. Yet he took part in the funeral procession of a man called Ali. The bier pushed him away. He was told: »Please, go away from Ali! Thou art not pure. Shame on thee, Hasan!»

ALYA: »The derwish knows when an unclean man is present and drives him away. Hasan said he wanted to test whether it was true. How stupid of Hasan!

The angels follow the dead in the procession.»

The people in the funeral procession murmur the Muslim creed — God is one . . . , repeating it all the way while they speed to the grave.²⁸

The men stand by the grave, the women behind them in a separate group by themselves. The bier or carpet containing the body is placed before the door of the grave. Everything is ready.

And then it may be found that the tomb is not empty.

If a wife is to be buried, her husband may have stepped down into the grave beforehand. He is defiant and refuses to come out from the tomb unless someone promises him a new wife. A bride received in this way is called a gift from the grave.

If a husband is to be buried his widow may have gone down into the tomb beforehand. She refuses to come out and appeals to the people, begging to be allowed to remain a widow and to bring up her children in their father's house. Or, she may announce her pregnancy before the men assembled at her husband's tomb in order to protect herself and her unborn child.

The last chapter of my book, *Marriage Conditions*, II, includes explanations of these ceremonies at the tomb, formulae, and gifts of new garments: a kaftan or shawl, or a blue mantle.

At the interment it is important to 'give him the right direction'. In the grave, the body must be laid: face southward, back northward, head westward and feet eastward — the eyes always being turned towards the south, towards Mecca.

The grave — especially if it is built for one person only — is low, and the body is pushed through the door into the grave.

ALYA: »One of the village men goes into the grave with the dead one, and should it be a woman, he who goes with her must make brotherhood with her.»

If she has no close blood relatives: father, brother, father's brother or mother's brother, a man must make brotherhood with her, because a man must lay her in the grave. He then says: »I am thy brother in the Book of God», etc. Then he may touch her and go with her into the grave.

Sometimes two men enter the grave at the burial of a man. For instance: Two men, Khadr Ehsen and Ahmad Isma'in, went down into the grave with Sliman Jedallah.

The dead must rest on their right side.

For that purpose, according to ALYA, they prop up the body with a stone at the shoulders, and another at the girdle, and another at the feet. They do this to prevent the body from swelling,²⁹ and from rolling over onto the back. And, the eyes must always face south, i.e. Mecca.

They settle the body — the right hand under the head. This concerns adults and young people, men and women. People say: »the right hand under the head», but it is better explained if one says: put the right hand under the right cheek.

SITT LOUISA pointed out that this is an idiom for death.

There is a saying for lifelong friendship: »From the day when I learned to know her — or, when I met her — unto the day when I shall lay my right hand under my head (i.e. die) I will not forget her.»

A variation: »From this day and unto the day when I lay my right hand under my head, I shall not forget the favour of this or that person.»

ALYA: »The man who has gone with the dead one into the grave and placed him at rest, made him comfortable, laid his right hand under his head, and propped up his body with the stones, he loosens the bands of the winding sheet and takes it off his face.»

This must be carefully done to avoid trouble, not least for the sake of the living. A deceased may bring both life and death.

If someone is ill with fever his sister or mother measures him with a thread that is as long as he is. The thread is rolled up and hidden in the wrappings of someone who has recently died. The illness will depart with the deceased when he is laid in his grave.

»He who opens his mouth, his death is a bad death,» said ALYA. She

added: »The winding sheet must be carefully applied lest it enter the deceased's mouth. Many people died in a village. The deaths could not be explained. A grave was opened, and a piece of the wrapping was found in the deceased's mouth. This was the cause.

In the village of Surif they once forgot to take away the winding sheet from the deceased's face. He swallowed it, and numerous deaths occurred in the village. They ploughed the burial place with a plough turned the wrong way about, and they whispered in the ears of the cows: 'May the deaths cease!'

And they went to the preacher. He said to them: »Open the grave of the man who died just before the many deaths!' They opened the grave and found that he had a piece of the winding sheet in his mouth. They took it away, and the deaths ceased. The deceased had swallowed the wrappings and 'drew others with him'.

If the graveyard in Artas is opened by a member of the Shahin family, then the Meshani or Sa'd family must close it. Thus Ibrahim Shahin drew Ibrahim Ode after him. And Khalil Ibrahim from the Shahin family drew Isma'in As'ad from the Ode family after him. Ibrahim, son of Hasan il-Hajj of the Shahin family, drew Dahud Khadr from the Ode family after him.

Then there were no more deaths for a long time in the village.

As ALYA, herself a member of the Ode family, expressed it: »They open and we close.»

But to revert to the last tending of the deceased in the grave, ALYA says: »He scatters some dust upon the dead one, saying: That is thy fortune (from this world).»

Everyone who dies, young or old, has a handful of dust scattered over him — in his eyes — followed by the words: »This is thy share of the world.»

Or, it may be said: »Thine eyes are not satisfied without a handful of dust.»

A variation: »How much hast thou not run and walked, and all that thou hast got from this world are these grains of sand.»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »The idea is: Out of dust wast thou taken, and unto dust shalt thou return.»

Those who stand close to the grave obstruct the view from those further back. They cannot see what is happening, they cannot look into the grave. But they are not meant to, especially at the funeral of a

woman. The male relatives of a deceased woman even screen the opening of the grave with their mantles. But everyone knows what is happening.

ALYA related: »When Sabha Khalil Ode was buried it was evening, and they covered the door of the grave with their mantles.»

SITT LOUISA: »So that nobody should look in.»

ALYA: »And when the man who went into the grave removed the winding sheet and the veil, her face shone like a fire.»

SITT LOUISA: »That means that she had a good death.»

The people at once understood that it was a reward for being good and doing good all her life.

ALYA told me of another woman: »Khadra Asad had brought up two orphans, and when she died, she turned yellow, and there was a smile on her face. There is nothing better than that — to bring up orphans.»

SITT LOUISA: »To turn yellow after death is considered a reward.»

It is said: »If they remain a beautiful yellow colour, it is a good sign. If they turn black it is a bad sign. If they grow rigid it is a bad sign. Soft hands mean generosity. A deceased who has been good and virtuous has soft hands.»³⁰

These things are observed and discussed while the deceased is being washed, and when settled in the grave. If the right arm is easy to bend, and the right hand easily placed beneath the right cheek, people know that the deceased has been good and virtuous.

Taking advantage of the public sentiment, the preacher may call for official statement of the character and morality of the deceased. He may ask the people to express their opinion of the departed.

If the ritual of witnessing has not been performed earlier that day, it must be done at the grave.

MAN AND HIS ANGELS

Men and women are responsible for their own actions. If they have been evil, they are punished at death and afterwards. Only little children are not morally responsible. They are free from sin.

HAMDIYE: »Children who are innocent have been compared to mad people. When he is grown-up, his understanding has become complete. Before that he is innocent. The angels wait until he is mature, and from that time on, he is accountable for his sins. The angel who is on the right

side writes down the good things and the angel on his left side writes down the bad ones. Every son of Adam has his own angel.»

ALYA told me about people's angels: »Everybody has two angels: one for the good actions, the alms. That is the angel on the right. And the angel on the left is for the bad. He who stands on the right writes down the good deeds, the alms. And the angel on the left writes down the bad actions. This is written on the table which is lifted up.»

SITT LOUISA: »Lifted up on the Day of Atonement, as Moses lifted up the tables of stone in the wilderness.»

Many times people have prayed:

God give that our angels are merciful,
And our death an easy one!
God, the Lord on the Throne, have mercy upon me!

At the moment of death, the angel Azrael removes the soul gently, or draws it out with violence causing great suffering, depending on whether the life of the deceased has been good or bad.

ALYA once said that the angel Gabriel, who is sent by God when a child is to be conceived, must also remove the soul of man. But it is generally held that this is the duty of the death angel, Azrael.

EXAMINATION BY ANGELS IN THE GRAVE

However, at the funeral, the people think of the two death angels, Nakir and Nkir,³¹ who are to come to the dead in their graves.

To their question: »Who is thy Lord?» the one in the grave must reply:

The Lord is my Lord
And the praying place of the Prophet is my praying place
And the Muslims are my brothers
And the Muslim women are my sisters
And I lived and I died in (the faith)
There is no God but God . . .

Instruction (*talqīn*)³²:

SITT LOUISA explained: »Khalil Khalawe is called a preacher. When

there is no other preacher in the village, he is the reader and the leader of prayers.»

ALYA: »Khalil Khalawe said to his wife, Lika, when she was in the grave: 'Stand firmly! Naker and Munkir will come to thee. They will ask thee: Who is thy Lord? — Say: God is my Lord, and the holy stone in Mecca is my south, and the Muslims are my brethren, and the Muslim women are my sisters, and I live and die in: Witness that there is no God but God . . . '»

This, of course, is according to the ritual, but as Alya related it, it must be interpreted as a kindness by Khalil Khalawe to instruct his wife. She might have made a mistake and be punished for it.

ALYA: »If anyone is afraid of the death angel Naker, he says: Thou art my Lord! And then he is struck.»

SITT LOUISA: »With the scourge. He should say: God is my Lord! The pass-word must be correct.

It strengthens the deceased to have the correct formula of the Muslim creed read to him before he, himself, has to repeat it to the death angels, frightened as he is of the punishment and the torments in the grave.

Only a little child need not be afraid. He is without sin and no examination is required.³³ Moreover, a child may even protect an adult and deliver him from evil.

If a child dies at the same time as a grown-up person, the adult enters the other world under protection of the little one, because there are no accounts to settle with the child. The dead child is placed on the knees of the adult.

Two of Alya's brother's sons, Mahmud and Mhammad Khalil, each had a brother's daughter buried with them like this. Hamdiye's father's sister and Miryam's child died on the same day in el-Khadr. The child was placed in the arms of the adult.

The death angels, Nakir and Munkar, come at night to question the deceased and they may strike and severely torment him in the grave. When they see the child on his knee, they have mercy on him for the sake of the little one. They do not want to frighten the child. A little child gives protection. It is rare, however, to find a shield of flesh and blood, an infant, against punishments in the grave.

With horror, those present at an interment think of themselves, how one day they shall die, and the agony they may have to suffer at their own burial by the treatment of the angels.³⁴

The people, too, may treat a body very roughly.

In a song it is said:

May God help us, on the washing board,
And the pinching, and the hard rubbing on it,
And on the bier and its shaking
And before Nakir and Munkir and their assaults.

CLOSING THE GRAVE

The hour has come for the grave to be closed. The man who was with the deceased in the grave has administered his last services and has come out, tired and exhausted. The strain on him had been great, alone with the deceased. There was no standing-room in the low grave. Reclining, he had to adjust the body according to the rules set.

He had untied the shroud, turned it up on both sides of the head, revealing the face of the deceased like in a window. But, with his eyes, the deceased shall no more see the living. The darkness of the grave shall enclose him.

ALYA said that in old Jedallah Ode's grave they put a flint — to light a fire to heat his coffee — and coffee utensils.³⁵ They stood them in the window,³⁶ probably a niche in the grave.

There is a song:

Thou digger of the grave
Make canals!
Make for the grave
Something for hanging up the shot-gun!³⁷

SITT LOUISA explained: »If the deceased is dear to his people, they make canals to prevent water from running into the grave.»

The grave is generally on a low level. Yet in the song it says:

»Thou digger, make high steps to it!»

The man who has laid the deceased in the grave may be too exhausted. He has done his duties. Others have to finish the task.

The opening of the grave is to be closed with stones and mortar. The plaster must be prepared. Women bring water.³⁸ Other people are standing about, depressed by the loss, and sad, but dignified.

CONCLUDING SCENES

A man arrives and begs permission to make a meal called the Invitation for the Dead. Someone else may also aspire to this honour. He swears to divorce his wife if not allowed to c o o k. Then he is given permission to make the repast. He rushes off. Actually he has already started his preparations. The meat is boiling. There is fire wood, and other things. He must be on the alert to see that no one steals anything from him.

At the grave a voice is heard: »Kiss the heads of each other, *lit.* kiss your heads — and make peace!»

This is the signal for greetings and condolences to be exchanged. The men embrace each other, each falling upon the other's neck, and kissing each other on the right side of the face or neck, and then upon the left side.

People's thoughts now go to the living. All present express the hope that there will be no more deaths in the family of the deceased, nor in the village, and that they may all remain healthy. And, should the deceased's span of life not have been filled, may those surviving benefit by it.

ALYA quoted: »May your heads be preserved! May what remains be added to your own life!³⁹ May God let the others remain alive! God grant that this is the end of all evil for the whole village!»

The women kiss the head of a widow, a mother, or a sister.

The men always stand round the grave, the women further away in a group. At the death of a child, the women do not go to the grave, but at the death of an adult — yes, they do so.

Meanwhile the work of closing the grave goes on. The large stone, called the door of the grave, has been put into place.

ALYA: »When they plaster the grave, when they close it, they say: Thou Beneficent, thou Merciful! Thou Forgiver of great sins!»

The deceased is supposed to pray to God, someone may say it for him: »Thou Light, Thou Light!⁴⁰ Thou who arrangest all matters!»

The hope is expressed:

May God illuminate thy grave,
And arrange things for thee!
And may thy angels be merciful [to thee]!
And may the earth be light upon thee!

All these expressions refer to faith and traditions among the Muslims.

The grave, even a low one, is built so as to give ample room for the body. It is stated: »The earth shall not touch him.» Yet the earth may be heavy upon him. His friends exclaim: »May the earth be light upon thee!» The enemy curses and hopes for the reverse.⁴¹

ALYA told me of two co-wives who went to their husband's grave:⁴²

One of them, the hated wife, said:

Oh grave, be heavy upon him!

Press his eyes out!⁴³

But the beloved wife hastened to say:

Oh grave, do not listen to her!

A detached triangular stone is placed in front of the grave. If a man is buried there, the narrow edge of the stone must face the grave; and the broad side, in the case of a woman.⁴⁴

Passing the grave on their way home after the interment of a body, the people say: »Thou art in the right house, and we are in the house of vanity!⁴⁵

These may be words of comfort. Yet people fully realize that: »One day above the earth is better than a thousand beneath it.»

Nobody wants to die. Everybody wants to live.

ALYA says of the living and of the deceased:

They get up and say: 'May God preserve your heads!' He also wishes to stand up with them. But the stone says to him:

Sleep, oh Servant of God

As God judged thee!⁴⁶

He hears the sound of their footsteps disappear, and desperation overwhelms him.⁴⁷

AFTER THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

CEREMONIES AND DUTIES

Treatment of death and burial customs is not completed by the statement that the body has been interred. Even after the burial there are many ceremonies and duties to be performed.

There are the series of meals and demonstrations of grief, visits of condolence by relatives, the arrival of men and women comforters from other parts of the country, from other villages.

Some of the meals are prepared in immediate connection with the burial: some in the evening of that day, some in the morning after the burial. Further, there are his *T h u r s d a y s*, three in number, on the second, third and fourth Thursday of the weeks following upon his death — when some food is offered. And the *s u p p e r o f t h e d e e a s e d*, forty days after death; it may be postponed, but not for more than a year. There is also an annual feast called the *T h u r s d a y o f t h e d e a d*, when food is offered at the graves. The dead are included at other periodical feasts, too.

«It is for his soul», is an expression indicating the ritual character of the feasts. And part of the Quran is often read.¹ Repasts for the benefit of the deceased are offered by his family, by his blood relatives, or by men of the village who are not related to him.

The meals are given also in honour of the deceased and his family. But at the same time they are considered debts and loans which the family of the deceased have to repay by equivalent repasts. Sitt Louisa called these meals »Essentausch«.

The same, an exchange: the condolences offered by men from other villages and the food provided by, or for them, the wailing and mourning of stranger women, and the gifts they bring or receive. Everything must be repaid.

ALYA quoted: »Joy is a debt, and death is a debt.»

SITT LOUISA: »This means, the meal of joy is a debt, and the meal of death is a debt.»

ALYA added: »What they have been given must be returned. All is a loan, *qurda*. Everything is a loan, *dēn*, even the footsteps, even the tear in the eye. If thou weepst with me I weep with thee.»

The customary expression of sorrow creates a debt. And a debt must be paid until the tear in the eye.² If I go to shed tears over a deceased, someone from his house must come to bewail my death or to bewail the death of some of my family, the people of my house. This is the rule. Gifts as well as expressions of sympathy must be returned.

What do the visitors, neighbours and friends say when they enter the house of death after the burial? Here is an example.

On the 29th of January 1926, ALYA told Sitt Louisa that Sheikha's husband had died in Bethlehem.

To that SITT LOUISA commented: »Now there will be many who come to condole, to say *fidāk*, on Abu Misleh's death. Everyone who goes to Sheikha will say: 'May thy head be preserved!' The answer to this is: 'May God keep thee safe!' — 'May God have compassion on him and on all the dead!'

In Spring 1959, DOCMAC, in Bethlehem, explained: *fidāk*, literally means your ransom. The word is used in common speech at the time of a person's death. To console one's friends, one would say: *fidāk*, your ransom, meaning: 'He died as a ransom for you', that you may live after him.

It is also used when anyone loses something of value. People will say: 'your ransom', meaning that the lost article has been lost as a ransom for something of a greater value. The answer to this is *fidāk ʾdāk*, may your enemies be a ransom for you!

If an animal, a cow, has perished, it is considered a sacrifice. »A life had to be sacrificed, rather an animal than a human being.» This is said to console those who have sustained a loss. The death of a human being is considered a sacrifice, too. »I beg for protection by God. May it (the sacrifice) be property, not man!«

TWO MEALS IN THE EVENING OF THE DAY OF THE BURIAL

The first meal is called the invitation for the deceased, *ʿuzūmet il-miyet*, or the invitation for the missing one, *ʿuzūmet il-manāqīš*. It is for a man, a woman, and even for a child, boy or girl, of two or three years, or over.

ALYA: »The invitation for the dead. — A man who is not of the family of the deceased prepares the meal. A goat is slaughtered, and goat's meat and rice or bread with broth is prepared. The men eat in the house of the one who prepares the meal.»

Another time I was told that they have the meal in the men's club. The invitation for this meal is given at the grave by the man who cooks it.

ALYA: »When the people have said: 'May your heads be spared!' he 'invites' and runs home. He goes to his work and the other men go to the men's club.»

SITT LOUISA said of the meal: »It is in honour of the deceased.»

This may be one of the explanations why the men vie with each other for the privilege of preparing the meal. One of them says: »I will do it!» The next one says: »No, I will do it!» And still another: »The meal belongs to me!» They all wish to show how much they honour the deceased. The struggle about the meal is generally fictitious, a gesture. The question has often been decided beforehand. But on some occasions an outsider has to interfere and decide the matter.

In the following case, related by ALYA, the two competing men were truly rivals. They had both slaughtered animals and started preparations before making the formal invitation.

Mhemmed, the son of Khadr Ehsen, died. Mustafa Salem, a relative in-law — his brother was married to Fatme Khadr, a sister of the deceased — offered to prepare the meal, the 'invitation for the deceased'.

But at the grave, also Ahmad Ethman offered to do so.

SITT LOUISA: »Ahmad Ethman was of the Sa'd clan, the same clan as the deceased, but they were not closely related.»

ALYA: »Without trying to find out whether anyone else planned to prepare the meal, Mhemmed and Ahmad had each bought an animal for slaughter. Both of these men insisted on cooking the food. They turned to Ahmad Isma'in to settle the question. He said: 'One of you makes the dinner and the other the supper.'»

SITT LOUISA: »This was all a mistake and does not often happen.»

The Arabic name, *il-unīse*, for the second meal on the burial day means *entertainment*. It is made, like the former, for deceased males and females, from the age of five years, upwards. The food is cooked in the house of the deceased and sent to the men's club. Everybody eats

of it: men and women. It consists of meat and rice. I was told that the Bedouin have their meal at the grave.

ALYA: »The entertainment — it is for him in the grave.»

SITT LOUISA: »It maintains him in the grave.» And it keeps off the death angels, Nakir and Munkar.»

TWO MEALS IN THE MORNING OF THE DAY AFTER THE BURIAL

The two meals are: the Opening of the Mouth, *fakkit il-hanak*, in the men's club, and the Breaking of the Solitude, *fakkit il-wihdeh*, at the grave. — Food may be taken also at home.

The opening of the mouth. — Only the blood relatives of the deceased prepare this meal. The first part is offered at the men's club. Guests, strangers, and every one who is in the men's club has his share.

ALYA: »They eat, and read the opening chapter of the Quran.»

This meal consists either of figs or grape juice (*dibs*), olive oil, butter, fresh bread, *maftūte*, etc.

The breaking of the solitude takes place at the grave. Food is distributed to those present.

SITT LOUISA: »For instance, figs and dried fruit are taken to the grave. The women take the food with them when they go to the grave in the morning. The relatives do not like to eat of it, but strangers do.»

ALYA: »There are only women at the grave. If a shepherd, a camel driver, a stranger, passes, food is given to him. Also to children.»

SITT LOUISA: »Those present at the grave are given something. They say: 'May God have mercy on him!' And those who come to weep are also given a share.»

The women go to the grave at dawn to dispel the 'solitude of the deceased'. In a sudden jokular mood, SITT LOUISA said: »To sit and howl, that is to entertain the dead.»

They sing songs in which they express their compassion and their understanding of the loneliness in the grave. This continues until the men arrive and chase them away.

I think that the food distributed is considered a kind of alms. I have a note: Dry figs are offered at the grave. If there are no heirs, it is said: »Share out money! He would like it!«

MALE VISITORS OF CONDOLENCE

The better known and the mightier the man who has died, the more numerous are the people who come to the house of mourning. Men come also from outside of the village. They come to the funeral, or afterwards.

ALYA: »He who loves thee comes within three days to condole with you upon the loss.»

SITT LOUISA: »They do not postpone their visit. If they do so, there is no love.»

However, some of the men arrive later. Those living at a distance may come after seven days or more — when the message of death has reached them.³

Male guests from other places bring sheep or goats, which are slaughtered, and eaten in the men's club. This is done at night. The following morning the family of the deceased has to slaughter one or more animals for a farewell meal, or to offer their guests some other kind of food. Their horses, too, must be well looked after and fed.

The custom for guests, who are not mere wayfarers but come for a set purpose, is to bring an offering, usually one or more animals. A visit of condolence is called a visit for the missing one. The Arabic expression is *qawwad il-manaqis*. The word *qawwad* means leading or conducting, that is, an animal for slaughter; but also a gift, actually a loan. The word *qawwad* includes also the meaning repayment. A gift received creates a debt, from which the receivers must try to free themselves by giving a similar gift, or a gift of the same value or more, to the donor, at some ceremonial visit. It may take a year, or even more, before they have the occasion to do so. It remains a debt until repaid.

The men who come from outside to offer their condolence are often relatives-in-law. When Alya's brother died, men came from Abu Dis, near Jerusalem, bringing two sheep, and men from Surif and el-Khadr bringing goats. Numerous people came from the near-by el-Khadr.

In all these three villages there were relatives-in-law. Alya's father, Ibrahim Ode, had a wife from Surif, another one from el-Khadr, and another from Abu Dis; her father's brother, Jedallah Ode, had two wives from el-Khadr and one from Abu Dis; and her brother Khalil had a wife from Surif.

MOURNING WOMEN FROM OUTSIDE

Not only the women of the clan, and not only the women from the village take part in the demonstrations of grief. They come from distant places to mourn. As soon as they have arrived at the house of the deceased the village women join them. Each time wailing women arrive, the performances of lamentation, of mourning songs,⁴ and even of a strange kind of dance take place.

There are no hired mourning women.⁵

One of the women from outside, sometimes several, are closely related to the deceased. It may be a sister married in another village, or a near relative-in-law. But such a woman relative is accompanied by other women from the place where she is living. And these stranger women give a reason for their desire to join her. They want to be with her. They do not like leaving her in her sorrow. And they take pride in appearing in large numbers.

The arrival of these women is feared, however. It increases expenses, and trouble easily arises.

What are the feelings of these stranger women towards the deceased and the relatives in his home village? They may not have known him personally. They do not lament the death of a dear one. From their point of view the visit is really a pleasant change. They see other places, other people and customs. Feeling free of the severe restrictions imposed on them in their own village, these women may be troublesome and unruly, especially if their leader is a bold type. They expect, and require to be well received, as, officially, they have come to mourn.

ALYA, who herself had been present on some of these occasions, enjoyed telling me of their pranks.

Ninety-nine Women Comforters

»A man from Bet Ta'amir died. He had a woman relative married in Bet Fejjar. She assembled ninety-nine women and went to the house of death.

She said to the owner of the house: 'My father's brother, forgive me! I have found and brought only ninety-nine women. The hundredth one is missing.'

He said: 'Thou hast killed us!'

Her host reproached her. How could she be so thoughtless as to bring upon them such great expenses! Food for so many women! She was actually about to ruin the family, said he.

Alya had probably only heard of this incidence.

In the next one, she had taken part herself. At that time Alya was living in Surif, married to a sheikh, Nofal, as his second wife.

M O R E t h a n a H u n d r e d W o m e n

Alya left for Se'ir together with some other women from Surif. There were forty-four women, all told. They were joined by a further thirty-five women from Bet Ummar and twenty-five from Halhul.

On their arrival each woman gave her host a small stone which she had brought with her. The stones were counted. There were one hundred and four stones and that meant one hundred and four guests, one hundred and four new visitors. Bread, eggs, cooking butter and grape juice (*dibs*) were served in the afternoon. Later, the second food, the evening meal, was brought: meat and rice. Three meals for these women! Three meals including breakfast on the following morning.

The Surif women remained in the house of mourning. And the others, the women from Bet Ummar and Halhul, spent the night in different houses in the village.

On their way to Se'ir the women started quarrelling with the first ones, the Surif women, reproaching those joining them: »Why do ye follow us?» — »Are we following? We are on our way to mourn!»

In Se'ir the women visitors behaved very badly. They stole figs from their hostesses.

R e q u i r e m e n t s o f t h e W a i l i n g W o m e n

ALYA told me of how rude and insolent the women may be in their demand to be welcomed and given the best kind of food.

As an introduction, some explanatory words may be said. A crowd of women were on their way to lament the death of a certain man. Approaching the house of the deceased, they saw their hosts bringing home the sheep from the pasture. The women looked at the animals with critical eyes and observing that one of the sheep was hurt, they immediately suspected — and quite rightly — that this very sheep was to

be slaughtered for their supper. A bold woman of the party told the hosts they would accept nothing but a sheep without blemish.

ALYA's story of the hosts and the bold mourning woman:

»The men urged on the sheep and goats, and among these there was a limping sheep. The woman said to the women who were with her: 'Wait, I will see that they take it back!' She sang:

Spread out new carpets for us
Do not spread out old and shabby ones!
Slaughter young sheep for us
Do not slaughter sick ones!

'Take the sheep back! We have been accused. We have heard the truth with our own ears,' said the hosts to each other.»

It is no wonder that stranger wailing women are not appreciated. But, as SITT LOUISA said: »If they are not well received their evil tongues will be let loose.» The reputation of the hosts and their village will suffer.

The wailing women themselves are aware of not always being welcome. There are some songs built upon this theme.

Your dead one I pity him
But give me meat to fill my hands!

And the response:

Oh, thou raven of separation
Do not appear before the women
They are drinkers of broth
And gnawers of bones.

This may originally have been a duel in words between the stranger women and the relatives of the deceased who wanted to conceal the loss of their dear one from these gluttons, and to avoid having them in their house.

The wailing women do not all come because of compassion. There may even be enemies among them. Such women deride their hosts.

They sing:

Were it not for the sausages and the (black) bread
We would not have come to shake our heads!

They mean: We would not have come to tire us by singing and dancing. The expression 'shake our heads' refers to a certain movement in the death dance.⁶

ALYA told me another story.

»One of the women comforters from another village was sitting behind the cauldron where the sausages, stuffed with rice and meat, were kept. She stole some of them.

Next morning, before the women left, they again performed a death dance. For this dance they form a circle, each of the women putting her hands on her neighbour's shoulder. The woman who had taken the sausages hid them in her dress between her breasts. Fearing discovery, she told the others to move cautiously.

She who had stolen stood up, and joined the others. And said:

Leap slowly, slowly
Lest the sausages fall out!

'Protect me! If ye do so till we have passed the Convent I will share them with you!' she added.»

As the word Convent is mentioned, the incident may have occurred in Artas, because, entering the village from the west, there is a Convent on the right-hand side of the road.

The End of Condolences between Two Villages

The tricks played by the women may seem funny when they concern other people. But when their own village is the target they do not seem so humorous. Ahmad Isma'in intervened when women from the neighbouring village of el-Khadr insulted the villagers of Artas.

ALYA: »The el-Khadr people and those of Artas used to exchange visits of condolence.

When Ethman Ahmad died in Artas, the women from el-Khadr paid their customary visit of condolence. On their way home they washed themselves in the canal above the terrace belonging to the Ode family.

One of the women said: 'I was given a bit of the shank — may God curse his hip!' Another said: 'I got the shoulder. May God curse his shoulder!'

A boy, shepherding sheep and goats, heard it. Then he ran off to tell the people in the village.

Consequently Ahmad Isma'in wrote to Mahmud Ali, the sheikh in el-Khadr: 'Oh, Abu Ahmad, had we but known that a sheep or a goat would not have satisfied your women, we would have slaughtered an ox and filled their bags.'»

Here bag means the space between the dress and the chemise, limited by the belt, or their wide sleeves. This is where the women carry things.

Mahmud Ali's son was called Ahmad, and Ahmad Isma'in addressed him politely as Father of Ahmad, his eldest son. In the same way Mahmud Ali addressed Ahmad Isma'in as Father of Isma'in, after his eldest son.

»The el-Khadr sheikh, Mahmud Ali, answered:

'Oh, Abu Isma'in, be not offended because of the women. The women are often a source of annoyance and make trouble, talking of, and disclosing things which they should not.'»

In the same month a man died in el-Khadr.

ALYA: »We, from Artas, went up to el-Khadr to condole, and Ahmad Isma'in said to his wife Raiya: 'Mind I do not see thee bringing any meat back from there!'

When the el-Khadr sheikh, Mahmud Ali, shared out the meat, he said: 'Be not offended! Ye are equals but all parts of the meat are not equal.'»

To the el-Khadr women (the women of his own village) he said: 'May God disgrace you as ye have disgraced me!'

And from that time on no one ever went to el-Khadr, nor did any one from el-Khadr come to Artas. No one came and no one went.»

And this is how and why the customary visits of mourning women between the two villages ceased.

It is said: »Mourning is from the threshold into the house.»

This saying has two meanings. Mourning should be kept within the home. But it may also denote that the mourning of outsiders is superficial. Strangers who come to condole and mourn are sad as long as they are inside the house of mourning. They leave, and think no more of it.

The men who come to condole, and the mourning women from other places often arouse great attention, sometimes even a sensation in the

village. They arrive one day and depart the next, returning to their own homes, work and problems. They have done their duty.

But the bereaved family, the clan, and the village of the deceased have further obligations for a long time to come.

HIS THURSDAYS

For three successive weeks food must be offered on a certain day each week.

ALYA: »Thursday. But if someone is murdered, the day is Wednesday. This is because he was not willing to die. His death did not come from the Lord but from man,» *lit.* from the slave.

Two men were killed in Bet Safafa. Instead of offering olive oil cakes on a Thursday, they did so on a Wednesday. This was done also for Salem Ethman of Artas, who was murdered.

Olive oil cakes is the main food served on these occasions. I have a note in my Diary of January 1927:

Delicious pancakes are baked in a gigantic frying pan. They are made of white flour, but contain no eggs, and are cooked in olive oil. In some places they also have cauliflower folded over with dough and cooked in olive oil.

Alya and Sitt Louisa explained the procedure more closely.

ALYA: »On the fifteenth day, that is the first Thursday after the funeral, the family of the deceased make olive oil cakes — lots of them, or folded cakes, or *maftûte*, whatever they have at hand and can afford. These are for the relatives in the house and for the men in their club. In each family of the relatives a wooden bowl is filled with pancakes.»

SITT LOUISA: »They rise at midnight. They spread the dough on a thin metal plate (*šāj*), to get thin cakes, and then cook them in hot olive oil: *zalābie*, olive oil cakes; *mʿabbaq*, folded cakes, sweet pies; *maftûte*, fresh bread baked on the *šāj* plate with fresh butter, and sugar sprinkled over it.»

ALYA: »On the second Thursday, they formerly used to take food to the grave — ten to fifteen bowls.»

SITT LOUISA: »Because of much quarrelling, Ahmad Ismaʿin said: Now we must stop the custom of taking food to the grave. Since then, it is served at home and in the men's club.»

Of the third Thursday ALYA said: »They send olive oil cakes to the club.»

SITT LOUISA: »All the relatives prepare olive oil cakes, and folded cakes, sweet pies. Every house must fill a wooden bowl with cakes and take it to the men's club. Food is offered also to strangers, poor people, and widows. This is 'for his soul'.»

Before eating they read the opening chapter of the Quran, and some other part. Food is distributed to anyone who happens to pass. This is probably a kind of alms for the poor and those in need. It is a good deed and benefits the deceased. Actually, the food should be distributed at the grave.

ALYA: »The day after the burial, at the 'opening of the mouth', and on Thursdays they visit the grave.»⁸

While it is still cool, early on a summer morning, they go to the grave, but in winter they wait until sunrise. Only women and children go to the grave.

If it is a very cold day they wait until the following Thursday. Each postponement is, however, connected with a certain risk of the visit not being made at all.

THE SUPPER FOR THE DECEASED

There is a still greater risk in the Supper for the Dead, *'asha il-miyet*, being neglected. It should be served forty days after the funeral, but it may be postponed for a whole year.⁹

ALYA: »The supper for the deceased is prepared when suitable.»

SITT LOUISA: »The great supper — when there is enough money for it.»

ALYA: »In Surif it must be served after forty days. In Artas it is done when convenient.»

SITT LOUISA: »After forty days, this is the old custom.»

ALYA: »Every one in the clan helps. Some bring whole wheat, some white flour, some barley flour or whole barley.»

SITT LOUISA: »Even whole barley, not ground.»

ALYA: »Most of it is made into *marmā'ōn*. And meat is shared out to the various houses. Formerly the whole village came together; to-day only the clan takes part. And formerly they had only *marmā'ōn*.»

SITT LOUISA: »*marmā'ōn*, a dish of small balls of wheat flour, is also called *mughrabiye*, because, in Morocco, it is a native dish and the main food. There it is called also *kuskus* which, however, among the peasants

in Palestine is an indecent word. In the towns it is called *kuskusun* and *mughrabiye*. It can be dried and kept over the winter.»

ALYA: »The sheikh said: He who does not make *marmā'ōn*, he can offer ground wheat and rice.»

SITT LOUISA: »The sheikh allows this food to be made: ground wheat with rice on top and broth poured over it.»

In this connection Sitt Louisa — January 1927 — said that the use of rice is rather new in the country. »Rice has been used perhaps only about 50—60 years in Palestine.» That would be from about 1870. It does not grow in the country.

Rice is eaten or served at different kinds of feasts but it is often alluded to with some contempt.

ALYA quoted a song:

Rice is not wheat
It does not feed any army
For what should one boast?
Wheat is highly valued
And rice is not worth much
And what benefit will the kids get
If they butt with the ram?

SITT LOUISA: »What is rice compared with wheat!»

Wheat is holy. Wheat means life. Wheat grew in Paradise. Wheat is fit for the ceremonial dishes served at funerals.

The following notes on the Supper for the Dead are extracts from my DIARY.

»May God have mercy upon his soul!» — »Kiss your heads and make peace!» are expressions used at this meal.

SITT LOUISA explained: »Also at condolences they kiss the forehead or head, and say: Do not mourn! Be not sad! They go before, and we follow.»

Alya thought of giving the villagers one rattle of olive oil and two rattles of flour for pancakes when she dies. She was probably inspired by what a woman we were just talking about had done.

The woman, Khadra As'ad, was a childless widow. She was exceptional in many ways. Having vast experience of life, and knowing her fellow creatures and their weaknesses, she made up her mind to prepare her own burial meal.

»I shall make my own Supper for the Dead», she planned, to be certain of it actually being made.

SITT LOUISA: »There it is, and that's the end of it!»

Khadra As'ad had a large meal prepared. »This is my Supper, she said. I will not have it forgotten and be hurt after my death!»

Neglect of this kind is harmful to the dead. If the great Supper has not been made, the deceased appears in a dream and reproaches the person responsible: »Why hast thou not prepared my Supper?»

THE DEAD APPEARING IN DREAMS

ALYA gave two examples.

A Stone for the Grave

ALYA did not tell me where and when she had heard this story, and she mentioned no names. She called the deceased *il-Hajj*, which means a man who has made a pilgrimage to Mecca.

»They took a stone from the house of his relatives-in-law. Every day the mother of the wife of the deceased complained, saying: 'They took a stone from us for the grave of *il-Hajj*.'

The deceased sensed her agitation and came to his brother in a dream and said: 'Did I not leave you riches to pay for this stone? If thou hast not money enough to pay for the stone of my grave, go to the window of the pigeons, go and see what thou wilt find there!'

He did so and found a *majidi* coin and other money of various value.

He gave the *majidi* coin — twenty piasters — to the mother-in-law. He said to her: 'Take the price of the stone and forgive!'

The deceased came a second time to his brother in a dream and said: 'Thank thee that thou hast relieved me of this burden! I have not been made responsible nor have I been punished and plagued — in my grave — for anything but having refused the bed of my first wife.'»

A husband with two wives has the same duty to both of them. If he sleeps with one of them for a night, he must share the bed of the other one the next night. Thus demands the law. The deceased had neglected his first wife, he did not have sexual intercourse with her. He was plagued for this behaviour in the grave.

It might be thought that a man could not be blamed or punished for a sin committed by others after his death. It seems, however, as if a good

deed, for instance, giving alms and saying prayers on behalf of a man after his death, is entered to his credit account; and a bad deed is entered to his debit account.

A Warning

The second example comes from Artas.

ALYA: »After his death, Sliman Jedallah appeared before a woman in a dream, dressed in wonderful, clean clothes.»

SITT LOUISA: »A sign that all is well.»¹⁰

ALYA: »He said: 'Peace be with you!' She answered: 'And may peace be with thee! It seems to me that thou art in a hurry, oh Sliman!'

He said: 'The wheat is ready, threshed and divided on the threshing floor in Bet Skarye, and I have come to fetch the sacks, but I cannot find them. I shall go to Jerusalem.' He added: 'Our descendants plague us. Dost thou think that Muhammad, son of Khalil, will have many descendants the way he treats the children of Sa'd?'

Then he disappeared and went to Jerusalem. And in her dream she sought him, but he was no more there.»

ALYA finished: »Your greeting and health!»

Muhammad's father, Khalil Ibrahim Ode, and Sa'd Ibrahim Ode were brothers who were to inherit their father's land — a third brother had died earlier without leaving any children. When the land was registered, Sa'd's name was left out. After Sa'd's death, Muhammad, son of Khalil Ibrahim Ode, made use of this fact.

SITT LOUISA: »Sa'd Ibrahim Ode's name does not occur in the papers. Now they bereave Sa'd's children of their rights, because Sa'd's name is not in the papers. And the whole village knows that he, together with his brothers, owned the land.»

It was said in the village that the deceased Sliman Jedallah — who was the father's brother's son of the two brothers, Khalil and Sa'd — had taken part in the conspiracy. But in the dream, Sliman warns Muhammad, Khalil's eldest son, against taking advantage of the formal 'lawful' right, and of depriving Sa'd's children.

The two dreams are easily explained from a psychological point of view. People know or feel that an injustice has been committed, they think that the deceased cannot find peace before the injustice has been corrected.

In the Orient, dreams are not looked upon, nor interpreted from the point of view of what they may unveil of the dreamer's emotions, his unconscious life, and unsolved complexes. Dreams are considered to be revelations from another world, bringing messages from God, or from the deceased. Even a living person, 'his angel', may direct the dreamer to act in a certain way. Dreams are prophetic, guide-posts, giving people warnings and regulations as to their conduct.

Even in the West, dreams and visions related in the Bible are accepted in this way by Christians.¹¹

IN PARADISE

When children die, their parents' sad thoughts follow them. People try to comfort those who have been bereaved. It is said: »Children who die are birds in Paradise.» They shall not be mourned.

If a young unmarried man dies, his mother and his sisters beg the virgins of Paradise to meet him, to be kind to him, and even to comb his hair.

Oh, daughters of Paradise!
Comb his hair on his forehead,
And loosen over his long neck
His beautiful plaits!

SITT LOUISA: »An unmarried man is the bridegroom of the maidens of Paradise. Imm Abed, Mrs. Alami, in Jerusalem, lost her unmarried son through death. She says: 'In my dreams I see my son with a very beautiful woman. And she always keeps her eyes lowered.'»

»That is a sign of modesty,» remarked SITT LOUISA and added: »When Imm Abed sees the woman beside her son, she asks him: 'Who is this woman?' — 'Mother, I have a wife', replies her son.»

»And that comforts the old woman», said SITT LOUISA to me.

Fadda Awwad, a woman of the Shahin clan, told us much the same story of her son who died.

SITT LOUISA: »The daughters of Paradise marry youths of Paradise. A woman who dies unmarried finds a husband in afterlife.»

In a mourning song for a young girl it is said:

Oh graveyard! to thee came a bride with a green dress
White, painted and gilded,
White — and with henna on the hem of her dress.

SITT LOUISA: »She is going to her wedding in the other world.»

I was told: »A widow goes to her first husband — a 'virgin' to him.»¹²

Virginity is highly esteemed, and thus it is logical that, in the other world, a woman who has had more than one husband should be the wife of the man she married as a virgin.

According to this view a man would lose his wife in Paradise if he had married a widow in his life on earth.

If he had married several wives: the one, at her marriage to him being a widow, the other a virgin, he may lose the first and keep the second.¹²

He may even have married two wives who were both virgins. Of such a man ALYA said: »Ali Salem married Hamde Isma'in who bore him two daughters. When Hamde died, he married her sister's daughter. In eternal life there will be confusion. He does not know if he shall have his first or his second wife.»

A similar problem appears in the New Testament: a woman married to seven brothers, an extreme case of levirate marriage. »Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.» Jesus answered: »For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.» The question may have been more complicated in the old Israel, but it was evidently a question present in the minds of the people in those days. See St. Matthew XXII. 28, 30.

In the examples given there seems to be no doubt about women entering Paradise. Perhaps it is not so seriously meant when it is said that Hell must be filled with women, and women are the fuel with which the heat in Hell is maintained. In any case it is understandable that the women sometimes forget such a cruel dogma, and believe that they, too, shall enter Paradise.

As to the time of 'revelation' of the dead to the living in a dream, it seems natural that this should occur fairly soon after death.

If dreams and sayings should be believed, the deceased would reach their place in Paradise soon after death.¹³ Where Paradise and Hell are situated is not definitely known, but it seems as if both were under the surface of the earth.¹⁴ In any case the dwellings of the souls of the dead, before the Day of Atonement, are under the surface of the earth.

SOUL AND BODY AFTER THE BURIAL

An often heard saying runs: »It is good to be buried in Jerusalem for there, beneath the Temple Area, *Haram*, is the Well of Souls. The souls enter through an opening in the well.»¹⁵

The body in the grave is not without significance for the soul. After having been taken to heaven for inspection by the death angel Azrael, the soul is immediately returned to his body. The soul takes its abode in the body to be examined by the death angels, Nakir and Nkir, not on the first night, but probably a night or two later. The deceased in the grave hears and knows what is going on above earth. He is strengthened by the offer of food and alms by his relatives and friends, by their prayers and sympathy.

Also later the soul may — according to the belief of the people — at least on some occasions seek his body in the grave.¹⁶

What if the body were no more there? It is possible that some damage may have been done. The soul has no abode if the body, for some reason, has been destroyed or removed from its place of rest.¹⁷

An enemy: a man, or a supernatural being, may injure or destroy the body of a man to hurt him, even after death.

Speaking of the door of the grave, the great stone which is rolled to the opening of the grave after the burial, ALYA said: »For fear of hyenas and enemies.»

BODY STOLEN FROM THE GRAVE

ALYA: »When Salem Ethman had died and been buried, he was gone from his grave.»

SITT LOUISA: »Shroud and everything had disappeared.»

ALYA: »Either the enemies or the angels, Satans, no good angels, had done it. An enemy may take him away¹⁸ and burn him. He does not wish him to remain with the others, to remain among the others in the graves.»

EXCHANGE OF BODIES

In Jerusalem there is a Christian graveyard on the Mount of Zion, and at some distance is the Mamilla cemetery where Muslims are buried. In the night, bodies are sometimes exchanged between the two burial

places, according to the Muslim natives. Evil Muslims are taken to Zion and good Christians to Mamilla.

SITT LOUISA told me that a pious Muslim, who was very fond of her father, used to say to him: »What a pity that thou art a Christian! But be comforted. Thou wilt certainly be exchanged after death.»

The man averred that he had heard, with his own ears, how the angels dragged the bodies beneath the surface of the earth, humming:

From Mamilla to Zion!
From Zion to Mamilla!

SITT LOUISA: »The angels seem to have copied the Oriental custom of singing at work.»¹⁹ She added: »Some people understand the language of the dead.»

And: »There are different orders. The carrier-angels who remove the bodies from one place to another are of a lower order.

The pious Muslim said: 'I imagine that if a Muslim adulterer is buried in a Muslim graveyard, he will be taken away in the night. The angels will not accept an impure man among pious Muslims.'

And SITT LOUISA:

»One cannot have an impure here. But there is a good Christian, take him instead and put him among the Muslims! God alone knows!»

PERIOD OF MOURNING

In January 1926, SITT LOUISA said:

»Formerly, about twenty-five years ago, he who came to the house of mourning to condole upon the loss of the deceased had to bring a dish of good food, for instance, eggs, honey, lettuce, (hard) cheese, *imrise*, for the family and for those who were sitting there, and for others who were to come, because the family did not cook at such times.²⁰

In a house of mourning only bitter coffee is served. And even if it is the time of a feast they have no cakes or sweet things. 'Forgive us, we mourn!' — This is the custom in the towns.

When coffee is served in the house of mourning the guest says: 'May God show mercy on his soul, the soul of the deceased!'» In Jerusalem, Bethlehem and other towns, coffee is offered, but, as already mentioned, without sugar.

The Bedouin do not serve coffee during the period of mourning. In a mourning song it is said:

Thou coffee from Aleppo
 In the beautiful leather sack!
 It is months since I have smelt thy aroma.
 Thou coffee from Aleppo in the leather sack
 For two months, oh coffee, hast thou not come into my mind.

Another song:

Oh, thou coffee pestle
 It is long since I heard thee pounding.
 The cups were weeping over the coffee-pot
 And the coffee-pot cried until it could no more!

The Bedouin explain: »The coffee utensils mourn on the death of a sheikh. They are hung up and turned upside down.²¹ The coffee pestle must not be used. The sound of pounding denotes joy.»

SITT LOUISA: »They ask to be excused. Please forgive! But the coffee utensils are mourning.»

ALYA told us about Salma il-Ali, a Bedouin woman from Bet Ta'amir, married in Artas. Ali Asad was her husband.

When Salma's father died her brother fetched his married sisters to the burial. He said to them: »My sisters, be not vexed with me! I am not stingy about coffee. But the coffee utensils are mourning their owner.»

Later, one of Salma's brothers died.

ALYA: »The utensils in which the coffee is roasted and ground mourned Abu Ali. They hung the coffee roaster on the pole.» SITT LOUISA: »In the Bedouin tent.»

Now ALYA quoted a saying: »There are three copper vessels mourning him: the coffee pot, the cup and the roaster.»

SITT LOUISA: »In olden times all these things were made of copper.»

ALYA continued: »And there are three women mourning: his sister, the daughter of his sister, and the daughter of his father's sister.²² And three stars mourn him: Sirius, or Canopus, Orion, and *Helāl*, the new moon.»

— But his daughter, I asked, why is not his daughter mentioned? And ALYA said: »It would not fit in with the rhyme. That is why his own daughter has been left out.»

SALMA IL-ALI told us that her brother's daughters in Bet Ta'amir

cut off their hair when he died. — »My brother's daughters have placed their plaits on their father's grave.»

In my DIARY I have a note from an excursion with Sitt Louisa and Hamdiye to Bet Ta'amir on February 14th, 1926:

In Bet Ta'amir we saw a number of graves, some of them of a recent date. Some of the Ta'amre people still bury their dead there. There were beautiful grave stones belonging to the Zir family. Ibrahim Mahmud, a young boy from Artas, who was with us, told us that he had seen women's plaits on Bedouin graves when, a year ago, he had been a shepherd grazing his sheep in those parts.

However, this is not now the custom in Artas. Yet, on the death of Ahmad Jedallah, his daughter, Khaliliye, sang:

Cut your hair!
 Why do ye keep it?
 Cut off the hair
 For the provider of bread!
 Why do ye keep it still?
 Cut off the hair²³
 For the provider of food!

An old custom is often preserved in songs long after it has been abandoned.

ALYA: »The Prophet decreed forty days' mourning. Nobody followed his instructions.²⁴

The wife of a man who has died, mourns for a year. The mourning consists in the following: not to wash her head kerchief, not to bathe, not to make herself beautiful, not to wear her best clothes, coloured clothes, and not to blacken her eyes. Further: not to wear bracelets, nor a chin-chain, *iznāq*. If these adornments are not put away, they must be covered with some material. The coins on her head must be covered either with green or black material, or with bits of white cloth.

The widow is allowed to marry after forty days. From that day on, she has the right to remarry. If she is pregnant she must wait until the child is born and weaned, i.e. six or seven months to one year.»

HAMDIYE: »According to the law, the period of mourning is forty days, but the dead man's wife may mourn for a year, his sister for a year, and his mother all her life, if she wishes to do so. The widow has the right

to remarry after a year. If she is nursing a child, she must wait until it has been weaned.

If a woman is wearing coins on her head she covers them with green material; embroideries on her dress are covered with a piece of cloth, and her clothes are not washed.»

HAMDIYE quoted a song in which a woman says:

I shall dress in sackcloth and ashes
And mourn for thee my whole life.
I shall dress in sackcloth and brown²⁵
And mourn as long as I live.

HAMDIYE added: »In olden days, the clothes were washed with ashes at the village spring.»

SITT LOUISA: »Cold water was used for washing clothes in the period of mourning, so that they should not be pleasant.»

A woman's clothes remained dark and dirty. Head cloths were not washed as a sign of mourning. However, the men did not always allow this kind of mourning. Sliman Jedallah's orders on his death bed were that the 'lazy' women were to wash their head cloths after his death.

Even women's handicraft is influenced to a certain degree by death.²⁶ For instance, weaving and basket work in bright colours is not allowed, nothing dyed should be used.

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD

At some periodical feasts there are ceremonies which comprise also the dead to a certain extent.

About the celebration of the *Little Feast* in Artas, April 13th, 1926, I have a note in my *DIARY*.

On the preceding day the people made preparations for the feast, their joy being great in anticipation of the end of Ramadan, the Month of Fasting. SITT LOUISA said: Tomorrow there is a feast.

ALYA: »Ramadan dies when the preacher calls the people to morning-prayer.» She told me a story in which Ramadan is looked upon as a man.

»In the evening, the labour of his mother begins. In the morning, about two or three o'clock, he is born. He reaches adolescence in ten days. Then grey hairs begin to appear in his beard. When he is twenty days old, ten days of his life remain. He lays his tired head on the pillow. His end is near.

His sisters, his father's and his mother's brothers, and all his relatives come together. They weep and wail knowing he is approaching the end of his days. He says: 'Do not weep! I shall return to you for a month each year.' When he dies good food is offered.»

The Little Feast is the celebration of Ramadan's death and burial.

Early in the morning of the Little Feast, shortly after sunrise, the men gathered for prayer on the roof of the village mosque. After finishing, the preacher stepped down from the cupola onto the roof and the men started to exchange Feast Day greetings, and they kissed each other.

Sitt Louisa and I spoke to an old woman who was sitting at some distance, in between the rocks, surreptitiously listening to the words of the preacher. She kissed Sitt Louisa's hand, and wept. »She is a widow and on a day like this she thinks of her dead ones,» said SITT LOUISA to me.

Meanwhile the men went to the graves to pay their respects to the dead. When they had left, some boys remained to read out of the Quran on the grave of a mother or other close relative.

At the Great Feast on June 20th, 1926, similar celebrations were held as at the Little Feast — repeated in the same way year after year.

On the day before the feast the men did not work, as hard work is forbidden on such a day. It was said: »He who does so makes himself unhappy by his own hand.»

The day of the Feast began with an early prayer performed by the men on the roof of the mosque. Then the men exchanged Feast Day greetings, kissing each other on the head or on the shoulder — kisses of atonement. According to Alya only relatives and friends should kiss one another, otherwise heads should be laid on shoulders.

Shortly after this scene the preacher and other village men were seen on the wall of the path in front of the graves. After praying they left again. Only some of the young men remained to read at the graves. They held the open Quran in their hands. The Surah Ya-Seen²⁷ was read. That day I took several snapshots.

Another name for the Great Feast is the Sacrificial or Slaughtering Feast. Blood must run onto the earth, some people smear the doorposts of the house with blood from the 'sacrificed' animals. Sheep and goats have to die to save human life.

The Little and the Great Feasts are celebrated in different seasons of the year, because the Muslim Calendar which is based on the lunar year (354 days) is followed.

The Thursday of the Dead is always celebrated in the spring in the month called the Month of the Thursdays. The first Thursday, usually in April, is the mysterious Thursday of the Plants. The second Thursday is the Thursday of the Dead. No work is done on that day. The people visit the graves. The men sit or stand while saying their prayers, and the women offer food on the graves. Boys or youths read the first chapter of the Quran, and some other part, and they are given a piaster by a relative of the deceased.

The dead are not remembered only at the time of the periodical religious feasts. In some way the dead are always present. The graves are in the village on the mountain slopes below the houses.

The dead dwell in the midst of the living. How many stones there were! I had been for quite some time in the village before I realized that many of the stones that I had been passing were grave stones. So well did they merge into the hills and ground. But the villagers knew where they were. Each day they pass the graves, and — if it is afternoon — they say: »Good evening», or »good night!» *lit.* »Let your evening, your night, be happy!»

The living greet the dead.

UNNATURAL DEATHS

To death and burial belong also unnatural deaths. Some incidents are given here of what ALYA called death caused by the slave — not God's death.

SUICIDE

In Artas I heard of only one man who had committed suicide;¹ he was not a villager, however. He came from Bet Ta'amir, and was called Khalil. He was well known in Artas, for he had relatives there, his father's brother, Hamad, who had spent most of his life with his family in Artas. SITT LOUISA remarked: »These Ta'amre people were the only Bedouin in Artas who lived in tents.»

Khalil was evidently a fairly young man when he killed himself, as he was not married, only betrothed.

ALYA told me about this tragic event in a few words:

»Khalil, the Ta'amre man, shot himself. It was because of his mother. She used to say: 'Thou takest everything to thy future relatives-in-law'. And like a fool, he turned his gun on himself.»

I heard this story only from Alya. If she was right, Khalil must have been an exceptionally sensitive man.

»He was buried with his people at Rachel's Tomb,» she concluded.

MURDER OF SALEM ETHMAN

The most important man of the Rabaya clan, Salem Ethman, had been the civil head of Artas, and he had taken too much power upon himself. A party was formed in the village to work against him, and it fell to the lot of some Shahin men — among them Sliman Khalil — to kill him.

ALYA: »It was in the month of Ramadan. Salem spent the night among the Ta'amre Bedouin, with Isma'in il-Hamdan, their sheikh.

And at home in Artas, Salem's wives, Alaya and Zuhur, had their evening meal and went to sleep leaving the door open. Thieves entered and stole Zuhur's chest. At the top of Sitt Milya's terrace they opened the chest, took out the contents, and left the lid open.

Cameliers from Artas passed by. They said: 'This is Salem Ethman's chest.' They called out to the villagers and carried the chest to Abdallah Ayesh's wall and placed it on top of it.

Abdallah Ayesh was furious when he found the chest on his own wall. 'I shall divorce my wife!' he shouted, 'if anyone but the rightful owner has touched the chest.' Having said the divorce formula, his wife was now divorced. Her brother, Mhammad Khalawe, took her to his house.

Then they sent a messenger to the Bedouin where Salem was.

'If Salem is not there', cried Abdallah Ayesh, 'it shows that he himself has taken the chest.' But Salem was there with the Ta'amre sheikh as his guest.

When Salem Ethman saw the messenger approaching he realized that something must have happened. He said: 'May God ward off the evil! What does thy coming mean?

The messenger sat down to rest, saying: 'Thy house has been robbed. Zuhur's chest is gone.' They returned together to Artas. Salem said: 'Jaber and Sleman have stolen my chest!'

He went to Jerusalem to accuse them of having stolen the chest. He proved them guilty.

In Bethlehem he hired a donkey. There were no carriages in those days.

In Jerusalem he gave Jaber and Sliman a dinner of bread and sweet things and, while they were sitting in the Café by the Jaffa Gate, Osman il-Azze came up to them.»

SITT LOUISA: »Osman was employed by the Government.»

ALYA: »Salem jumped up from his stool, and said to him: 'Please! I will divorce my wife, if thou dost not eat thy supper with me in my house this night!' Osman excused himself, saying: 'I have work to do in Jerusalem.'

Salem — who probably wanted to talk tidings over with him — repeated: 'Thy supper is with me in Artas. Thou art welcome! And if thou dost not come I shall sue thee for the money spent!'

SITT LOUISA: »If someone prepares a big meal, and the person invited does not appear, the host has the right to sue him for his expenses.»

ALYA: »Salem Ethman returned from Jerusalem riding on his donkey, and Jaber and Sleman walked beside him.»

Salem had told the officials that there were 70 000 Government piasters in the chest.

Jaber and Sliman had again asked As'ad and Ibrahim Ayesh, the chiefs of Artas, to advise them in their difficulty. The chiefs said: 'Kill him!'

On their way back, Jaber and Sliman made up their minds to follow the advice. At il-Morade they murdered Salem, and hurried on toward Artas.» — Il-Morade is the name of a place near Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem, quite close to the 'Children's graves', *qubūr il-ṭfāl*.

»But having finished his work in Jerusalem, Osman il-Azze set out for Artas. Approaching the aqueduct above the village, he saw two men — Jaber and Sliman — washing blood off their clothes. He said to them: 'What are ye doing?' They replied: 'We are just sitting here.'»

Meanwhile some Bethlehemites had found the murdered man. They recognized him and sent a message to Artas. From the top of the high mountains the messenger called to the villagers, telling them of what had happened.

ALYA: »Dabanj brought the sad tidings. 'He-e-e! O Mhammad Khalawe!' he shouted. 'Come to thy mother's brother! He has been killed in Morade.'»

This was heard also by Osman il-Azze who, by now, had reached Artas where he was to have been Salem Ethman's guest. The villagers were proud and eager to offer him hospitality.

ALYA: »They fought about him, they all wanted him to stay the night in their house. He said: 'I am not tied to the village now, since Salem is not here.' — This was an oath.» He went to the neighbouring village el-Khadr and stayed the night there.

But the Artas people went to fetch the murdered man and bring him home.

ALYA, who was with them, said: »All departed hurriedly: Salem's sister Ethmane, and her daughters, and his sister Sheikha and her daughters, and his wife Alaya, and Nafise Isma'in. And also the men hurried off, and with them were Sliman and Jaber.

We passed the window of Abd il-Rohman. — 'Is Salem with you?' asked Alaya. — 'He is in the house of Subah Shawke.' She said: 'Is he well or dead?' He said: 'He has had a blow on the right hand.'

We went on to the house of Subah Shawke.»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »He is a great sheikh, a Christian sheikh in Bethlehem. Salem Ethman had been taken to his house.»

ALYA: »This Christian walked down the stairs. Alaya asked him: 'Is Salem well, in good health?' — 'How could he be well! He has been slit open from ear to ear.'»

When Salem's relatives heard of it they gave vent to their sorrow.

ALYA: »They all cried and rent their clothes and the women loosened their hair.

Around Salem stood the Government officials, Christians and Muslims. Someone brought a camel. Salem's body was tied to it on one side, and a box filled with earth on the other side, for balance.

SITT LOUISA: »The load of a camel must always be equal on both sides.»

ALYA: »Sliman Khalil tried to make the camel go down on its knees. Alaya pushed him away and said: 'What? Thou hast killed him, and now thou comest to carry him on the bier.' She added: 'Where are the Hazabniye?'

SITT LOUISA: »That is a Christian family in Bethlehem.»

ALYA: »A man of this family came and said: 'What dost thou want, oh Alaya?' In desperation she said: 'Let none of the Artas people come near the camel!'

One of the Hazabniye said: 'But the Ode family! They can do it. Can't they?'

So Khalil Ode, and Ethman Jibrin — a brother's son of the deceased — led the camel by its bridle.

»When they reached Artas, Nafise — the wife of Ibrahim Ayesh — came out holding a torch in her hand. She had once made a vow: 'If Salem dies I shall light a torch, a torch of joy.' She now fulfilled her vow.

Ethman Jibrin was sent to el-Walaje to fetch the relatives living there.

And Khalil Ode went to Jerusalem to call the Government officials to Artas. They came: twenty-five men on horseback, and the doctor and the surgeon. They said: 'Who slaughters with his left hand in this village?' They said: 'No one but Sliman Khalil.'

They asked Alaya: 'Who is thy enemy?' She said: 'Sliman and Jaber, who killed him, and As'ad and Ibrahim Ayesh and Mhammad Shahin.'»

They had a conference in Artas. And then they arrested nine men: Ibrahim Ayesh and his brothers, and Sleman Khalil and Jaber, Musa Shahin and Hasan and Awad and As'ad. They tied their hands behind their backs and took them to Jerusalem.

Some of them bribed the officials and were liberated. The others were sentenced to nine months' imprisonment.²

According to SITT LOUISA, Salem Ethman was murdered in November of 1874. She told me: »On the day when my brother Philippe was drafted for military service (in France) he was told of Salem Ethman having been murdered.»

The Baldenspergers were then living in Jerusalem. But, to show how interested her family was in the villagers in Artas and in their lives, SITT LOUISA went on: »My father said to my mother: 'Go to the two widows, Alaya and Zuhur, and comfort them!'

When she got there, she found the children with knives in their hands. — 'What are the children going to do with the knives?' — They are sharpening them for use on the enemies.' — 'No, no! Take the knives away from them!' said my mother.»

Earlier in this book, some demonstrations of grief after the murder of Salem Ethman have been mentioned. Sitting at the handmill in the early morning to grind flour for their daily bread, his widow Alaya used to sing a song, also sung for fallen soldiers.

Have I not told thee, thou whirl-storm
Do not go to the market in Jerusalem!
Before you is the wide desert (sea).
The blood of the lion runs in the wilderness.
Had I been there I would have opened my lap for it.
The blood of the lion runs in the wilderness.
Had I been there, I would have held my head-cloth for his blood!

The murdered Sheikh, Salem Ethman, belonged to the Rabaya clan and the murderer(s) to the Shahin clan. There had been friendship between the two clans. They were friends in death, so to say, as some of them were buried in the same tomb. They were friends in life, the members of these clans intermarried. Sliman, the murderer — his enemies' name for him was the 'throatcutter' — was married to a Rabaya daughter whom he had received in exchange for his sister Sara, who, again, was married to Ethman Jibrin, a brother's son of the murdered sheikh. After the murder these two marriages were dissolved. The Rabaya clan took back their 'daughter' and later gave her in marriage to the much younger Mustafa Salem, the son of the murdered sheikh. Having lost his wife, Sliman Khalil demanded that his sister Sara be returned to him. The

Rabaya men, too, insisted upon a divorce between Sara and her husband, as they would not have the murderer's sister in their clan. But Ethman Jibrin, her husband, loved her dearly and would not divorce her. In spite of the pressure he was subjected to, he fought against a divorce to the very end. Finally he had to give in. But he could not forget the loss of his wife, Sara.

His former brother-in-law was now his bitter enemy.

After leaving the prison Sliman Khalil contracted leprosy, in consequence — as the villagers said — of the fright he had had on seeing blood gushing out of his victim's throat. But not even this misfortune satisfied the revengeful minds of the Rabaya clan. They still felt it their duty to avenge the murder of one of the members of their clan.

REVENGE

SITT LOUISA said: »When Salem Ethman was killed there was no one except his brother's son, Ethman Jibrin, who could take revenge. Salem Ethman's sister, Ethmane, wife of Ali Shahin, had a son, Mhammad, but the mother's brother is excluded, and the father's brother is included.»³

Ethman Jibrin did not kill the slayer, Sliman Khalil, but his very much younger brother, Isa Khalil, who actually had had nothing to do with the murder.

SITT LOUISA told me of this incident: »Many years after sheikh Salem Ethman's murder, his father's brother's son, Ethman Jibrin, took avenge, mortally injuring the young Isa Khalil.

The two met occasionally. Ethman Jibrin: 'What! Thou darest show thy face to me!' And he hit him with the butt of his gun, and Isa fell down unconscious.» SITT LOUISA was not quite sure, however. He may have hit him with a stone.

»The people dragged Isa home, and to bring him back to life, they burned him with a red-hot nail.

But Ethman Jibrin, the avenger, went to Khalil Ode — who was from a different neutral clan — and said: 'What to do? The man is dying. I have killed him.' He feared the Government.

Khalil Ode advised him: 'Fill thy pockets with 25 Thalers. I will see to things. Khalil Ode went to Bethlehem and bribed the doctor and the government, explaining the fight in his own way.

Isa Khalil died three days later. The doctor was called to certify the

death when Isa was laid out for the final washing. Having been bribed, the doctor declared that Isa's death was due to the red-hot nail, not to the blow.»

Thus Ethman Jibrin was saved from further persecution.

The villagers were not satisfied, however. »It is not fair», they protested. »Ethman is to be blamed», they said. »This is a grave for a grave and not a head for a head.»

They meant that a young man, a shepherd, cannot be compared with a great sheikh. Ethman Jibrin should have waited until Isa was older.

SITT LOUISA: »A Bedouin», so it is said, »had waited forty years to take revenge, and yet it was too early. Speed is from the devil.

But the widows of sheikh Salem Ethman trilled and sang: Lu, Lu, Lu! Oh, our blood is cooled!»

But also the men in the Rabaya family were proud of themselves. They had taken revenge on their enemy. They had shown an example.

ACCIDENTAL HOMICIDE AND BLOODMONEY

The following case would not have taken such great proportions, had not a man from the Rabaya family, due to his pride, forced the victim's family to take actions for vengeance.

Yet in the incident to be described there was not wilful murder, but accidental homicide, and the victim and the killer were both children.

SITT LOUISA: »There were two young shepherds, Khalil and his friend Farhan. Khalil was a boy from Artas, the son of Odtallah Jedallah, and Farhan, a Ta'amre boy. They played together in the wilderness, shepherding their sheep and goats.

One day they practised shooting. Farhan, the Ta'amre boy, said to his friend: 'Now, put thy cap over there. I want to see if I can hit it.' He took off his cap and made a target of it. At that very moment the other boy fired and hit Khalil, not the cap. This happened at a time of the year when some of the Artas people, who owned land in Bet Skarye, were working in their fields.

Leaving everything, Khalil made his way to his father and step-mother in Bet Skarye with the bullet in his body. His father lifted him on to the back of a mule and took him to Jerusalem. About ten days later the boy died in a hospital.»

Here SITT LOUISA said that people kept wondering and thought it

strange that the children of Shakra (Odthallah's first wife) should meet with an unnatural, a violent death. The elder brother was killed in the World War. It seems strange that gun powder should be the death of Shakra's two sons. And moreover, Helwe As'ad, the boy's mother's sister, had bought the gun powder and lead for Khalil when she was in Bethlehem.

»And Farhan was such a great friend of Khalil. He would share even an onion with Farhan. — 'Why dost thou hide the meat', they sometimes asked him. — 'It is for Farhan'. And Farhan loved Khalil, too, yet he wounded him mortally.

They had been to the hospital in Jerusalem and found him dead. Ali Asad, Khalil's mother's brother, put him on his mule and took him home to Artas. All the people working in Bet Skarye returned to Artas for the burial of the boy. His mother, Shakra, had died some years ago.

Before he died, Khalil said of his friend: 'He did not want to kill me. I fell over the gun.'»

It was a pure accident and the matter might have been left at that had not others interfered. Mustafa, son of Salem Ethman, the murdered sheikh, was now a grown-up man. When his father died he was a little child — maybe not even born (*Marriage Conditions*, II.p. 298). He summoned Khalil's relatives to take revenge for the death of their boy, like, he boasted, his clan had avenged his own father's death. — »Would Khalil be avenged? Would his family think of their honour?»

Here follow Sitt Louisa's and Alya's versions of what happened, partly in parallel columns.

SITT LOUISA:

»At the grave

Mustafa Salem of the Rabaya clan said:

'We want to see if ye will save your honour, as we did. We are in the same situation — our family and yours.'

He added:

ALYA:

The men of Artas assembled on the roof of the house of Jedallah. They discussed the killing of the boy.

Mustafa Salem sprang up, shouting:

SITT LOUISA:

'We have found a partner. Now.
Let us see!'

Jedallah Sliman, a father's brother's son of the dead boy, Khalil, heard him and said:

'I hear Mustafa speaking. Am I an ass that I hear such a thing and do not take revenge. I will ruin that family!'

He gathered young people about him and set out at once. He slung his gun over his back. 'I am off to the Ta'amre people!' No one could stop him.

He was off and shot a cow belonging to the Ta'amre people. He had about ten men with him to take revenge. And they cut off the ropes of the tents with swords and knives. Then the tent collapses.

The Ta'amre people went to sheikh il-Zir, a great Ta'amre sheikh, and a judge in their country.

ALYA:

We have received a partner!

Jedallah, too, sprang up, shouting:

Vanity of vanity! And I, too, am a father, the father of Ahmad.

In great alarm they all rose, the young men taking up their positions ready to follow Jedallah. They set off for Bet Ta'amir.

The Zawahre Bedouin of the Ta'amre people had pitched their camp in this neighbourhood.

The Artas men set their guns on them.

'Ye kill men and have the feet (the arrogance) to camp here!' they shouted. They went up to the tents and cut the ropes. The Artas men killed a cow. 'Stay another night here', they threatened, 'and see what will happen!'

The men returned to Artas. The Bedouin departed.

They went to Mhammad il-Zir.

SITT LOUISA:

They said to him: 'Help us!
Make peace between us and the
Artas people!'

ALYA:

To beg him to intervene.

A letter arrived from Mhammad
il-Zir: 'We wish to make good
the blood-money on the 16th
night of the moon when it is light.'

The Ta'amre people came to the house of Atallah, the father of the
killed boy.

Alya happened to be there, and she and Khalil's step-mother were
sitting inside the house.

SITT LOUISA:

Alya was there, and she and
Khalil's step-mother were sitting
inside the house.

The Ta'amre men, with backs
bent, bareheaded, and humbly
bending their heads, came in.
Each of them had his head cloth
tied round his neck, holding
the ends together with his hands
to make it look like a yoke.
One of the Ta'amre men said:
'I am under the protection of
God and under the protection of
this little child.'

He crept under the cradle.

To judge from the continuation of Alya's story, several Ta'amre
men came to negotiate, but they stopped at a distance, and only one
man entered the house.

ALYA:

I and Fatme il-Sheikh, the step-
mother of the boy, were making
tomato salad!

A Ta'amre man came in. He put
the string of his head cloth around
his neck and said:

'I am under the protection of
this house and the dwellers of
this house and I am under the
protection of this cradle and of
him who is in the cradle.'

He pushed his head under the
cradle as if to creep under it.

SITT LOUISA:

A relative who is a good speaker;
the clan is a unity.

The women set the alarm. They
shrieked and called out loudly to
their menfolk.

Ahmad Jedallah, a father's
brother of the dead Khalil, went
to the house and said:

'Come out and be protected.
Thou wilt find peace, the rope
of peace.'

The Ta'amre man: I shall not
come out without assurance.
Now Odtallah, Khalil's father,
arrived, trembling and shaken.
His own boy had been killed.

The Ta'amre man: 'I am under
the protection of God and of the
house, and of what is in the
house.'

Odtallah: 'Come out. Khalil died
and thou art in his place.>'

ALYA:

We went up onto the roof calling
to the men of our village: 'A
man has come to us into the
house begging for protection by
the house and by the dwellers of
the house!'

The Artas men asked: 'Who is
this man?'

We said: 'He is from Bet Ta'amir'.
Ahmad Jedallah — a father's
brother of Khalil, the boy who
was killed — came up. Standing
at the threshold of the house,
he said to the stranger: 'Come
out! do not fear! It will be as ye
wish, the rope of peace.'

When they heard Ahmad's words,
the other Ta'amre men, those
who had been hiding, came for-
ward.»

ALYA added a general remark: »The murderer may go to the house of the victim. He says: 'I am in thy protection, and in the protection of God. I seek protection in the house and by the dwellers of the house!' He begs to be forgiven, addressing the owner of the house. A relative of the victim brings him out of the house — to be forgiven.

The Ta'amre negotiators had succeeded in their task and returned

to their people to tell them that they were now allowed to go to Artas to make peace.

SITT LOUISA: »A great feast of reconciliation took place at the village chief's, on the roof of his house. The Ta'amre people had to pay the expenses. They had to bring all the food and all the cooking utensils, and they had to do all the work for the feast.»

ALYA: »The Ta'amre people brought animals for slaughter, five goats, and a basket of rice, cooking butter, soap, tobacco, coffee and sugar, wood — and cloaks.

Atallah, the father of the killed boy, said: 'Slaughter, ye Ta'amre people!'

They prepared supper and took it onto the roof. They set it down, and threw new cloaks, wide, full-length silk dresses and mantles beside it.»

SITT LOUISA: »When the food was ladled out the people were invited to eat. — 'Please, sit down to eat!' Then: 'We have come for a purpose. Before we eat we wish to know for what we eat.'»

These words were answered by mentioning the sum of the reconciliation money.

SITT LOUISA: »As to blood money, the legal ransom is 33 000 piastres, but in practice the sum varies.»

In this special case the blood money demanded was 100 liras (pounds) which was high enough to allow bargaining.

ALYA: »Fifty pounds was deducted: 10 for the sake of God, 15 for all the saints and the prophets, 10 for Mhammad il-Zir, and 10 for those present — the men.» It was still too high a sum, however.

ALYA: »And the Ta'amre women refused to eat of the food. — 'We do not eat! — We taste not anything. — We rely upon the beards, the men!'

SITT LOUISA: »The poor women! Of course, they had to carry wood for the fire.»

ALYA: »For the sake of the women who refused to eat of the food, a further five pounds was deducted.»

By these deductions, they finally came down to fifty pounds.

SITT LOUISA: »The sheikh il-Zir said: 'Go on ye Ta'amre people! Bring the sum for the Artas boy!' They tied the banners. Five banners were set up, one banner for each ten pounds.

Then the ceremony: the murderer passing beneath the sword, with uncovered head, barefooted and with the headcloth tied round his neck.»

ALYA: »The Ta'amre boy who had (accidentally) killed Khalil was

brought to Atallah, the bereaved father. He shaved the boy's head and dressed him in a new mantle and stroked him three times on the back.»

SITT LOUISA: »This was a sign of forgiveness.»

ALYA: »And Atallah said: 'I have released thee before the face of God, the High, the Exalted.'

And the Ta'amre people paid the 50 liras (pounds) and raised the banners, five of them, every banner worth 10 liras.»

SITT LOUISA: »And they ate and made merry. It was a moonlight summer night. And singing, the Ta'amre people went back to their homes.»

I was told more about the act of forgiveness after a murder.

The murderer is brought to the relative of the victim who stands with a knife or sword in his hand.

SITT LOUISA remarked: »He has the power to kill. He says: 'Speak!' And the murderer speaks: 'I have slain and God has written. I am the meat and thou art the knife, or sword.' He passes under the uplifted weapon.»

ALYA explained: »Bareheaded, neither head-cloth nor head-rope is he wearing, and he is barefooted.»

SITT LOUISA remarked again: »For mercy to be given. To be bare-headed means to surrender.»

ALYA: »The relative of the victim says: 'A slave and his lord has forgiven him!«

Then the relative of the victim shaves the murderer and dresses him in the cloaks brought by his own people. Now he may also say that he does not want to have the cloaks, and they are taken back to the shop. This is agreed upon beforehand.»

BLOOD REVENGE LEADING TO UNCLESHP

In 1926, SITT LOUISA said:

»About a hundred years ago a man from Surif went into the gardens of Artas to steal cucumbers. He was shot with a gun.

The shot man's relatives came to Artas. They said to him: 'Sleep! Thou must sleep, and we must take revenge.'⁴ He was taken back to Surif and buried there. Later people from Surif — the shot man's relatives and friends — repeatedly went to Artas on plundering expeditions. There was great fear in Artas. People did not dare to go out of doors. If anyone was captured, he might easily be killed.

In their great fear, the Artas people went to their friends in Surif and in the neighbouring villages. At that time Lahham was a great sheikh, a Sultan of the Wilderness, 'governor' of the Arkub district.»

Here SITT LOUISA remarked: »In the World War, Lahham was a prisoner in London. If anything went against him, he would boast and threaten: 'If ye do not let me do as I want to, I still have a bed in London!'

She then continued the story: »When the men from Artas came to him for advice and help, sheikh Lahham said: 'The people of Artas are my children. They are my sons and I am their father.'»

These words showed that he was willing to intervene.

»He wrote a note, sealed it, and gave it to them. They took the note to sheikh Nimr who was the chief of the Kawafne people in the village of Surif.

Now the great reconciliation took place.

For the ceremony was needed: 25 goats, 10 sacks of rice, 25 rattles of butter, 5 pieces of soap, 15 rattles of coffee, 20 sugar cones, 15 bags of salt, 25 cloaks and 25 white banners.

Sheikh Lahham stood up stating: 'Muhammad has fixed the sum of blood money, 33 000 piasters.' Opposite him was sheikh Nimr. These two great sheikhs negotiated about conditions for a reconciliation. Each sheikh was standing by himself and behind them were their supporters, 50—60 men. Fresh disturbances were feared. But the matter was settled — quite independently of the Government.

Sheikh Lahham decreased the reconciliation money from 33 000 to 25 000 piasters — and of course some food. The enmity was wiped out. The people of Artas and those of Surif made uncleship, father's brotherhood.»

SITT LOUISA pointed out that the term uncleship (uncle = father's brother) does not mean blood relationship but reconciliation relationship. If the murder had been committed as early as Sitt Louisa thought, the enmity between the villagers of Surif and Artas must have lasted a very long time, as sheikh Lahham was still alive at the time of World War I.

ALYA said that her father's brother had been a great sheikh in Artas at the time when the act of reconciliation between Artas and Surif took place.

Speaking of the negotiations and reconciliation between these two villages, ALYA mentioned some details and formulae used.

»The man who asks for mercy takes off his head-cloth, puts it round

his neck, holds it together with his hands like a yoke or chain and approaching the deputy of the injured people, he humbly says: 'I am in the protection of God and in your protection, protect me from injustice and false ways!'

An old man from the injured party: 'We have the right to sell you as slaves.⁵ We have the right to kill you as slaves.' The manslayer or his deputy says: 'I am the meat and ye are the knife.'»

They shall have to shave the murderer and to dress him in new clothes bought and brought for the occasion.

»Then the old man says: 'We have released thee and forgiven thee before the face of God, the High and Exalted.'

Two men standing outside the victim's house, say: 'Ye are cordially welcomed to a cup of coffee!'

DOCMAC remarked: »This is a common saying.»

As regards the uncleship between the people of Artas and Surif, ALYA added: »Now, if someone dies in Artas the Surif people come to condole, bringing goats with them.»

In my Diary from Artas I have made a note of also the Shahin family having made 'Uncleship' with the Se'ir people.

ACCIDENTS

A man belonging to a Derwish Order may be helped by the other members.

On March 1st, 1927, Sitt Louisa and I were called on by Fatme from Shiyukh and her little daughter, Halime. We had met her at a wedding in Artas where she had been living for some time with her sister, Nazha, wife of Rashid Abdallah.

FATME told us of her father, il-Hajj Aref, and his staff, and how it came about that he married her mother, Rab'a, by whom he had two daughters: Fatme and Nazha, and two sons: Jamil and Saleh. She dwelt especially on her brother Jamil.

Jamil was in prison because he had killed an old man. It happened in Surif. The people there scorned him. In anger he had thrown a stone that accidentally hit an old man, called Abd il-Athim, who was severely injured and died.

Jamil's family are now trying to compensate for the death, but that is very expensive. And Hajj Jamil and his family are very poor. He

belongs to the Hidme Order, and therefore great consideration is taken to him in prison. This is an order from the Mufti. But others, too, take consideration to him and a collection is made for the compensation.

Fatme left us and ALYA went on to explain:

»Hajj Jamil and his family live in Shiyukh. He has the right to select members for the Order (*il-tarîqa*). Many people, for instance in Gaza, are helping him with the collection for his son Jamil: 25 camel loads of wheat and 60 sheep and goats and 60 liras in gold have been presented. For the feast of reconciliation there is a gift of 16 sheep and goats for slaughter, 2 sacks of rice, tobacco for the waterpipes and ordinary tobacco, sugar and coffee, cooking butter and soap.»

SITT LOUISA: »If a man kills someone — his fine is one hundred pounds — as in the time of the Turks. He is not alone. He is a limb of the body, a member of the clan. They must all pay for him — there is no other way out. Everyone must give something. They must all take part in paying the fine.

A woman in Bethlehem was killed in a bicycle accident (about 1930) by Ali, the son of Abed Musa. All the members of his clan shared in the fine paid for the woman who was killed.»

DEATH PUNISHMENT FOR MURDER

In 1931, EMILE BALDENSPERGER, who had been a pupil of the Bishop Gobat's School, Mount of Zion, Jerusalem, once said to me: »I shall tell you a story from my youth.

When I was twelve years old (about 1870) I saw a Turkish execution for the first time. It was on Whitsunday, and we were just returning from church. I was very proud of my white suit that had been made for the feast. There was a huge assembly of people at the Jaffa gate. In those days there was an open place there, and no houses.

I heard that a man was to be executed. I stepped out of the line of schoolboys and rushed in between the people to see what was going on. I saw a Bedouin from the Ta'amre tribe, his hands were tied behind his back. He was on his knees, and round him stood several policemen. The murdered man's mother was sitting where the shops are now. Then there was a terrace and above it a kind of coffee house.

And, as was customary in those days, shouts of 'Who will buy, who will redeem this man!' were heard. The mother was asked if she would

allow him to be bought, i.e. redeemed. She replied: 'My only wish is to drink a plateful of the murderer's blood!'

The executioner was a drunken Kurd. He stabbed the murderer which made him leap. Then, with his sword, he gave him the first blow, cutting off a bit of the shoulder. With the second blow, he cut away part of the back. Next he gripped the Bedouin by his hair and, as if sawing a piece of wood, he cut off his head.

To comply with the wish expressed by the mother, the people collected the murderer's blood in a cup. She drank the blood, trilled and cried out: 'My son is avenged!'

There lay the executed man with his head on his chest. The crowd of people closed round him.

To disperse the people, a policeman dipped a handkerchief in the murderer's blood and waved it about in a circle and, as I was in the first row, my new suit got badly splashed. Crying and howling I ran back to catch up with the other boys. At home my mother pulled down my stained breeches and gave me a thorough thrashing.

The man was left lying all day with his head on his chest, and everyone passing threw a small stone on him as a sign of contempt.

In the afternoon, the schoolboys used to go for walks to the Mamilla Pool. And then I again saw the man with his head on his chest, and a third time when he was taken to be buried at Mamilla.»

A UNIQUE CASE

In 1959, I had the occasion to meet Mr KHALIL JUBRAN JUBRAIL, a dispenser in Bethlehem. Abu Jubran, as he is called, is a Christian Arab. For fifty years he lived in Hebron. There he acted as »a judge among other judges« in tribal courts and has inside knowledge of many cases of blood-guilt: homicide or accidental killing. The following is one of them.

ABU JUBRAN: — I recollect an incident that occurred twenty years ago.

There was once a man in the town of Hebron who married several wives, but he had only daughters and no sons by his wives. And he wished to have a son, a male heir, to carry on his name. So he married a new wife. She bore him a son who was the joy of his life. But by then he was a very old man. His son grew up. At the time of the incident his son was fifteen years of age. He wanted to see the boy married, and built

a new, modern house for him and furnished it with the best furniture available.

The boy was engaged to a girl. The time of marriage drew near. Seven days before the wedding, they started feasting, according to their custom.

The day before the wedding, a lorry with the bathroom equipment drove up to the bridegroom's house. This was in the winter. When the lorry had been unloaded, the driver turned round to drive back.

The bridegroom came out of his house and tried to catch up with the lorry. He was wearing a wide cloak, and when he tried to jump up onto the lorry, his cloak caught in the chain of the back wheels. He was run over and fatally injured. The driver was quite unaware of what was happening. It was raining heavily and it was very cold.

At that moment a passenger bus happened to pass by, and someone in it saw the body going round and round with the wheels, and called out to the driver, who stopped at once.

When he saw the horrible sight he left his lorry and ran to the police station to beg for protection, as in his clan the people were poor and few in number — they could be counted on the fingers of one's hands — while the victim's clan numbered over 1200 men, *lit.* souls. They were rich and notable people who could take revenge at once.

On the same day, as is the custom, we went to the bereaved father to negotiate about armistice. Chosen men from all clans and representing various clans take part, and we were more than a hundred men. The negotiators bring gifts to the victim's house, e.g. sheep, rice, coffee, sugar, etc., which are called the 'gifts for the hot blood'. This signifies that an armistice has been settled between the two parties, for three days and one-third, according to the custom. Before this period ended we hastened to renew the truce for twenty-one more days.

Then followed the reconciliation.

We assembled to give our verdict (*tibe*) on the case: payment of the usual ransom, the amount of 330 Dinars, i.e. Jordan pounds, besides the outlay for food: coffee, cigarettes, etc., for all those present, over 3 000 people.

The blood-money, *il-diye*, was paid after the act of reconciliation.

The people of the unhappy driver carried the customary white banners in honour of the bereaved father.

'Come and drink coffee!' the father begged us. After having had it at his house, we wanted to leave, but he said: 'Where is the driver?' We fetched the driver. The bereaved father said to him: 'O, my son! I did not

have the chance to have a son in this world (to bear my name after me). I lost my only son by the way of fate and destiny. Now thou art my son. My son's ransom is thine.' And he handed him the blood-money.

Then he continued: 'There is no strength nor power but in God, the High and the Great. To God we belong, and to Him we must return!'

ABU JUBBRAN continued: »So this case was settled — a unique case — and I have experienced nothing like it in all my life. It exemplifies the benefit and usefulness of the tribal courts, and the generosity of the Arabs in our Great Orient.»

MOTIVE AND SYMBOLICAL COMPENSATION

ABU JUBBRAN gave a general, short account of murder, too.

Blood cases vary, depending on the motive. A murder may be committed for instance in defence of a lady's honour, the family honour. It may be a prearranged, or a determined murder for revenge, or because of hostility.

Some murders are not wilful, however, e.g. during a wedding. The peasants fire off their guns, and it may happen that someone is shot. That is accidental murder. Negotiations then follow. A 'judge' sentences the accidental murderer to pay blood money to the family of the victim. This generally amounts to 330 Dinars (Jordan pounds). When the act of reconciliation takes place, the representative of the person killed hands the total sum of the blood money to the judge. He, again, passes it on to the murderer's representative.

According to the tribal customs in the Hebron district the accused murderer's people carry a white banner and march about. This is to acknowledge the generosity and good will of the victim's people. The murderer's people are then by duty bound to give a banquet for all those present as a sign of complete reconciliation. There may be as many as 200 people present.

This account shows that a distinction is made between intentional and unintentional murder. The giving of blood money is evidently only to appease the people, but as it is given back it really is only symbolical.

BLOOD FOR BLOOD

In Emile Baldensperger's account from Jerusalem of death punishment for murder, the mother of the slain man was asked whether the slayer could be bought or redeemed. Burning for revenge, she insisted on having some of the slayer's blood to drink.

It is said: blood for blood, head for head, but in practice it is often modified, and the 'law' of retaliation may be replaced by compensation in some form or other. There is not only the possibility of paying a fine or blood money for a murder, but there are other means of compensation as well.

SUBSTITUTE FOR A LIFE LOST

For instance, in the case of homicide, a woman is sometimes given in marriage to compensate for the loss caused,⁶ which will reconcile the slayer's and the victim's families.

Such a sentence was given by Ahmad Isma'in, from Artas, when he was called upon to reconcile the two families concerned after a murder in Abu Ghosh, north-west of Jerusalem. Such a bride is called *il-ghurra*.

SITT LOUISA said: »The idea is that the woman may give birth to a son who will replace the dead man. If she bears no son she must later be replaced by another woman.» The woman herself is not a substitute for the victim but her son is — a man for a man.

ADOPTION

In the Hebron case, told by Abu Jubran, there was a kind of direct adoption: a son for a son. When the blood money had been paid, the sheikh adopted the 'murderer' as a substitute for his deceased son.

NEW-BIRTH

In another case, a woman, due to be condemned to death on account of a moral error, was saved by a ceremony of new-birth. Her mother asked a sheikh: 'Who buys this soul which God has forbidden [to kill]?' The sheikh declared himself willing to help her daughter. He made the daughter go through a ceremony of new-birth, and by this means her sin was wiped out.

'The soul which God has forbidden' is a Quranic saying. In Surah XVII. 33 it is said: »And kill not the soul which God has forbidden except for a just cause.»

EMILE BALDENSPERGER once said: »An innocent man is not hanged but put into prison.»

REDEMPTION

ALYA said: »If a man has killed someone, he must be put to death. When he is taken out of prison he is bathed and shaved, and they go about the bazaars of Jerusalem with him, crying: 'Who will buy the soul which God has forbidden!' People who wish to earn a reward in heaven say: 'We buy this soul!'

Then the buyer strokes the murderer three times on the back and says: 'I set thee free, before the face of God!' The murderer kisses his hand and says: 'I am thy slave, I thank thee!' Then he can go wherever he likes.

'To redeem a person sentenced to death is of greater (religious) value than a pilgrimage.'»

ALYA compared this case of forgiveness with the forgiveness at a reconciliation ceremony, saying: »Atallah Jedallah did so with the Ta'amre boy.»

GOD'S JUDGMENT AND MAN

Paying a visit to Sitt Louisa in her house on February 1st 1926, ALI KHALIL said: »When a man slays another, God does not leave him. God will judge. All this judging by man is of no value. God decrees.»

All really depends on the Divine will. God does not speak only on the Day of Judgment. God judges also on earth.

ALYA quoted:

Thou darling, my eye, is it written or determined
Or, is it to be read on the table of thy forehead?'

If it is God's judgment, my eye, be patient.
And if it is the judgment of man, the slave,
May his judgment not come true.

The classic example of God's intervention in the judgment of man is (from the Islamic point of view) the so-called crucifixion of Christ.

ALYA, acquainted with the Muslim belief, said: »The Jews rejoiced at the suffering of Jesus. And yet it was not He.»

A denial of Christ's death on the cross appears in Surah IV. 157: »They (i.e. the Jews) say: »We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the apostle of God. But they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him. It seemed so to them . . . The sure fact is they did not kill him.» Other

Quranic references to Christ's death relate to his ultimate demise. Theories in Islamic sects and orthodox circles differ as to Christ's fate at and after the 'Crucifixion'. The Muslims deny the Christian doctrine of Christ as the Redeemer of mankind.⁸

In Arab and Muslim traditions there are terms and ideas such as: redemption or buying of a soul, forgiving or atonement, sacrifice, adoption⁹ and new-birth. Similar conceptions occur in the Bible.

... I was there alone with the other people for
... the first time we met - I was there alone with the other people for

SECOND SECTION

This section is based on material collected in 1930-1931, during which period several deaths occurred. Extracts from my Diary, describing my personal observations, alternate with information obtained from the villagers.

DEATH—BURIAL—MOURNING

TWO WOMEN

Helwe Ahmad

When I returned to Palestine in Spring 1930, and going out to Artas on April 1st, I was interested in hearing what had happened during the three years of my absence. They told me that Helwe Ahmad had died, and from SITT LOUISA I learned that the women had wondered what I would say when I heard of it. She had been a friend of mine, the women said. They were right. Helwe Ahmad had been very sweet and kind to me.

My acquaintance with her dated back to autumn 1925, when Sitt Louisa and I were on our way to Solomon's Pools, west of the village. I took a photograph of two women as they passed the St. John's Bread tree which grew at the side of the road. It turned out to be a good snapshot of them with their long white head cloths streaming down their backs. There are three figures in the background: a man, a woman, and a little boy. A little girl was picking up dung which she put into a shallow basket with two handles; she carried it on her head. People dry the dung on the roofs of their houses and use it for fuel. The woman was carrying a deep, one-handled basket on her head.

The group in front of us seemed to be in no hurry. We caught up with them. They were Helwe Ahmad and her husband, Ali Derwish. They were both very nice, and probably somewhat curious to see the newcomer. They told us that they were on their way to their vineyard and fig garden and begged us to join them. I found them quite willing to pose for me under a fig tree.

In the afternoon of the same day, Helwe came to see us. The edge of her very wide sleeve was twisted round her wrist, forming a pouch. She was evidently carrying something in it. She loosened her sleeve, and out of it she took a twig of pomegranate, green leaves and red fruit, which she gave me. Then she sat down, smiled, and indicated that I might

give her a present in return. She pointed to my golden academic ring. Her request was neither bold nor audacious, however. Of course I could not give her the ring. — She did not seem to be disappointed, and her gesture was probably a sign of joy at seeing something so exceptional and beautiful.

The next time we met — I was then alone with the Artas people for the first time — was on my way to Bethlehem to celebrate a betrothal feast; Isa Khalil and a girl from Bethlehem were to be betrothed. In my book on Marriage, I have described the betrothal procession and some photographs are included.

In the early morning there was singing and dancing outside the bridegroom's room. Looking out of my window I saw the villagers begin to stir, and soon the people were climbing the hill. The women sang with trills and clapped their hands; their little children were in their arms or on their shoulders, and the bigger children walked beside them. The women came last in the procession, singing all the time. When we came to Bethlehem they started to dance. They had come to 'win' a bride for their village, and they were joyful and triumphant. Then came two Bethlehemites on horseback, broke up the dancing and persuaded the women to be silent. I did not understand the meaning of this.

Then Helwe came up to me, resting her cheek on her right hand. She shook her head and looked so very sad and serious, distinctly conveying to me that someone had died. The Artas people were not to dance and sing in the streets now, as death had come to the city.

I had taken several photographs during the procession and I took some more at the house of betrothal. A man from Bethlehem suggested that he should take a photograph of me, if I would lend him my camera. The women thought it would be great fun to dress me up for the purpose. A woman lent me her head cap ornamented with coins. To it they fixed the chin-chain. Another woman lent me her black head cloth with bright fringes. The man took the photo too soon and Helwe's hand is seen arranging the fringes.

I did not meet Helwe Ahmad often, but I can still see her before my eyes at her sister's wedding. Shelebiye Ahmad was married to a brother of Helwe's husband, the sisters thus becoming sisters-in-law as well. The wedding meal was eaten in the bride's home before the bride was taken away from her father's house. Helwe carried a big wooden tray with rice and meat which she offered to the women. How eager she was! How full of life, and of good will for the guests.

This was the last time I saw her. And now she was no more. And the women wondered how I would take the sad news.

Is there anyone so rich that he would not feel the poorer for the loss of a true friend? As to Helwe, I hope that she will be rewarded in the next world for having been good and kind to a stranger from a far-away country.

M h a m m a d i y e

When I had been in Palestine for two months, in 1930, a woman died in Artas.

In the afternoon of Monday, May 26th, I went to Jerusalem, and in the evening I wrote in my Diary:

For the first time after coming to stay in Artas I am now spending the night in Jerusalem.

On the following day I had the opportunity to take part in an excursion arranged by Mrs Crowfoot, to Wadi Ali, where, at the time, Mr Emile Baldensperger had his beehives — he was a nomadic bee-keeper. And on Wednesday Sitt Louisa and I returned to Artas. We generally went by car to Bethlehem, and walked from there over the hills to Artas. I cannot remember why we did not do so this time: we went by car via Solomon's Pools, right up to the village. I distinctly remember, however, my wonderful feeling of happiness to think that I, in the Holy land, had a place where I actually belonged.

I now quote some lines from my Diary.

When we arrived at Artas, on May 28th, we were told of the death of Mhammadiye, the wife of Mhammad Khalawe — born in el-Weleji, and widowed. Latife, who carried our luggage from the motor car, was the first to tell us that Mhammadiye was dead and buried. She was quite alone when she died. All the people were away harvesting.

On the following days we discussed death, especially the death of a woman. Quite naturally, the women thought of deceased relatives and friends, of their wishes and orders before dying.

Women like to state their last will. They may not own very much. But they may have some clothes, and want them to be given to certain persons — as in the next incidence which Alya told me.

While Helwe, the mother of Ahmad Isma'in, was still alive she gave her daughters some money and ornaments, and to her sons she gave the

hood, from which they removed the money and spent it. Her sons were Ahmad, Mhammad and As'ad.

Her clothes were for her daughters. But Nafise had to wait a whole year for her kerchief. Her daughters were Sabha, Sara, Nafise and Hamde Isma'in.

Of another woman ALYA told me:

»When Sara was on her death-bed, she said: 'Bring to me my brothers!' They came to her and said: 'O mother of Daud, he who dies after giving his last will, shall die in peace.'

She said: 'O Fatme, my child, bring me a shroud, large enough! Do not make it too narrow. Let me have the ceremony of deduction for prayer (*tasqit il-şalât*)! And distribute the alms for the deceased (*il-ımtiye*)!' These alms are her clothes that they distribute as a good will or intention to the old, the poor, the widows, the orphans.

Further, Sara said: 'Give Khalil Khalawe, the preacher, a pound so that he may read the prayers for me!

O Fatme, my daughter, do what is needed for the deceased! — Look after thy sisters!»

ALYA spoke of the last days of a third woman, Sabha Jedallah, and of her last will.

She, like Mhammediye, died in the harvest time. Many of the villagers were then away in Bet il-Skarye, where the Artas people own some land. Sabha Jedallah had been married to two of Alya's brothers, Abdallah and Sa'd Ibrahim. They were both dead by this time.

When she fell seriously ill, she was staying with her daughter, Zarife.

ALYA repeated a dialogue that she had overheard at the sick-bed, between mother and daughter.

»Zarife Sa'd said to her mother when she was dying: 'Mother, what belongs to thee, and what dost thou owe?' She replied: 'Atallah owes me seven pounds less a quarter, and Isa Sanad owes me two. — I have two chickens. Take them, Zarife!'

Then she added: 'Call Isma'in, my son, and Ali Sliman, my brother's son.' The others who were present answered: 'They are away in Bet il-Skarye.'

The mother said to Zarife: 'What is in my box is thine! Take the key! Buy a rottle of milk and make hetaliye!»

SITT LOUISA explained: »Every peasant woman has a box of her own which she always keeps locked, and carries the key on a string round

her neck. The room is open to everybody, but the box is her very own.»

As a widow, Sabha should have stayed in the house of her sons, but she left in anger because of her daughters-in-law.

ALYA continued: »'Take me', Sabha said, 'to my own house, so that people will not speak evil of my sons.' Zarife said to her: 'They are thy sons, but I am thy daughter.' She replied: 'No, daughter (*yamma*), my house is protection.'»

SITT LOUISA: »A better protection against evil tongues.»

ALYA: »Finally, she gave orders about her shroud. — And she gave up her ghost.»

The tidings of Sabha's death reached her son, Isma'in. He arrived in the village, bringing material from Bethlehem for her shroud.

ALYA: »Isma'in brought 51 ells of material, green and white, for his mother. They made the required garments: a white dress — the garment of righteousness — a pair of drawers; a green dress, a veil to cover her face; and a head cloth. And she was wrapped in the remaining material.

Women who marry twice must have the wrapping — the big cloth called *darj* — double. And if there have been four husbands, she needs four wrappings. This concerns only women.»

SITT LOUISA: »If they can afford it. Often in words, but not in fact.»

Sabha was not alone when she died. Her daughter was with her.

When M h a m m a d i y e died, there were none of her own people to hear her last words.

A week later, on June 3rd, we met her daughter, Hamde Mhammad, in the village. Sitt Louisa asked her to come and see us, and she did so.

SITT LOUISA said about this visit: »We condoled her. Alya and Hamdiye, also, sympathized with her.» Hamde's sorrow and tears were sincere, she felt the loss of her mother deeply. Alya's and Hamdiye's words were mere words, however. Actually the two were quite indifferent, as also the other villagers seemed to be.

HAMDIE: »They made the grave clothes for Mhammadkiye and each stitch was so long that a goat could have been tied up in it.» I had heard Hamdiye use these words before. It was her way of expressing lack of feeling for the dead. People are not always particular about how the last duties are performed.

And of course there is no time to spare when a person, like Mham-

madiye, dies suddenly in the afternoon, and must be buried before sunset.

The members of the family and the close relatives who were working in their fields in Bet Skarye had to be sent for. They had to return to the village, then go on to Bethlehem to buy the material for the grave clothes. All this took hours. They had to hurry and there was not much time for rituals and ceremonies. Even if her family and the neighbours had wished to show their respects to the dead woman, they would not have had the time to do so.

If people have been neglectful and passive they will always find excuses and explanations.

Mhammadiye was a stranger wife, it was said. She was a stranger in Artas, because she was born in el-Weleji, where her mother was a stranger wife. Mhammadiye's father came from el-Weleji, and her mother from Bet-Safafa. Her mother's relatives were all in Bet-Safafa.

Mhammadiye was old, and I do not know whether any of her brothers were still alive.

The women spoke about death in old age.

In my book on Child Problems I have quoted the stories of two mighty sheikhs who had been honoured in their younger days, but hated in their old age because of having lived too long. Thinking of Mhammadiye, the women now recollected these narratives.

ALYA and HAMDIYE told me about Mhammadiye: she had been a great woman. She came whenever there was a death. She helped to wash the body, if necessary. She mourned with the mourners and shared their grief. She even took command. »Now, sing this or that«, she would say, and they all obeyed her.

SITT LOUISA: »A female 'general'. When somebody died, she arrived and took command. This is necessary when twenty women are together.»

But: »Old age is detestable.»

It is also said: »The old one is not worth a piaster.»

Mhammadiye was neglected because she was old.

But the main reason for neglecting her was the urgent harvest season.

A saying runs: »He who dies in harvest time is not honoured.»

But also: »The bridegroom at harvest time is not honoured.»

SITT LOUISA: »Everyone rushes back to his work.»

That is why the wedding season is in autumn when everything is harvested, even the fruit in the gardens. Then people have the means and the time to celebrate. SITT LOUISA called the autumn weddings a harvest and thanksgiving feast. The weather is still fine. The people may sit out-of-doors, especially on moonlight nights. But one does not chose the time for dying, and if it happens during harvest time, then the living are put before the dead.

Death in harvest time is sad. Mhammadiye's sons, IBRAHIM and KHALIL KHALAWE, said: »Oh! had we but lost the whole harvest and our children and our wealth, but saved our good name.» They explained: »Because she died, and we were not with her.»

SITT LOUISA: »That is the shame.»

There were no mourning songs for Mhammadiye, but in connection with her death, several death songs were quoted to me: songs for a mother, a neighbour woman, a stranger wife.

SHEIKH ABD IL-SALAM

Death and Burial

In my Diary for Wednesday, June 18th, 1930, I wrote:

To day we are mourning in Artas. Sheikh Abd il-Salam, one of our most prominent men, has left us for ever.

He was taken ill on Sunday, June 15th, or, to be exact, in the night between Saturday and Sunday. When they went in to wake him on Sunday morning, they found his tongue paralysed. On Monday morning, HAMDIYE came to us, saying: »Abd il-Salam is dead.» Then she altered her words: »Others say he is very ill.»

I went out and stood at the door of our house from where there was a splendid view over the village. I saw people, especially women, streaming towards Abd il-Salam's house. If anybody is ill, it is the custom in the village for people to gather round him.

That day I had thought of going to Jerusalem, but hearing that Abd il-Salam was »dying» I changed my plans. I went to his house which is also the club of his clan.

Approaching the house I heard lamentation and wailing. Men were

standing in a circle round his bed, a mattress, simply laid on a carpet on the floor. His wife and his daughter were sitting at the head of the bed, looking at the poor man who was deprived of speech. He seemed to be unconscious.

Not only women, but men were weeping loudly, bewailing his serious condition. Others reproved them, exclaiming: »It is a sin on you, it is unlawful. He is not dead.« An old white-haired brother of his threatened them with his stick.

A little later, when Sitt Louisa and I again went to the sick man's house, he had been dressed in his turban. But someone shouted: »Take it off!« They did so reluctantly.

A turban was considered to increase the worthiness of a man and was of religious significance, but they realized that the thick and stiff head dress irritated the sick man.¹

I now counted up to sixty persons in the room: men, women and children. They were sitting in long rows, silent and solemn, women and men separately. A young man was reading the Quran. The sick man was given water to drink, and honey, which they had brought from our house. Honey is served to a guest, honey is the first food given to a newborn child, honey is given to the sick and to the dying.

A Bethlehem doctor had said that Abd il-Salam had had a stroke. On Monday afternoon they brought a doctor from Jerusalem — Dr Taufik Canaan. When he arrived the people brought a bench and cushions for him to sit on. First, he turned the villagers out of the room. Then the patient was washed and cleaned. An injection was given, and he ordered cold compresses to be laid on the sick man's head. Dr Canaan told me that Abd il-Salam had a temperature of 39.5°C., and was very weak. Only the patient's wife, his sister and his daughter were allowed to be with him. This was very wise indeed, as it gave the patient rest and peace for a while at least.

On Tuesday morning Sitt Louisa and I went to see the sick man again. He now lay with a cold compress on his head. I took his temperature; it was 38.5°C. He seemed to be somewhat better, and everybody was relieved. In the afternoon it was said that he had even tried to raise his head. Sitt Louisa and I went to Bethlehem for two hours. In the evening his temperature dropped to 37.6°C.

There were now twenty men sitting in the room around him, and more were coming later, they said.

Earlier in the day, Yusef, the son of the sick Abd il-Salam, called on us. Sitt Louisa gave him some honey for his father, and wrote a letter for him to take to the convent in Artas, to ask for help.

But, of course, there was also some gossip about Abd il-Salam.

It was whispered that he had made a false oath some days ago. This may have been evidence of how the enemy is always on the alert, and ready to use every occasion to speak evil of his neighbour. And in its way, this shows that Muslims consider sickness and death a punishment.

ALYA reported what she had heard in the village: »Saturday last, Abd il-Salam went with Ibrahim Khalawe to the Government in Bethlehem. They swore by the Quran that the sons of Zalame — a dead brother's son of Abd il-Salam — have no share in the family property. Then the men returned to the village, chatting and laughing merrily, these two and the others.

Ibrahim Khalawe and Abd il-Salam stayed up till midnight. They were at the men's club in the house of Abd il-Salam, whose wife, Sheikha, was asleep in the next room.

When Ibrahim Khalawe left, Abd il-Salam fell down. He wanted to call Sheikha, but he had no tongue. As the day lengthened, and Abd il-Salam was not seen, Sheikha opened the door of the men's club. There she found him, unconscious. She cried out, and the men came rushing, alarmed and shocked.»

Since then his male relatives had been sitting round him both day and night. Also the women now assembled in his house, weeping and rending their garments because he could not speak. This ALYA told us on Tuesday night.

And on Wednesday:

Very early in the morning — I was still asleep in bed — Yusef, the son of Abd il-Salam, came to our house. Sitt Louisa told me that he wanted me to come and take his father's temperature. We had our breakfast, and left soon after.

A single glance at Abd il-Salam told me that the end was fast approaching. There would have been no use in taking his temperature. We sat down on a bench and watched his breathing getting weaker and weaker. Yusef, his tall son, was sitting there, weeping. His daughter Ne'ome, at the head of the couch, was crying. His wife was stunned, calm, and self-controlled.

Someone begged Khalil Khalawe, the preacher, to pray. He repeated

the Muhammadan creed: There is no God but God. Then he gave his instructions as to how the people should conduct themselves.

He bid them be silent and calm, so as not to distress the dying man. — Angels now come for his soul.

All the men were moved to tears. A brother's son read out of the Quran. One after another they went up to the dying sheikh, kissed him on his cheeks and on his beard, taking farewell. They begged him to forgive them — and to convey their greetings to those who had gone before. The daughter cried: 'My camel!' — which means, 'my bearer of burdens'.

He drew his last breath. It was now half past nine.

Suddenly agonizing screams were heard. There was wild confusion. The men were told to go outside. But the sons threw themselves on their father's bed in desperation. Jude, his brother, had to be forcibly carried out; he dashed back, again and again.

The order was repeated: »All men must leave the room! — Women only may remain!» They did so.

The women rent their garments. They loosened their hair and pulled and tore at it. They beat their heads and breasts; they scratched their faces until blood oozed out, they bit their fingers.

These were the close relatives. At the side of each one there was a comforter trying to pacify and protect the woman against herself. I witnessed how a mourning woman, on such an occasion, abandoned herself completely to passionate grief. There was no danger, however, as someone would always prevent her from injuring herself. And then no one would say that she had spared herself.

Several women wore their best, but only to rend these fine garments. It was not always easy to do so as the material was solid, so in a kind of rage or fury, they bit into it, tore at it with their hands, ripping it open down to the waist. No one was to blame them for not having exhibited their deep and sincere feelings for their deceased relative — they had not spared their fine garments!

Suddenly, two old men appeared at the door, crying: Stop this! It is a sin on you! But it was all in vain. The women went on as before. The men sighed, and gave up.

Sheikha Shahin, the dead man's wife, was still sitting at his head caressing him; she pinched his cheeks and pulled at his beard. Now that he was dead, she was allowed to show her affection for him in the presence

of the villagers. The women began to sing a death-song. From time to time some new woman relative — who had just received the tidings of the death — came into the room. She jumped in, and whirling around, she scratched her face and rent her garments. And shouting 'my father's brother', she threw herself on him and kissed him.

Outside the house the men assembled in groups around the unhappy, inconsolable sons — their loss was great. Yusef, especially, was frantic with grief. I took two photographs of him that day. In the first one, two men are holding him by his hands, dragging him away from the house of death to prevent him from rushing back. In the other picture he seems to be calm, sitting on the ground, listening to two men talking: one of them is wearing a striped shirt-like robe and a white head kerchief; the other one, his father's old brother, is wearing a turban and a long black mantle.

Hamdiye, who had also witnessed Abd il-Salam's death, left the room before Sitt Louisa and I did. She was standing outside, waiting, at some distance, and came with us to our house.

In front of us were some men, carrying hoes, on their way to the grave. Abd il-Salam was to be laid into his father's grave, and to make room for him, his father's bones had to be pushed aside. — »A grave is beautifully made, built like a house,» remarked SITT LOUISA.

We were told that Zahiye Hlal, the wife of Sheikha's brother, was looking after Sheikha's children.

At home we went over what we had seen and heard.

When Abd il-Salam was giving up his ghost — the preacher, KHALIL KHALAWE, said to those present, especially to the women: »Do not shriek! Let a tear drop! But do not rend your clothes!»

SITT LOUISA said to me: »A tear, that he allows. The prophet in the Old Testament says: 'Rend your hearts and not your garments'.² Likewise said Khalil Khalawe, the prophet from Artas.»

HAMDIE: »Khalil Khalawe said to the assembled people: 'And the angels take him now. They are now beginning to draw his soul from his body. Do not trouble him! It is unlawful, a sin, which is to be written down to your account.' He was silent for a moment, then he said: 'Do not burden him with your cries and lamentations and bewailing. Ye only hurt him! He is now in the Gardens of Paradise.'»

HAMDIE had something to do in the kitchen, but all the while she

was thinking of Abd il-Salam's death. She was soon back again to continue the story of what she remembered of the preacher Khalil Khalawe telling the people.

»Shame upon you if ye do not follow the law! Nobody shall scratch her face! Nobody shall rend her garments, and undo her hair! That is a sin! If ye did love him, remain calm and quiet! One tear, that does not matter — but nothing more!»

Those were his orders, but no one listened to him.

HAMDIYE: »Yet — when he gave up his ghost, they were like mad: his sons, his brother's son, his daughter, Safiye, and his son's wife, Alya. The fire of the heart was scorching them. The women relatives loosened their hair. They blackened their cheeks with soot. They rent their garments. No words from the men cut them to the heart — they paid no heed to the words of the menfolk.»

Not only the women broke against some of the decrees of the Muhammadan law, but some of the men did so, too. On leaving the room, the more considerate ones said: »May God have mercy on him, the deceased!»

But as to the others, HAMDIYE said: »When he gave up his ghost they — his sons and his brother's sons — refused to leave him. They had to be taken away by force.»

Now ALYA came in. She had not been in Abd il-Salam's house yet, but she had heard the cry from the house of death: »Do not sit among the women while they rend their garments. Shame on you! And where is your honour?»

SITT LOUISA remarked to me: »The women are there, uncovered, in the house.» She meant: Without head cloth and with their garments rent.

HAMDIYE told us that she heard the preacher say to Yusef, the son of the deceased: »Health to you! Ye are a clan! Ye are not to be lamented! There is no need to bewail or grieve over such a man. May God protect you!»

HAMDIYE boasted of having shouted to the male relatives of the deceased sheikh: »Shame upon you, ye assembled ones! May your bearded men and your young ones remain alive! One faggot does not spoil a bundle!»

Someone cried: »He has left forty male members. He is not dead!»

And then, HAMDIYE added: »Women should weep. That is their business. Men are camels, and do not weep!»

The people do not only try to pacify the mourners by comforting words, they actually insult them to make them regain their balance.

AHMAD SALEM exclaimed: »This is a blow in the face!»

His father, SALEM, who was a brother of the deceased, replied: »Who has loved him more than I? But — death has its rights.»

Suddenly he cried out, scornfully, and in despair: »Buy him if ye can!» Hearing what the women were singing he turned to them: »Can he be bought, is he for sale, ye women!»

He finished in a quieter and more subdued tone: »We are all mortals, every one has to depart. We are all wandering towards death.» And: »He is now in the gardens of Paradise.»

Some of the people thought of Khalil Khalawe's mother, Mhammadiye, who died a few weeks ago.

A voice was heard: »Has Mhammadiye called thee?»

Another voice: »Life is measured.»

SITT LOUISA remarked to me: »Already beforehand measured.»

And then again back to Abd il-Salam—someone called out: »He has left forty male members. He is not dead!»

ABD IL-KARIM, a brother's son, recollected that his uncle usually said when going to Jerusalem or to Bethlehem to buy something for his family: »My brother's son, what shall I bring thee?»

And the people praised him, touched by these words showing that Abd il-Salam was not kind only to his closest family members, but included more distant relatives.

One of them said: »He was a camel for the whole family!»

Another: »He was a camel for the whole clan!»

And a third: »He was a camel for the whole village!»

Then: »He was honey for the whole land!»

Inside the house the women around the deceased sheikh praised his good deeds and qualities, and expressed their great sorrow.

ALYA SALEM, a daughter-in-law, exclaimed: »Had he but scolded me, had he but cursed me. Then I should not grieve and feel the loss of him so deeply. I shall mourn him all my life!»

As a bride, his daughter SAFIYE had been exchanged for Alya Salem She sang:

Father, why so
Why hast thou deserted me?

But no, she could not believe that it was true. She told herself:

He is in the city
And will soon return
Riding on his horse.

The women took up this thought and sang to his wife, pretending that he had gone to the city for supplies and to buy some gifts.

Say, O Sheikha:
Come in father with all good things!
Come in and spread them out!
Spread and give, forget no one!
Thy children, O provider, are still young
Little will not suffice for the chicks.

But SHEIKHA was not deceived.
In another song she is supposed to think:

O, thou father of the small children,
If thou hadst only waited a little, to bring up thy children
The time is long.

The young daughter, NE'OME:

Oh, father's brother
Canst thou not see
We have become orphans.
My mother and I
Are dressed in mourning!

When the deceased hears this — so they reason — his longing to return to life becomes so intense that he begs his brothers to help him — in this case Salem and Mhammad — and then Sheikha, his wife, to have compassion on him.

Thou Salem, buy me with thy fortune!
I am thy brother, a help against the enemy.
Thou Mhammad, buy me, thy near relative!

I am thy brother and I shall help thee against the enemy!
 Thou Sheikha, buy me with the property!
 Nothing is of greater value than the privilege of entering my house.

Thus the women sing, though they know, as do the men, that the deceased cannot return. He is gone for ever.

That day I went to the house of death several times.

I went with Hamdiye at half past ten. The women were still sitting at the death bed. — But they have to leave now, said the men.

They told the women to fetch some water. »We shall wash him, and pray.»

While some of the old men were chasing out the women, shouting: Now out! Yusef, the son of the deceased sheikh, in blind despair, tried to slip in, in spite of the women still being there. He was held back by the preacher, Khalil Khalawe: »What dost thou want with the women!» The women again refused to leave the deceased, but at last they went into the next room, where they continued to sing.

I went home for a while and returned later.

The men were tending the body behind closed doors.

Again they had trouble with the women: »It is enough, ye women! Say the Muslim creed: There is no God but God! — and nothing more!» The men accused them of sinning against their religion by wailing and lamenting. But the women continued to sin, to break the law.

Earlier in the day, both Alya and Hamdiye had told me that punishment awaited the women after death. I asked: But why do they wail and lament if they know that they are to be punished? *HAMDIIYE* smiled and shook her head.

— »Because they are foolish. It is with women that fire in Hell is kept burning. Where would they get firewood if there were no women?» she said drastically.

A Muslim sheikh in Jerusalem told me that in Hell, says the Prophet, there are more women than men.

According to *SITT LOUISA*, another view was expressed by an Artas man: »The space must be filled. Let him sin! There must be wicked men to fill up Hell.»

Women keep to customs and traditions which the men who read the Quran have abandoned. Exceptions occur among the women, however.

HELWE IL-HAJJE entered the house of death. She was then the only woman in Artas who had made a pilgrimage to Mecca. She did not rend her garment, or dance, or strike her face. — »That is unlawful», she said and added: »If I know that it means fire, punishment in Hell, why should I deliberately throw myself into it.»

She had a more serious religious conception because of her pilgrimage. But she belonged to another family. Would she have been equally labiding if she had lost someone of her own? She said, herself, that when her second son died, she had rent her clothes. That was before her pilgrimage. Now she sat there looking at the wailing women who let themselves be carried away without thinking of the consequences.

A new woman came in. It was SABIHA, a half-sister of the deceased. Many years ago she was married to a man in Lifta, and was still living there. Hearing that her brother, her father's son, was seriously ill, she at once hurried to Artas, hoping to find him still alive. But she was too late.

On entering the room, she rent her garment, and cried: »My brother! May it not be true!» Then in a song:

The tidings came to me
I was frightened
The tidings were about
The light of my eyes!

She continues to sing of how the people, seeing her rush off, say:

I wonder
Will she be hurt by stones?

But she has no time to think of that, herself. She is running fast, and is hot with anxiety and worry, wishing to be there. The song ends:

It seems as if I were
Coals of fire
And yet
I did not reach him!

Then a piercing cry, and her strength was spent — for a moment. Someone took up another death song. Others fell in, repeating the same song until quite exhausted. But women kept coming, constantly with fresh strength.

This is what I saw in Abd il-Salam's house:

A woman who had been in Bethlehem, came in leaping, whirling about, waving and twisting her hands which were black with soot. She rent her garment, lamented and wailed.

And again came another woman, again there were piercing screams, lamenting and crying: »O my father's brother!» She skipped about, she beat her breast, scratched and tore at her face, calling loudly: »O father's brother!» — and joined the circle of women sitting there with loosened hair.

Another woman entered. She took off her kerchief, twisted it round and round, jumped, skipped and tore at her hair; finally she sat down among the women on the floor. Some of them clawed themselves until blood appeared. The closer the relationship, the more violent are the expressions of sorrow.

Earlier in the day HAMDIYE had remarked: »They said to Helwe Salem, a brother's daughter of the deceased: 'Do not strike thy cheeks!' Each one sitting by the side of a mourning woman takes hold of her hands to prevent her from hurting herself.»

At the death bed, and again later in the day, I had observed how they tried to protect the frantic mourners from hurting themselves, and I thought: They may well abandon themselves to passionate grief, there is no danger in that as there will always be someone to prevent them from hurting themselves — and yet everyone will realize that the mourners have not spared themselves.

I asked my women about the custom of rending garments. HAMDIYE said: »Women rend their best garment at the death of a near relative.» And thinking of Abd il-Salam she added: »When he died everybody put on their best clothes and tore them.»

To my question: Is the dress of mourning worn on joyful occasions, too, at a wedding for instance, ALYA answered: »That would not do.»

ALYA said about gifts of clothes for women:

»They give her this dress. She gives them a present in return — some money. She says: 'Blessed be your joy!' They answer: 'God bless thee, and the dress! May it not be torn or worn for mourning!' — The dress of joy must not be torn. It is a gift, a dress of joy, from 'this' or from 'that' person. A dress that one has bought may be rent.»

In the house of death, one song followed upon another. When they had repeated the same song for some time, another one was taken up. I saw Alya sitting among the singing women mourners.

The men in the next room obviously were about to end their duties: washing and dressing the deceased in his death clothes in readiness for the grave. Sometimes murmuring voices were heard; they were calling the name of God over him, repeating the Muslim creed; the preacher was praying, reading the Quran, and speaking to the deceased and the living.

Suddenly the women rushed to the closed door between their room and the one where the men were standing round the deceased. Again 'the men had trouble with the women'.

The women continued to clap and twirl their hands, beat their breasts, leap and whirl around — a death dance, almost to exhaustion.

After a while I went home again. Alya soon followed from the house of death and, after the strain of singing mourning songs, she was pleased to have a cup of tea with Sitt Louisa and myself.

ALYA spoke of what she called the »tear of compassion«. On entering the house of death she had recited:

Vanity of vanity, all is vanity!
 Oh, blow of affliction!
 We hoped that the message would not be true.
 May these tidings be false!

ALYA added: »All who enter the house of death exclaim: Oh, vanity of vanity! Everyone who enters.«

And: »The death dance is for all.«

Alya gave herself time to repeat some of the death songs to me.

The next time I went to the house of death, which was the last, I passed the grave which had now been opened. The bones of the deceased sheikh's father were seen.

Outside Abd il-Salam's house the men were performing the *d h i k r* ceremony, swaying to and fro, and repeating God's name: God is living, God is eternal, God is living (*allāh ḥay, allāh dāyem, allāh ḥay!*)³

To explain why they performed the ceremony, they said: »He was highly esteemed, he was dear to us. This is in honour of him!«

The d h i k r ceremony — I was told — is not performed for women. The deceased was ready and tied into his death clothes. A last farewell, a prayer, and God is great, was said. Then: »Go, *yallah!*»

With a pillow under his head, sheikh Abd il-Salam was hurriedly carried in a rug from his house to the grave.

The b u r i a l of Abd il-Salam took place at about 4 o'clock p.m. Prominent men from other places arrived in motor cars.

When Abd il-Salam was laid into the grave they said: »Oh, God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Thou Forgiver of sins!»

— »What have ye, gathered ones, to witness? Give God, only good!» said the preacher KHALIL KHALAWE. And they replied: »Only good!»

— »Stand up, Abd il-Rohman!» This was said to the son of the deceased who had gone into the grave to place the body of his father. But he did not stand up. He had swooned, and the men had to help him out.

I took some photographs. In one of the pictures the men are gathered around the swooned Abd il-Rohman who is lying on the ground at some distance from the grave. »Had he been scared by the bones of his father's father?»

Several men are standing close to the grave, concentrated on what is going on. In the background, the women are seen sitting on the wall outside the house of death, their white kerchiefs tightly tied under their chins.

Abd il-Salam's and Sheikha's little son was taken to the grave; he cried bitterly. He was given a mantle. There were also other gifts from relatives and strangers.

Later ALYA said: »At the grave, the children of the dead man and his wife are dressed in mantles. A mantle, a *s h a l e*, was put on Sheikha's little son. The eldest son of the family is also dressed in a mantle.»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »*S h a l e*, a black mantle, very expensive — it comes from the relatives in other villages as a help for the orphans. Sheikha can sell it and use the money for her fatherless children.»

This is in accordance with the following dialogue between Sheikha, the widow, and Salem Ibrahim, her brother-in-law.

SHEIKHA: »I do not weep for my own sake, I weep for the sake of my children.

Then Abd il-Salam's brother, SALEM IBRAHIM, replied: »We are thy camels, oh Sheikha!»

With these words he assured her that there was no need to worry, her husband's blood relatives would assist and help the fatherless children.

Some villagers wondered whether, at the funeral, Sheikha would make a formal request for permission to remain in her husband's house. When her first husband, Musa Derwish, died, she had not done so and had had to leave his house and her daughter, Ne'ome. After some time Sheikha's father, Shahin, gave her in marriage to Abd il-Salam. Would she now, at the burial, as is customary, go into the grave and announce her reluctance to remarry, and beg to be allowed to stay with her children and to bring them up in Abd il-Salam's house.

But then it was said: »The widow will not go into the tomb! She said: No, I am not going. I have four boys and one daughter. Shahin (her father) has no right to give me in marriage as I have five children.»

A widow who remains to take care of her children after her husband's death is praised and honoured. She has protected the fatherless! She has not left them to the father's or to the mother's brother. They are not looked upon as orphans!

As to the presence of women at the grave, ALYA said to me: »In olden times, no women except the water-drawers were allowed at the grave. An elderly woman, not a young one, must carry the water.»

There was a woman to carry water for the men preparing the mortar for closing Abd il-Salam's grave, and for pouring water over their hands when the work was done.⁴

Meanwhile, the preacher Khalil Khalawe, and his brothers went among the men inviting them for a meal prepared by himself and his brothers — the meal called the invitation for the deceased (*'azūmet il-miyet*).

At half past five the ceremony at the grave was over.

I went home utterly worn out. A hot and exhausting day. We did not talk much that evening. Just a little about the grave.

ALYA: »The grave of Abd il-Salam was the same as his father's. When it was opened, they said: Forgive us! — And then they drove away the devil by calling upon God's name. The bones of his father were pushed aside. And his body was laid beside his father's.»

SITT LOUISA: »He was gathered to his fathers — a biblical expression. An awful punishment if someone did not die at home and would not be gathered to his fathers.»

To my question: Why do those who open the grave ask to be forgiven, ALYA replied: »They are afraid of the angels, the guardians of the grave.»

SITT LOUISA: »As at the sepulchre of Jesus, where the angels keep watch, and say: What seek ye? The Master is not here.»

She added: »In the evening when people pass the graves, they say: Good evening (*masikum bi-l-khēr*)! This is to the dead, perhaps also to the angels in the grave.»

The Day after the Burial

Thursday, June 19th, 1930, I wrote in my Diary:

I got up earlier than usual this morning, and yet we were always early. I did not want to miss the ceremony at the grave.

Before I was out of my room, Zarife, a neighbour woman, knocked at my door. Knowing the speed with which some things take place in the village, I hurried out immediately but, fearing that I might not get there in time, I took the road leading down to the spring. It was a roundabout way, but I had the advantage of being able to see the women all the time, singing their songs of mourning, rocking and swaying, to and fro, as they were sitting in a circle around the grave — their white head kerchiefs streaming down their backs.

However, before I reached them the men were there to chase the women away. As they were leaving the grave, I saw the widow Sheikha, and Safiye, Abd il-Salam's daughter, and Safiye, his father's wife and Jude's mother, and many others with cloths tied over their foreheads.⁵

The sun was just rising when I returned to our house. The women of to-day, like in olden times, go to the grave 'very early in the morning'.

ALYA, who had been out 'listening', came in at the same time. We had our early morning cup of tea and the day's work started. There was much to inquire about and to discuss. As I had just seen the women, I asked: — What do the women do at the tomb? Why are they there?

ALYA: »The women only weep at the tomb. This is the 'breaking of the solitude'.» — They sing their songs of mourning. They think that the deceased is saying:

Tell my relatives that when I was buried
 The moon set and the house was dark for me!
 Tell my relatives: on the night of the solitude
 They passed the night in company and I was alone.

The women sing other songs, too.

This day — the day after the burial — is also spent in the club where the men celebrate the 'loosening of the jawbone' by a meal of pancakes.

The food is prepared by the women of the village.

ALYA: »The woman owner of the house gets up in the night — after midnight — when it is still dark, and kneads the dough and bakes the cakes: either oil cakes or pancakes. They are taken to the men's club for the 'loosening of the jawbone'!»

The woman owner of the house takes part of the food to the grave. The widow shares it out — they 'break the solitude'. Other women bring contributions.

ALYA said: »The women bring whatever they have to the house of death: dry figs in the winter, grapes in the grape season — like now, there are apricots. These are debts.»

ALYA added: »In olden times the whole village brought some food, and entered the house of death singing mourning songs.»

SITT LOUISA explained: »The women come, carrying dishes of food and bread to dip for everybody present. When something is ready, the woman takes it to the house of mourning. She enters singing and everybody joins in. They go on and on with the same song until someone takes up another one.»

ALYA ended: »They do not let the widow do anything in the house for a week or ten days, or so.»

T h u r s d a y s

The day after Abd il-Salam's death and burial, June 19th, 1930, was a Thursday, and I wrote in my Diary:

This is not, as I thought, his *F i r s t T h u r s d a y*.

ALYA says: »To-day is only the 'breaking of the solitude'. Next Thursday all his brothers and his wife make folded leavened pancakes and oil cakes. That is his *F i r s t T h u r s d a y*.»

And: »On the **S E C O N D T H U R S D A Y**, the whole clan and the strangers — relatives and friends from other villages — bring food. They will bring (dry) rice, and coffee for the men to drink, and sugar.»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »The women usually bring the rice tied up in their mantles. The men bring the coffee and the sugar in their mantles.»

ALYA: »Those who bring a gift, must receive a gift in return. In the pear season, pears, in the grape season, grapes.»

A week later, on Thursday, June 26th, I wrote:

ALYA: »To-day is the **F I R S T T H U R S D A Y**. They make folded cakes, oil cakes, and macaroni cooked in milk. And there are one or two baskets of apricots. On the First Thursday only the 'family', close blood-relatives, prepare the food.

On the **S E C O N D T H U R S D A Y** the whole clan makes it. Some days before or after, women arrive from other villages; also men, leading goats, *qawwad*.»

A week later, Thursday, July 3rd.

ALYA: »To-day is his **S E C O N D T H U R S D A Y**. The whole clan, they who love him and those who hate him, have prepared some food. They have made oil cakes, bread of sour dough — the very plainest of bread — which is painted with oil, pancakes folded together, milk and rice. Everyone comes, bringing a contribution.»

SITT LOUISA: »They spend as much 'money' as they can afford.»

ALYA added: »They visit his grave. His daughter and his wife go to the grave.»

— And the men? What about the men? I asked.

»The men have a meal separately», said ALYA. »After the meal in the club, the opening chapter of the Quran is read for his soul. They say: 'For the Prophet and his beloved ones, for the food, and for those who enjoy it'.»

SITT LOUISA: »They do not waste their words, the men.»

ALYA: »The food is for the soul of Abd il-Salam. The one he loved he will feed.»

SITT LOUISA explained: »He whom the deceased has loved will have most of the food from the food tray.»

A T H I R D T H U R S D A Y is generally celebrated.

Except the Thursdays described above, there is a common **T H U R S D A Y** for **A L L T H E D E A D**; this is celebrated in the spring.

Offering of Food at the Grave

Offering of food at the grave is partly for the benefit of the deceased — for his soul — but, on the other hand, it is also a charitable deed, for which the giver will receive a reward from Heaven (*ajer*).

Their intentions may be the best, yet altercations and troubles may occur and turn good into evil.

Formerly, the custom of bringing food to the grave was more common than it is today.

ALYA said of this custom: »Every house of the clan brought a wooden bowl and they were all piled up on the grave. Formerly, they used to bring food also from other places, for instance, from Bet Skarye, from Ehbele and from el-Khadr.»

She continued: »They start their wailing, singing songs of mourning. But — some people steal the food. Then a clever and brave woman takes charge. She piles up the oil cakes on the palm of her hand. She gives one each to the boys and girls, and two to the women. When all have had their share, she starts the round again.

Then someone says: 'Feed me! Thou hast not fed me!' — »But», says SITT LOUISA, »that woman has hidden her pancakes.»

A heated argument arises.

ALYA: »The distributor of cakes says: 'I have fed thee!' But the woman denies it. 'Give me!' she repeats.

Then there is a cry: 'The bowl is empty! — Oh! who has stolen here?'

Those suspected exclaim: 'And are we famished, so that we must steal?'

Oh dear! a quarrel is brewing, the deceased and his family (*il-fuqde u shāb il-fuqde*) are being cursed. They curse one another.

Someone curses: 'His Thursday! and again his Thursday!' — It means 'May his Thursdays be cursed!'

Someone says: 'Thy deceased (may he be cursed)!' And the reply is: 'And thy dead (may they be cursed)!'

SITT LOUISA explains: »It is not said: May the father be cursed, or, May thy deceased be cursed! It is only said: Father, or, thy deceased! — in this connection implying a curse.»

At this point the quarrel between the women has reached such a height that the men become alarmed and interfere.

ALYA: »Then Ahmad Isma'in came, saying to them: 'What have ye

done? Ye have brought shame upon us! Divorce from my head! The woman brings no luck (*kheir*)! If anyone dares to bring a wooden bowl to the grave again, I shall flog her!' He scolded and cursed them and chased them off.»

And that was the end of this ceremony.

SITT LOUISA: »This was the reason (so Alya relates) why her family, the Ode family, were forbidden ever to bring their food bowls to the grave. They now take them to the men's club, and there is no quarrelling.»

Another time Ahmad Isma'in interfered at a Rabaya grave on the day after the burial.

ALYA: »When the women sit at the tomb weeping in the morning the men come to prevent them, to scold them, and even to beat them. When they were mourning on the tomb of Mhammad, son of Ethman Jibrin, the women were weeping in despair. Ahmad Isma'in grew very angry, and frightened them. He attacked them with a stick. They were scared. His wife, Mahbube Jibrin, was one of the mourning women. She wept and cried out for the deceased, her brother's son.»

ALYA added: »If any man comes with his stick and threatens a woman — his own wife, or his sister, or someone in his power — people keep him back by saying: 'The sense of women does not weigh even as much as a grain of mustard.' — 'The head of a woman is like the head of a hen.' This will restrain him.»

So far Alya.

A man, annoyed with a woman — or with a man — does not have to restrain himself. He can use hard words and violent gestures, because there will be people to pacify and calm him, and prevent him from going too far.

Female Mourners from other Places come to Bewail the Deceased

Lamentations for the dead after the burial are taken up again when women from other places come to bewail the deceased. For various reasons the men object to it.

Some of these women have barely known him, and they cannot grieve deeply for the family's loss. Among them there may be some who come out of curiosity, or just for a change. But the villagers have to

spare a room for these women where they can sing their songs, and eat the food given to them. The female mourners always increase the expenses.

There is a dualism in the religious tradition: bewailing is required, bewailing is prohibited, the women must lament the dead, and yet the men prevent them from doing so. When the men raise difficulties, they feel justified in that they are protecting their religion, defending the Muslim faith. Their raging against the women's behaviour is a holy anger.

Abd il-Salam's death brought female mourners from two villages.

As already mentioned, Sabiha, who was Abd il-Salam's sister — his father's daughter — hurried to the death-bed, but she was too late. And she returned to her home in Lifta.

But probably the wish to show the Lifta women her native place was too strong. All the villagers and those born in Artas are proud of the spring with running water and of the green valley with its beautiful gardens. A woman is rarely allowed to leave her husband. Now Sabiha had a valid excuse. A woman cannot travel alone.

But in Artas the men objected to the women coming.

ALYA: »On Friday there came women from Lifta. Sabiha came, and her mother-in-law — seven women in all. They came to bewail the deceased, to sing their mourning songs. But the men started a quarrel and cursed them.»

The HAMUDE wife, one of the visitors, was evidently a woman with a sharp tongue. She said to the Artas men: »We have not come to get cooked food or bread. We have come to honour the deceased. He was one of the great heads, and not a common bumpkin. — Do ye not have any place to retire to, away from the women?«

What could the men reply to such talk? Could they do anything but comply with their wishes?

ALYA: »Ahmad Salem came to his father, the brother of the deceased, and said: 'If there is no place in the house, there are the gardens.'«

SITT LOUISA: »It is summer, the carpet of the summer is wide.«

ALYA said of the women: »They sat down and proceeded with their mourning songs.« She added: »They have made dinner for them.«

SITT LOUISA: »That means rice and meat.«

ALYA finished: »They have eaten their dinner, and they go home again.«

There must have been a revolutionary feeling among the women that day. Sheikha summoned up her courage. She gave the ultimatum.

ALYA: »After the women had left and gone home, Sheikha said to her brothers-in-law: 'If ye will do this, if ye wish that nobody comes and nobody goes, if ye will this, then I shall move into my father's house!'

Two days later, June 22nd, another group of women arrived, this time from the village of Bet Safafa. Khadije, Abd il-Salam's sister, had been married to a man, Mahmud Ahmad Ehsen, from that village. But that was many years ago, and now Khadije herself was dead.

ALYA: »On Sunday there came eight women from Bet Safafa: Abd il-Salam's sister's daughters, and their sisters-in-law, and also his sister's husband's daughter, and her sister-in-law. They came to honour the deceased and his family.»

At the top of the mountain, above the village, they started their mourning songs.

The tidings reached our gate
 We said: Mayest thou be in peace
 Thou mother's brother of our loved one!
 The tidings reached our land
 We said: Mayest thou be safe
 Thou brother-in-law of our people!

When the villagers heard the singing, the men and the women reacted each in their own way.

The men objected to it.

ALYA: »The brothers of the deceased: Mhammad and Salem Ibrahim, and the latter's son, Ahmad Salem, went to meet the women, saying to them: — Do not wail and mourn! We have those who love us and those who hate us.»

In this way they beseeched the female mourners to cease, because the enemies would rejoice to hear their lamentations.

SITT LOUISA: »People do not show their sorrow to the enemies. The men said: To spite the enemy we shall not sing.»

As to the women, ALYA said:

»When they hear the strangers' voices, they gather together, put on their fine garments, loosen their hair, and sit down to sing.» And so they did on this occasion.

When the Bet Safafa women entered the house of Abd il-Salam, the clan women were there, ready to receive them.

ALYA said: His sister's daughter shrieked and tore her garments, singing:

Oh uncles, my mother's people,
Ye dearest of God's folk — how dear ye are to me!
I only love my mother's brothers
Those who wear the large turbans!

And then:

My mother's brother!
How sweet sounds this word
Mother's brother!
Like honey
And sweeter still.

ALYA: »The women brought gifts of rice tied up in mantles which they carried on their heads, three or four rattles in each mantle. They arrived loaded with gifts and they returned loaded with gifts; baskets filled with apricots.»

SITT LOUISA: »Apricots are not put in a mantle, they would soil it.»

This was the time of the apricot harvest, and instead of being able to sell the fruit, they had to give it to the guests.

Men come to Offer their Condolences

ALYA: »And they begin to bring the animals, the sheep and the goats.

When the Bet Safafa women arrived, there were already other guests visitors from Bethlehem, and they had not had their dinner yet.

ALYA: »On Sunday there came a group of men from Bethlehem. Among them was the son of Nasar, the butcher, whom Abd il-Salam used to deal with, and the relatives of Murra, a Christian Bethlehemite, who owns land in Artas.

Muslims and Christians came together. They brought sugar and coffee. It was said that there were about thirty people from Bethlehem. They had their dinner, and left again.»

And then came the people from Bet Sahur: Khalil Subeh and his friends. They stayed the night. They had an afternoon meal of fruit: apricots and plums, green plums. Then supper was cooked. And everyone, both men and women, were given a meal. The Bet Sahur people had brought goats which were slaughtered at once. It was the meat of these goats that was cooked for supper, and there was enough for all.»

The Bet Sahur people followed an ancient general custom: men from other places, who have not been in time for the burial, arrive later, leading one or more animals which they slaughter for supper.

The Bethlehemites and the Bet Sahur people were neighbours, so they soon heard of Abd il-Salam's death. It took a longer time for the tidings to reach more distant places.

I have already mentioned that the morning after the burial I saw some women at the grave, wearing kerchiefs tied round their foreheads.

ALYA: »This kerchief is a sign of mourning. It is also said: Some women wear the kerchief as a sign of mourning for a long time, others do not.»

SITT LOUISA remarked: »The old fashion is to keep it as long as possible.»

ALYA added: »The coins ornamenting their caps are covered up and their bracelets put away. A dark head kerchief is bought. The fashion with a black head-covering is no more in use. And they wear the mourning girdle.»

Some days after the funeral I took a photograph of Abd il-Salam's daughter, Safiye, when she was passing our house on her way back from Bethlehem. On her head she was carrying a basket filled with empty milk bottles, and she was dressed all in black — her head kerchief was black, and she was wearing the mourning girdle.

ALYA: »What has been torn remains so for forty days, then it is mended.»

And: »A good dress is worn until it is finished. When the women go to Bethlehem, Bet Jala, or Jerusalem, the people there say: Look, they are in mourning.»

These dresses are not only a sign of mourning, they are also, intentionally or not, a kind of announcement. Women in mourning arouse attention and curiosity. People are eager to hear the details.

The women of Artas often have errands, especially to Bethlehem

where they sell their products in the market, as do many people from other villages, sometimes even from distant villages.

Alya told me of how the news about Abd il-Salam reached the village of Surif.

The scene: the market in Bethlehem. The time: the week after Abd il-Salam's death. The persons: Artas women selling milk and vegetables, men from Surif with their camels loaded with straw after the harvest, and other people.

ALYA: »The cameliers in Bethlehem were selling straw. Some of the women selling vegetables were in mourning, and some were not.

One of the cameliers asked: 'What has happened in Artas?' They answered: 'Abd il-Salam is no more.'

He asked: 'From what family?' They answered: 'From the Meshani clan, relatives-in-law of Sheikh Muhammad (of Surif).'

SITT LOUISA remarked: 'These cameliers and the milk-women are the newspapers.'

When the cameliers returned home, they announced the news of Abd il-Salam's death in their own village.

The next scene is the men's club in the house of Ahmad Nofal, the chief in Surif.

ALYA: »The cameliers arrived in the afternoon. The men were just having their coffee. Some of the men in the club were drinking it, and some were waiting for it.»

SITT LOUISA: »The old fashion was to have only two cups, or even only one cup, for about twenty men, and still to-day they do not have enough cups for all the men in the club. They have to wait patiently as each in turn sips the cup empty. This is the old custom, not to have many cups. No cup is rinsed, it goes straight on from man to man.»

The following dialogue took place between the cameliers returning home from Bethlehem and their chief, Ahmad Nofal, in the club in Surif.

ALYA: »The cameliers said: Peace be upon you! The chief answered: 'And peace be upon you!'

One of the cameliers said: 'May your heads be spared! Abd il-Salam is no more.' The chief: 'Say and change, change these dreadful words! Tell us that it is not true! How many days is he dead?' — 'It is three or four days.'

The chief: 'And are we in Zerka or in Balka that they have not sent for us?'

Then sheikh Muhammad said: »I must pay a visit of condolence. I need a *qawwad*, an animal for slaughter.» He gathered some men and together they went off. They rode to Artas on horseback. Their arrival aroused great excitement.

ALYA: »In Artas they were much surprised. They could not understand why these men came on horseback and brought with them a sheep. They came to the door of the club. The villagers, male relatives of Abd il-Salam, came forward to them, face to face.»

The following now took place in the men's club in the house of Abd il-Salam.

The Surif men had probably been several times in Artas. Now they were struck by the emptiness of the house. Sheikh Abd il-Salam was no more there to receive his guests. As Orientals do, they thought of him as the light of the house. This light had been extinguished.

ALYA: »They said: 'Why is this club so dark?' They kissed his sons and his brothers. And they wept and said: 'He was a pillar, but now it has crumbled down.'

One of the blood relatives said: 'Ye honoured assembly, ye all! Death ruled and took him. Even the death angel died.'»

Later DOCMAC remarked: »This is a word of comfort to make them stop weeping.»

ALYA: »The condolers said: 'We came for the sake of the deceased, not for those who are dressed in clothes. We came to pay our respects to him who is beneath the earth, and not for the sake of those who are in clothes.'»

They stressed the fact that they had come for the sake of the departed, and not for the sake of the living. These words were meant to be reproachful because they had not been called to the burial.

The blood relatives replied: »It was so sudden. Nobody had time to think of anything else.» This was said as an excuse for their omission when the Surif people complained of not having been told of Abd il-Salam's death.

Preparations for the supper were started.

ALYA: »They slaughtered the sheep which the condolers had brought. And the horses' feedbags were filled.»

Ahmad Salem swore on the breakfast that, the following morning, he would make it, and pay for the rice and the meat.

In a carpet, four men carried the large *minsaf* food-tray, containing rice and meat. It was so heavy that four men had to carry it in a carpet.

SITT LOUISA: »They carried it from Ahmad Salem's house in the valley up to the club. Like carrying grapes 'between two upon a staff'.»

ALYA: »They placed the large food tray before these honoured guests. They ate, then got up and washed their hands.

They said: 'Give us our saddle-bags! We want to go back home.' The villagers, the hosts, said to them: 'No, ye have to entertain us this evening!' They swore they had not to go, and they stayed on.

Next day they had their breakfast and left.»

The Artas people might even have urged them to stay on still longer, had not other visitors arrived.

ALYA said: »The Surif people washed their hands after having eaten. Then the family of il-Zreyer from Hebron arrived.

The Surif people said to their hosts: 'Let us make it easy for you! We are returning. Look after the new arrivals!'

They left when the others arrived. Two different groups of visitors at the same time will not do (*qawwad 'a qawwad mā biṣīrsh*).»

Thus ALYA related about the Surif people, how they arrived, how they were received, and how they left.

Some remarks were made by Sitt Louisa when Alya had left in the evening.

SITT LOUISA said: »The men came on horseback.»

ALYA had once said to her: »Riding in a motor car is like riding on a donkey. It is not dignified.»

»But», SITT LOUISA said, »horses are a great expence, because of their foodbags.»

She added: »The foodbags give the horses each their own share, no animal can snatch it away.»

The saddle bags cannot be left in the stables. They are taken into the house. The rider likes to have his saddle bag beside him. He can always put his hand into it while he is riding and take what he wants out of it. He keeps his tobacco in it, and other things that he may need.»

SITT LOUISA also thought that the visitors from Surif would have

reason to praise the way in which they had been received in the village of Artas. The men would talk about it in Surif. And it would give Artas a good name. — »We have the newspapers, they have the club, 'to let people shine, or to pull them down'.»

SITT LOUISA finished by remarking that Surif is very old-fashioned, and they have very expensive, time-consuming customs. »Compare Bethlehem,» she said. »The visitors from there returned on the day of their arrival; they came on a Sunday when all the shops were closed. Most of the people in Bethlehem are Christians. With civilization comes lack of time!» The Surif people were in Artas on June 30th.

Three weeks after Abd il-Salam's death, on his Third Thursday, visitors of condolence again arrived, this time from Ajjur. Abd il-Salam's mother was from Ajjur. The visitors called themselves mother's brothers (*ikhwāl*).

When guests arrive in a village, there is often much rivalry as to who shall have the honour of preparing the supper for them. People try to outdo one another, and then a man swears to divorce his wife if he is not allowed to make it. It is then said: »He swore to divorce on account of the supper for the guests.» Also, when visitors wish to leave, they often urge them to remain over night and the host swears that he will divorce his wife if they do not stay.

ALYA: »They came from Ajjur with a *qawwad*. — They bring a he-goat. A man hurries up ready to slaughter the animal. Before he does so there is an announcement about the purpose of the meals to be prepared. The visitors provide the supper on the first day. And some of the villagers are allowed to swear, i.e. offer to prepare meals for the guests on the following day.

ALYA: »Khalil Khalawe told them: 'This *qawwad*, this animal for slaughter brought by the visitors, is for the relatives of the deceased. He who wants to s w e a r to make a meal for the guests may do so for the morning meal and for their supper on the next day. These are precious guests!'

But the condolers said: 'If it were not for Abd il-Salam we would not be here, but he was very precious to us. Ye would then say: What! his mother's brothers have not come.' Then they added: 'Ye did not even send for us to be present at the burial. We are not in Zerka, nor in Balka. We are in this country.'

One of the relatives of the deceased replied: 'For God's sake, and

for your own! Forgive us this mistake! It was an hour of surprise. If we had not been out of our minds we would have sent for you.'»

The condolers from Ajjur, like those from Surif, complained of not having been asked to the funeral. The greater were now the villagers' endeavours to care for their guests.

ALYA: »They slaughtered for them, they fed and honoured them, and did their duties for three days.»

When I met Sheikha Shahin, the widow of Abd il-Salam, on July 12th, the people from Ajjur had just left.

ALYA: »On the day of their arrival the coffee utensils ended the mourning. The coffee mourning lasts forty days.»

Now only twenty-four days had passed, but the mourning of the coffee utensils was terminated in honour of the guests.

ALYA: »Nobody but the Emirs and the noble ones can undo this mourning.»

SITT LOUISA: »They do not have coffee utensils in every house. The club has them. In Artas we now have three clubs: Abd il-Salam's, Shahin's, and Odey's.»

Visits of condolence at various times, sometimes weeks after the funeral, are not uncommon.

ALYA had told me before: »The men wait until his Thursdays, the two Thursdays of olive cakes, have passed. It is not customary to come earlier.»

But ALYA had added: »Those who love him come early.»

It may truly be said of Abd il-Salam: the tidings of his death reached seven lands.

Alya enumerated the places from whence visitors of condolence had come: Ajjur, Bethlehem, Bet Safafa, Bet Sahur, Hebron, Lifta and Surif, and all brought gifts with them.

But some people had not come yet.

ALYA: »The el-Weleji people have not come with their *qawwad* gifts. The Absiye family, living there, is missing.»

And Abu Derwish should have come. He was from el-Weleji but had left his home village because of a case of homicide, and was now living in Malha.⁶

ALYA: »Abu Derwish from Malha has not been yet. Abd il-Salam's outlay on the grave of a relative of his — Muhammad Abu Derwish —

was large. Abd il-Salam put 5 pounds in an envelop on the tomb and a kaftan — probably a blue one, made of cloth — in all 10 pounds. These are debts.»

SITT LOUISA: »To give money in an envelop is a new fashion.»

She added: »All who come with their gifts have to be repaid. It is a debt. People now expected Abu Derwish to repay the noble gift of Abd il-Salam at the grave of his relative.»

In another connection SITT LOUISA said of visitors: »They never come with empty hands. They bring either a sheep, or sugar and coffee. And all must be repaid, or else a man is not a man. He will not be thought of as a pillar, or a head.»

And ALYA quoted a saying: »Nothing is for nothing, except deafness and blindness.»

This may be called the dark side. But on the other hand, the people were proud of the attention paid to an Artas man.

ALYA: »He is hidden in his peels.»

SITT LOUISA explained the expression: »He is like a sweet peel. Nobody knows his value from outside. Nobody expects him to have such an honour shown to him.»

To conclude. — This is how a sheikh, a Sultan from the Wilderness (*sultān barr*), is honoured.

ALYA: »The Sultans of the Wilderness judge. They can tie and untie — questions.»

Some Glimpses from the Mourning Year — the Year after Abd il-Salam's Death

As already mentioned, Abd il-Salam's death was sudden and unexpected. After a busy and active day he retired for the night to his club, and in the morning he was found unconscious and never regained his ability to speak. A man should be able to state his last will before giving up his ghost. He should guide and direct his family on how to carry out his instructions. Abd il-Salam left his family in darkness as to his last will. This, naturally, created a feeling of bewilderment among the villagers. It was thought that the anxiety felt was shared by the departed.

ALYA told Sitt Louisa and me about Ahmad Ali As'ad having had a dream shortly after Abd il-Salam's death.

She started by saying what literally means: »May the sleeping one see happiness (*kheir*)!» SITTI LOUISA remarked: »The sleeping one sees the truth.»

Then ALYA described the dream in Ali As'ad's own words: »When I was asleep, Abd il-Salam came to me and said: Oh, my brother! I am in a black tent. Tell Sheikha and Safiye to take this darkness away from me! I am alone, nobody comes near me. I wanted to make arrangements but my tongue was paralysed.»

ALYA continued: »And Ahmad went to Abd il-Salam's family and said: Do your duty!»

Evidently the dream was a moral warning, but the voice from the other side gave no detailed instructions. I did not hear of anyone having interpreted the dream but no doubt the family knew what it meant.

At that time a son was born to Isa Khalil, a man from Artas, but living in Bethlehem. As is customary, people came to ask him to celebrate the birth by arranging a feast. He refused to do so, however, saying: »I beg to be excused. Do not be offended! A sheikh of my mother's relatives has died.» His reason was accepted. The feast was not given. Joys and feasts are not considered proper in the year of mourning.

Bright colours must also be avoided in the year of mourning.

ALYA: »Straw for trays and wool for rugs must not be dyed. Eggs are dyed blue.»

SITTI LOUISA: »Each year I received a straw tray from Alyan, my brother Henry's servant. He brought it from Beit Mahsir, his native village. Once I got a tray without colours. I said: Where are the colours? He said: The women are in mourning, the tray cannot be dyed. Colours are for joy.»

SITTI LOUISA explained: »Every peasant understands that. Even the carpets mourn. No red carpets are made. If, in the year of mourning, they are weaving a carpet, natural colours must be used — not red.»

ALYA repeated: »Red is for joy. Also the eggs for the children at the feast must be dyed in dark colours.»

SITTI LOUISA: »Abd il-Salam's young daughter, Ne'ome, complained to me about Safiye, the widow of Abd il-Salam's father, saying: 'She is building a house, and she is happy and her kerchief is white as snow!' To show happiness in times of mourning is an insult.

Then the autumn set in. This is generally the time of betrothals and weddings. That year there was to be a wedding in the Shahin clan. Mham-

mad Sa'ïd was to bring a bride from Sharafat, about which there was much talk beforehand.

From my Diary: *Artas, Sunday, the 28th of September 1930.* —

On Friday there was the betrothal of Abd il-Salam's son, Yusef, to his cousin Haniye. Her father had died in the First World War and her mother had gone off with some Turkish soldiers. Now Haniye was living in the house of her father's brother, Salem Ibrahim, who was also Yusef's father's brother.

I was told that coffee and sugar, and animals for slaughtering were brought to Salem Ibrahim — because he is the girl's 'father and mother'. The opening chapter of the Quran was read. But there was no singing or dancing.

— Why was that, Alya? I asked. — »It was because of Abd il-Salam's death. The family is in mourning.»

Yusef's betrothal was not the joyful event that every young man looks forward to.

— But when was the betrothal of Mhammad Sa'ïd, I asked. — »Last month,» was the reply.

I had not heard of it as I was in Galilee at the time.

Friday, the 3rd of October 1930. — The Feast of Joy for Mhammad Sa'ïd's wedding, with dancing and singing in the evening.

The next day I was told of the wedding clothes and other gifts being distributed by the bridegroom's family to the villagers expected to attend the wedding. Alya enumerated those who were given wedding clothes.

These gifts require a present in return. What is received must be recompensed. Everything is a debt — even an additional step and tears shed. If a person has no means by which to repay the gift, he may refuse to accept it in the first instance. He may refuse, too, if he has a grievance against those who are arranging the wedding feast.

Not even four months had elapsed since Abd il-Salam's death, and yet a wedding was to be celebrated. Those who arrange a feast of joy are required to call upon the mourners according to the rules set.

Saturday, the 4th of October 1930. —

ALYA: »To Sheikha, the widow of Abd il-Salam, who died last summer, they took five loaves of sugar in order to 'bribe' her. But they found her house and the club closed. She had escaped into the gardens. They found

also the house of Mhammad Ibrahim Ayesh, a brother of Abd il-Salam, closed. A brother's son, Ahmad Salem, refused to accept their gift of sugar-loaves.

The Shahin family, who was arranging the wedding, wondered why the Meshanis were so angry. 'Was it for the sake of Abd il-Salam?' they said. 'Was it because of their mourning?'

— 'We are doing the same as ye did when ye were celebrating a wedding in spite of three members of our family having died. Ye did not respect our sorrow, either,' said the Shahin family to the Meshanis.»

SITT LOUISA explained: »Deep in their hearts they had a feeling of revenge. The Meshanis had behaved disrespectfully when the Shahins were in mourning. Now was the time for them to pay their 'debt'. Their honour and the honour of their dead demanded it.»

Men and women from all clans were present at the wedding, except most members of the Meshani clan. Jude and his two younger brothers were present, however, and Mahmud Musa Ahmad, and his wife, Ne'ome Yusef, a Shahin woman by birth.

In the evening, I was sitting outside our house with Sitt Louisa and some women from the village, listening to the sound of singing and dancing at the Shahin's.

— What joy in our village now, I said, looking out over the illuminated Shahin club and the fires.

— »Yes, but the enemies are angry,» said FATME KHADR to me. ALYA, too, said: »Half of this joy is to vex and annoy the Meshanis.» The houses of the Meshani clan were in complete darkness.

Tuesday, the 21st of October 1930. —

I asked: Is there to be no wedding next moonlight period?

— »Jude has been thinking of it, I have heard,» said ALYA.

— What Jude? I asked. I knew that Jude Ibrahim Ayesh from the Meshani clan had two wives already.

— »Jude Ibrahim is planning the marriage of his younger brother to one of Mhammad Derwish's daughters.»

— And is that possible though his brother Abd il-Salam died last summer?

— »Should marriage be prevented for such a reason?«

— But were not the Meshanis angry with the Shahins because of

their wedding feast being celebrated in spite of Abd il-Salam's death? How could they now think of having a wedding themselves?

— »But we had a wedding when my brother died. On the same day as he gave up his ghost 'we were all in Henna', we had been dyed for the wedding feast. Shortly before my brother's death he gave orders not to postpone the wedding for his sake. And should Abd il-Salam be considered above my brother?» said ALYA proudly.

SITT LOUISA told about Ahmad Isma'in, who said: »Go on with your preparations, and do not mourn! Do not hurt the deceased! It will please him if there is no wailing.»

Once again ALYA repeated the usual saying: »People die and people rejoice. Neither death nor joy are cut off in this world.»

After all, Jude's brother was not married, nor was any other man in the year of mourning.

Late in November, two young villagers, Isa Yusef and Ahmad il-Madani, were betrothed. The brides, Bint (daughter of) Ali il-Ne'ome and Bint Mhammad, were not from the village of Artas, and the betrothal feasts (cookings) were celebrated in Bethlehem and Sur Bahir where they lived.

About Christmas time Bahiye Ahmad was taken as a bride from Artas to Bet Safafa. She had been divorced by her cousin-husband, and was now to become a second wife of a man who already had a wife. This wedding was not a joyful event. »Bahiye was taken by car to Bet Safafa. — Only virgin brides are conveyed by camel,» said ALYA.

I spent Christmas in Jerusalem, and after some weeks in Egypt I returned on the 18th of January 1931. Some days later, the 22nd of January, I went out to Artas eager to see my friends, the villagers, and anxious to hear if anything particular had happened during my absence. I found Sitt Louisa, Alya, Hamdiye and all the others in good health.

In the evening I was back in Jerusalem again because the next day there was to be a funeral — a funeral of great significance not only in Palestine, but in the whole Arab and Muslim world.

MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI'S FUNERAL IN JERUSALEM

The burial of Maulana Muhammad Ali took place on Friday, the 23rd of January 1931, or, according to the Muslim Calendar, on the 5th of the month of Ramadan, in the year 1349.

Muhammad Ali was born in Rambour, India, in 1878. He belonged to a noble Muslim family and studied in Alaikua for his B.A., and in Oxford, England, where he passed his M.A. examination. On his return to India, he worked in a governmental office. However, he broke off his promising career to take up independent work, editing a daily paper in the Urdu language, and a weekly paper in English. Being an ardent champion of liberty, he was imprisoned under the British on two occasions, the second time together with his brother, Maulana Shaukat Ali, and Ghandi. Someone spoke compassionately to their mother, and she is said to have replied: Why have I children, then, if they are not to help my people?

Muhammad Ali was one of the great leaders of Muslim India (in the nineteen-twenties, the decade after the First World War), an advocate of all-Indian unity, and of Pan-Islam.⁷

During the time of trouble between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, in 1930, the Muslim Arabs begged Muhammad Ali to use his political influence to help them. Requested by the English Government to attend the Round Table Conference in London, in the summer of 1930, he held a conference with Arab leaders from Palestine in Port Said on his way to Great Britain. With him were his wife, and daughter, and her fiancé, and his own brother, Shaukat Ali.

In London, Muhammad Ali was taken seriously ill and knew that he was about to die. According to his wish, his daughter was married, and this happened to be the day before his death. In spite of his doctors' warnings he wrote for three hours, and by hand, his last will in a manifesto directed to the Muslims in Palestine and India. His remains were to be laid in the Temple Area in Jerusalem.

His body was taken via Egypt. In Port Said, Palestinian and Egyptian delegations met up, and at the railway stations en route for the Holy City, there were solemn receptions by many district delegations, according to the Burial Programme in which it was said: »The funeral shall be greeted at every station with the call: God is great! and one of the religious shall read the prayer for the departed soul.»

In Jerusalem, the funeral was discussed also by those who did not belong to Muslim or Arab circles. Mr Nils Hol Larsson, the Swedish Consul in Jerusalem, told me that all consuls had been asked to attend in uniform. A Swedish woman, Mrs Elisabeth Waern-Bugge, had come to Jerusalem to find out whether a section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom could be founded in the Holy Land.

She was in close contact with Jewish circles and said that the Jews were annoyed about Muhammad Ali's burial, and she could not understand it, as they were not, as they said, claiming the Temple Area.

According to the programme, arrangements had been made for the train to arrive in Jerusalem on a Friday, as that is the day of the week when people from neighbouring parts assemble to perform their noon-prayers of Friday in the two shrines, the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque of el-Aqsa, in the Temple Area. On the day of the funeral there were more people than ever, from far and near.

I wanted to see the funeral procession and, knowing that on its way from the Railway station to the Temple Area, it was to pass the Damascus Gate, I went there and found a good place on a low stone wall. Many women were sitting there in black dresses and veils.

English soldiers were posted here and there as disturbances were feared. All along the road men from urban as well as rural districts were passing. Mounted police were keeping good order and urging people on.

Finally a lorry with photographers arrived. This was a sign that the procession had started from the railway station.

We had to wait some time before the funeral procession reached us, preceded by mounted policemen. Scouts followed next, then men carrying pictures of the deceased, Muhammad Ali, flags, banners and palms — and, finally, the hearse, followed by the mourners. On either side of the coffin there was a religious chanting prayers. Part of the holy rug from the Ka'ba — the famous Black Stone — presented by Prince Muhammad Ali (Egypt), covered the coffin, and over it there was a green cloth on which were embroidered in golden letters the words: There you shall find the fruits of the work you have done here. — The cloth was a gift from the recently formed Committee of Arab women in Jerusalem.

I thought this was the end of the procession, but a group of distinguished men appeared. My eyes fell on an Indian, repeatedly lifting his hand to greet the by-standers. He was Maulana Shaukat Ali, the brother of the deceased. Beside him walked His Eminence Hajj Emin Al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti.

After lunch I went to the Newman School of Missions, a language school in Jerusalem, and met Mr Wehbe, a teacher in Arabic. The day's event had greatly excited him. He asked me whether I had seen the funeral. — Yes, I had.

It is against the Jews, said the teacher, a Christian Arab. Now the Indians have something to protect here, an interest to guard in Jerusalem.

This was a great day for the whole country.

The committee for the burial of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali had decreed:

On the day of the burial the Muslims in the Palestinian towns shall read the Quran in the Mosques.

The Muezzins shall utter the death chants on the minarets from the time of the entry of the funeral procession into the city until the burial.

As a sign of mourning, business shall stop in the city of Jerusalem until the end of the burial and in the cities of Palestine for 5 minutes, from 9 a.m. on Friday morning.

Papers and journals wrote of Ali Muhammad's funeral in the Holy City. They described the ceremonies, the burial procession, the reading of the Quran, and the prayer in The Sakhra, the Dome of the Rock, the proceeding to the Mosque of Aqsa where the prayer for the dead was recited after the Friday prayers, the funeral orations within the Mosque, the proceeding towards the grave, the funeral orations delivered, dealing with the life and work of Muhammad Ali, the condolence of those who attended the funeral, received and accepted by the brother of the deceased, Maulana Shaukat Ali, and the President of the Supreme Muslim Council.

An elegy written by Ahmed Shauki Bey, the Poet-Laureate of Egypt, and recited in Jerusalem, was mentioned.

Also the words of the brother of the deceased were quoted: the grave in the Temple Area should be a symbol for a closer contact than before between Islamic countries in Palestine and India.

I quote some lines from *Falastin* (Palestine Newspaper, Arab National Organ, English Edition), Jaffa, Saturday, January 24, 1931:

»Do you remember the old tradition? That mortals are buried in the soil from which their material body was made. You belong to the Holy Land. We claimed you alive and we possess you dead. No hand can rob us of you.

— — —

And the Indian Muslims and the host of friends in India! Their loss is our gain. We have denied to them the last duty and right of friends. We wanted the privilege. — The body that should have been buried near the second of the race of Grand Moghuls and the greatest of Indian poets now rests where God has blessed the environs.

— — —

And the wife of your heart whom you left a widow in an alien land!

Perhaps she made the greater sacrifice. The daughter of squires, who had never taken her veil off in public, crossed the seven seas to nurse you with an unveiled face and an undaunted heart. She who has taught us this sacrifice, of a valued and guarded tradition of centuries, can not be taught by us. She sacrificed for country and husband. She will be patient under the decree of God and 'verily the Lord rewards those who are patient'.

Wednesday, January 28, 1931, the Jewish newspaper, the *Palestine Bulletin*, Jerusalem, had a short item of news under the heading: »Widow visits Muhammad Ali's Tomb.»

It runs:

»The widow of Muhammad Ali, according to the Arab Press, after praying the prayer of Dawn in the Dome of the Rock yesterday morning, went with a number of ladies to the tomb of her husband. There she cried bitterly for some time. She said: 'I have left you in the Holy place. Farewell, comrade through life, farewell.' She remained at the tomb until the sun rose.

She has left for Egypt.»

Later, it was said in the newspaper, »the great condolence ceremony shall be performed in the precinct of the Raudat-El Maaref», in India, and a pamphlet be published containing the life, funeral, etc. of the great Indian Pan-Islamic leader.

On January 23rd, the 5th of the Month of Ramadan, or the same day as Maulana Ali was buried in Jerusalem, a man, Mhammad Khalil, died in Artas and was buried there. After having stayed in Jerusalem for some days, I returned to the village. Alya told me of how people had come from other villages to Mhammad Khalil's funeral in Artas, and how they were to celebrate his Thursday of Death by distributing cakes.

Shortly after, on February 5th, the 18th of Ramadan, Ehsen Abdallah Ayesh died after a long illness.

ANNUAL FEASTS AND COMMEMORATION OF THE DEAD

Visits to the Graves

The same year I had the opportunity to see the visits to the graves in Artas at certain annual Feasts.

In 1931, the feasts, with visits to the graves, were all in the spring —

not only the Thursday of the Dead, but also the Little Feast and the Great Feast.

I quote some notes from my Diary, on sentiments and feelings in the village on these occasions, giving some ideas and customs in connection with the commemoration of the dead, also the consideration taken to families in mourning.

The Little Feast, the Feast of the Breaking of the Fast

Artas, Wednesday, the 18th of February, 1931. —

It was seven o'clock in the morning, and yet no one knew whether there was to be a feast or not. No one knew with certainty if the bleating sheep and goats were to be allowed to live another day, or if the people, after their long period of fasting in the month of Ramadan, would be allowed to sacrifice their animals and have a meal of meat that day. Orders had to come from the authorities.

When we asked Hamdiye if there was to be a feast, she said, scrutinizing herself: »Would I then appear like this? Would I not have dressed for the Feast?»

But at about half past eight I saw the young boys running down into the valley. And in a little while all the men from the Shahin quarter were making their way down the mountain, wearing their wide black mantles. They came, two and two together, and in larger groups. They were on their way to the spring to perform their ritual washing before prayer. As soon as they were ready, they went up onto the roof of the mosque. There they took off their shoes. Large rugs were spread out. Khalil Khalawe was the leader, and the men lined up for prayer.

Hamdiye was not in the house. She too had seen the men, and grabbing the water pan she rushed out to wash herself for prayer. I went out and saw her at her important task under the mulberry tree.

How the message had reached the village I did not know. I concluded, however, that a message must have been sent now, as on a previous occasion, by telephone to Solomon's Pools and forwarded from there, especially as the west part of the village was already en route for the mosque.

I went in again and looking out of my window I could see the men from the men's club in the east of the village going down to the spring.

Now I saw the women approaching the graves. I hurried out, because this was what I particularly wanted to photograph — the women sitting around the grave.

I passed the house of our Shahin neighbours. At Abd il-Salam's grave I saw his widow, Sheikha Shahin, and several women relatives of the deceased sheikh sitting around the grave, weeping and lamenting. Other women came to the graves, and they brought with them trays made of straw on which there were figs and rich cakes to be distributed among the villagers. This was in honour of the dead, and the duty of the living.

A woman was sitting quite alone at one of the graves. I asked her whom she was mourning. »My son», she said. And her daughter came up and said: »Yes. It is my brother who lies there!»

Somewhat higher up was the grave of Mhammad Khalil, the blind old man who died early in the month of Ramadan. There, his widow Sa'ida and his daughter Zarife were weeping. They had brought figs and oranges to share among the visitors at the grave.

Still further up, Mhammad Sa'id, who had celebrated his wedding in the autumn, was sitting on a grave reading out of the Quran. And here and there were young men and boys, also reading out of the Quran. Below, in a mountain-cleft, was the derwish Rashid Abdallah alone, reading for the soul of his deceased brother, Ehsen Abdallah.

When the men, praying on the roof of the mosque, had finished their ceremony, they went to the graves. At Abd il-Salam's grave they chased the women away. »Be off, *yallah!*» they cried.

— Why do not the men allow the women to weep on the grave? I asked. Alya and Hamdiye declared: »They do not act according to the law.»

After having chased the women away, the men grouped themselves around the grave. Some of them began to read over the dead.

Abd il-Salam's son, Yusef, a tall man, was sitting all alone at some distance. He was holding a red handkerchief in his hand, weeping into it for his deceased father. His elder brother, Abed, arrived, looking pale and worn. Their sister, Safiye Abd il-Salam, came to distribute cakes to the men.

When the men had left, Sheikha came back carrying her trays and bowls containing figs and rich cakes. With her was one of her young sons, greatly enjoying a cake.

I left them and went down to another grave, that of Ehsen Abdallah. Hamde Derwish joined me there. I had met her earlier that day at her son's grave, while I was wandering from grave to grave. She offered me some figs. — »Have some for the sake of my son, Abd il-Hamid!» When I met her a second time, she offered me cakes dripping with fat. I could not accept them there, at the grave, so I asked her to come to our house with me.

Turning round I saw her sister, Rahme Derwish, at Helwe Ahmad's grave. She was carrying a tray on her head. I stopped to take a snapshot of her. At that moment her brother, Ali Derwish — Helwe Ahmad's husband — appeared. He was just passing his wife's grave, and called out angrily: It is a sin (*ḥarām*)! — What is a sin? I asked, and was told that he meant the lamenting and the weeping at the grave.

We went on, and met boys carrying olive branches in their hands. On second thoughts I asked Hamde Derwish to go on alone to our house, as I wanted to return to Ehsen Abdallah's grave.

I could see some women there: Itayme, the female derwish; Helwe Khalil, the Mecca pilgrim (*il-ḥajje*); and Sa'da Ahmad, whose husband had died recently.

Itayme and Helwe Khalil were exchanging views and praising God. »*Subḥān Allāh!* Praise be to God! Lamenting is a sin, it is unlawful (*ḥarām*), they said, like Ali Derwish had just done. »We all have to die, the one sooner, the other later.»

I tried to take a photograph of the women at the grave, but Itayme avoided me, hiding her face behind her tray.

Oh, I said, I shall not take a photograph against your will. And some young women sided with her. That would have been a sin, they said, as Itayme did not want to have her old face exhibited in a picture.

On my return home, Hamde Derwish was still there. And I gave her two piasters in return for the figs and the cakes. Hamdiye was delighted to share them with me. Hamde Derwish stayed for a while telling us about the children she had lost. In two marriages she had had four children of which the eldest was a boy. They had all died, and now she was living in her father's house.

I looked up some notes from the year before. Then (in 1930) Alya had told me: »Itayme took some dry figs to her daughter Khaliliye's grave. Figs and dates are best. Nothing is more suitable.» — Why? — »Each seed means a good deed, and each stone is a good gift.»

Further: »Pancakes are made of wheat, this means life (*il-zalabiye 'ēsh*). What is better than a pancake, it is wheat, it is life (*il-mṭabbaq zey il-ēsh*).»

And: »Rahme Derwish took some cakes (*mṭabbaq*) to her sister-in-law's grave. She thought of distributing them among the men to make them read the first chapter of the Quran. She hoped to be rewarded by Heaven for her good deed.»

The same pattern is evidently repeated each year.

The Thursday of the Dead

From my Diary:

Artas, the 2nd of April 1931.

This morning I was up before sunrise. As it was the Thursday in the Holy Week, I had much to do before going to spend Easter in Jerusalem. The villagers in Artas, being Muslims, were to celebrate their feast, the Thursday of the Dead, and I wanted to see if they went to the graves early in the morning.

I looked out of my door but I saw only a woman, Miryam Mustafa, carrying a tray with milk-bottles on her head; she was on her way to Bethlehem. A man, shepherding his sheep, came from the spring.

Yesterday some women neighbours brought Sitt Louisa and me some coloured eggs as feast gifts. We talked about this custom, and SITT LOUISA quoted an Arabic proverb: »To-day will be shown whether thou hast a friend — he will bring thee eggs.»

A woman neighbour, Fatme Mahmud, came in to ask if Sitt Louisa would lend her a knife. They were going to slaughter a lamb. Her request amused Sitt Louisa greatly. Of course she had no knife of that kind.

— »You really need a sword!» she said.

Many people slaughter an animal on this day. And they make oil cakes and big pies filled with sweet things. It is a feast of joy for the children — with all the eggs and cakes. But, actually, the slaughtering and the eating is in commemoration of the dead, a kind of sacrifice.

Suddenly I saw the women assembling at the new graves. I took my camera and went out, first to the grave of Mhammad Khalil, the Blind one, then on to Abd il-Salam's grave, where his daughter Safiye and

another woman were mourning. Their subdued weeping was touching. One of Abd il-Salam's brothers appeared to read a prayer. Unfortunately I had no time to visit more graves before the people dispersed.

There was much else to see that day, things that do not belong to the 'death' ceremonies. All the boys were wearing festival clothes, new shirts, bright head cloths, and looking so happy carrying their pink, lilac or yellow eggs in their hands. The children went about in the village, and people gave them eggs. They cracked them, one against the other, the boys competing about who had the strongest shell on his egg. The one who won got the other one's eggs as a prize.

I enjoyed the gardens in their green and white splendour. The apricot trees were in full bloom.

At the spring were Ta'amre shepherds with their flocks, watering their animals, and then off on their way again. The flocks pattered along, goats and sheep keeping strictly together, in separate groups. Down on the road they looked like a stream of black and white backs.

On the roof of the mosque were three tradesmen, arrived from Gaza to sell cloth in the village. They were sitting on a rug under the branches of the mulberry tree. They had taken off their shoes and left them at the entrance.

New streams of sheep and goats kept coming from the east and going westward.

»This is a very bad sign», said Sitt Louisa. »It means that there is a drought, there is no more water to be had between our village and the River of Jordan.»

The next day, the day after the Thursday of the Dead, the Muslims assembled in Jerusalem at The Dome of the Rock, commonly called the Mosque of Omar, and marched in great processions carrying banners to Nebi Musa — the Grave of Moses, the prophet — remaining there for seven days.

A pilgrimage to Nebi Musa on the Friday after the Thursday of the Dead has been customary for many years.⁸ In 1959, there was no such pilgrimage. Nebi Musa lies in a forbidden military zone.

The Great Feast

Some days before the Great Feast, people in Artas bought sheep and goats from the Ta'amre men who had brought them to the village. This

year dancing and singing preceded the Great Feast, because Khalil Mustafa celebrated the occasion of his sons' circumcision.

In my Diary for Friday the 24th of April 1931 I wrote:

All the villagers are to be present at the circumcision except the members of the Meshani clan who are in mourning for Abd il-Salam. Alya told me that a family in mourning even hesitate to go to the mosque on the day of the Great Feast.

Someone generally goes to their house to prevail upon them. »Come with us! Death visits all of us. We, too, have had the same experience, we, too, have been in mourning. Join us in prayer and feasting!«

On the following day, Saturday, the 25th of April 1931, I wrote:

They have been to the houses of mourning, to those who have lost a relative in the preceding twelve months, begging them not to be offended by this joy of circumcision. Coffee and sugar are handed over as a bribe. And the mourners answer: »Be joyful! Neither joy, nor gladness, nor mourning, is cut off in the world!«

The gifts are not taken to the home but to the club, Alya explained, and told me of some such incidents.

The gift of coffee and sugar was taken to Abd il-Salam's club. It was not only for his family but also for the house of Ehsen Abdallah, as these two men were of the same clan.

The blind man, Mhammad Khalil, had also died recently. They went to Abu Shahin's club, saying: »Please, may ye, too, have the joy of circumcision! Grieve not!« They replied: »May God complete your joy! Neither death nor joy will be cut off.«

The Evenings of Joy started on Thursday. For three nights in succession the villagers sang and danced. The circumcision ceremony was celebrated on Sunday, and followed by a meal of rice and meat.

The Great Feast, also called the Sacrificial Feast, coincides with the offering of pilgrimage sacrifice at Mecca.

ALYA loved to speak of their rites and ceremonies.

From my Diary — the Great Feast in 1930:

All the time ALYA's thoughts are with the pilgrims in Mecca, and she talks about what is to happen there, what the pilgrims are going to do.

»Yesterday, the pilgrims were at the holy well of Zamzam. The great Prophet has performed his ablutions there with water out of a silver vessel, illuminated by a burning light. Had not Muhammad washed himself there, then neither a Damascener nor an Algerian would have done so.

To-day they are on Mount Arafat.⁹ They remain there standing to say the prayer of the feast. And the learned one reads to them until a piece of paper descends upon them (from heaven?). Then the preacher says to them: 'Ye are forgiven, ye pilgrims.' All pilgrims slaughter their sacrificial animal and step over it.»

In 1931, the Great Feast took place on Monday, the 27th of April.

From my Diary:

It is raining now in the early morning. The people rejoice because of rain falling on the day of their Great Feast.

I have just looked up what Alya said last night of what is to happen to-day:

The preacher calls out before daybreak. The men go to wash themselves in the fountain and then follows the ablution. The preacher calls out for prayers before, or at sunrise. The morning call reminds the Muslims that Prayer is better than sleep.¹⁰

Awake the sleeper from his sleep!
Night has passed and its judgment is over.
And prayer is better than sleep.
Get up, let us make our ablutions
And death has passed away
And death is a cruel lion.
I am sure he has passed away from us.¹¹

At 7 o'clock I wrote in my Diary:

Now I have seen the men coming down along the mountain and the road leading past the graves to the village mosque in the garden. I enjoyed this beautiful sight: bright turbans, or white cloths tied to the head with a black cord, and wide trailing mantles over a long shirt. Some of the young men had white shoes on their feet, others modern black ones. But all the older men still wore their peasant footwear.

Now I can see the men sitting together with the preacher in long rows on the roof of the mosque repeating: God is most great! Ali Khalil, recently elected village chief, is arriving. He is wearing a long black mantle. He is taking off his shoes, laying them aside, and spreading his mantle before him on the rug. Yellow turbans appear like immense oranges among the green trees in the gardens.

Alya told me of the ceremonies at the graves on this day, and of the Great Feast being the Feast of Slaughter, also the Feast for Women. Married women receive gifts from their father's house: meat, and even live sheep.

We were interrupted, however, because Ali Sliman, a male relative of Alya, called on her, very probably on an errand of alms-giving. She looked very pleased.

Sitt Louisa and I went out and saw the men sitting on the stone wall before the graves reading over the dead. When the men had left, some boys remained here and there, reading out of the Quran at the grave of a relative.

Our neighbour, Ali Khalil, came up to the house to wish us a happy feast; *lit.* Every year, and may you remain well!

Now the men are going from house to house in the village to greet their neighbours. On this day they all make friends. Sitt Louisa calls it the great Feast of Atonement. The men embrace and make peace with one another. Outside the houses the women greet the approaching male relatives, take their hand which they kiss and lift up to their forehead. This takes place after the prayer in the mosque.

In front of all houses stood bleating sheep and goats. And now they were to be slaughtered. Earlier on a similar occasion I had taken some photographs of the slaughter of animals. To-day I was not in the mood to witness all this, yet in the distance I saw the people gathering around the animal to be slaughtered. Men and women were helping. I could see the blood of the animals spreading over the wall surrounding the house. This year, too, the Sliman Ode family smeared their doorposts with blood.

Now Hamdiye appeared and told us that everybody had left the burial ground, except those at Ehsen Abdallah's grave. His was the most recent grave. It was said that visits are paid to the graves, especially to the 'new' graves. And this gave rise to discussion of the adults who had died since the last Great Feast.

Death of Adults in 1930 — 1931

ALYA told me about the year, spring 1930 to spring 1931: »This year five grown-up persons have died: Mustafa Jedallah, Mhammadiye Da'ud il-Sefi, Abd il-Salam, Mhammad Khalil and Ehsen Abdallah.»

Mhammadiye's and Abd il-Salam's deaths have been previously described in detail. And I have mentioned that Mhammad Khalil and Ehsen Abdallah died in the month of Ramadan. (Other aged villagers who died in Ramadan were Hamdiye's father, Sliman Sanad, and Alya's mother, Salma Sanad.)

Mustafa Jedallah had died before my arrival in spring 1930. On his death-bed — ALYA told me — he had expressed the wish that his family should observe all the ceremonies connected with death: — »Do not trouble the clan with expenses, I am not poor! Do what is necessary. Give the preacher a pound for saying prayers over me! Distribute a basket of figs at the grave. Give alms to the poor!«

Present at his death-bed were his family members: his son Mhammad, and his two wives.

Sabha Isma'in, his first and beloved wife, said to him: »Forgive me!« He said: »I forgive!« Then Fatme, his second and not loved wife, said: »Forgive me!« He said: »Should I forgive thee who hast cursed and said: This old man, when is he to be uprooted? When shall this old man be taken from me! Thou hast no forgiveness!« His hate of Fatme lasted unto death. Yet she, and not Sabha, had born him children.

The dying Mustafa said to his son: »Mhammad, my son, take care of Sabha! She will strengthen thy soul, thee and the property!«

He also expressed the wish that his married daughter, Khadra Mustafa, should retain her 'rights' in her father's house. — »Be careful! Do not insult Khadra! Do not cut off her affection and love! She too has a share in her father's house.«

He then asked for his brother and sister. »Bring me Atallah and Tamame!« he said.

This is what ALYA told me of Mustafa Jedallah's last will and wishes. But on the whole there was not much said about his death and burial. In latter years he had been old and infirm. For years his energetic wife, Sabha Isma'in, had seen to important family affairs. Most of the time Mustafa Jedallah had kept indoors and was often asleep on the floor, rolled up in his mantle. »He is a hundred years old, and more!« said a young man to me in 1927. Mustafa Jedallah died, old and stricken by age, and, therefore, was not greatly mourned in the village.

To a certain extent this was true also of Mhammad Khalil, sometimes called Mhammad the Blind. He used to sit outside his house, and Sitt Louisa and I often stopped to talk to him.

Mhammad Khalil was the head of the family. He was the one who kept the bag, and in consequence he had the power and the right to decide in family affairs. But his old age and his blindness prevented him from doing any work. He took no active part in the village life.

ALYA said of him: »He is not deeply mourned. Not many tears are shed for his sake. His house is built up.»

SITT LOUISA: »Each son has a son. Shortly after his death a boy-child was born to his family.»

People from other villages came to his burial, but it could not be compared with Abd il-Salam's. Sheikh Abd il-Salam had many connections and his was the greatest and most dignified burial in the village during my stay there.

But no death affected the villagers so deeply and sincerely as that of Ehsen Abdallah.

On the day of the Great Feast, the 27th of April 1931, ALYA said: »All tears belong to him, for he died without leaving any sons. His heredity is lost.»

She added: »The mourning for Ehsen Abdallah is greater than for Abd il-Salam. His sisters say: 'My heart remains in fire until my death.' His share in the family property goes to others.

But as to Abd il-Salam: From one faggot a bundle has come. He who leaves behind Emer and Amer, i.e. builders-up of a family, has not died. Only he dies who leaves a ruined house behind.

PROBLEMS ARISING AFTER A DEATH

However deep and true is the sadness felt on the loss of a dear one, it cannot retain its pure and noble character because of the petty meanesses in daily life, and the evil tongues dropping their venom into the minds of the people.

Difficulties in Ehsen's House

Ehsen Abdallah died on the 5th of February 1931, or according to the Muslim Calendar, on the 18th of Ramadan in the year 1349. On the 17th of May 1931, Alya related as follows:

»When he was dying, he called his brothers to him and committed his wife, Sara, and his daughters to their care. He said to them: 'Give me your hands that I may kiss them. I commit to your charge my wife, Sara,

and her daughters, and the little vineyard is to be for Sara in return for the care she has given me.'

And now Sara wants to leave his house and Artas.»

It was clear that Ehsen Abdallah wanted Sara to remain in his house after his death. But people began to slander her and talk of her wanting to remarry.

ALYA: »The Meshani clan began to talk about her, that she wished to marry the son of Abd il-Salam, that she wished to marry the son of Mhammad Ibrahim.»

Her good reputation was in danger and her father demanded that she return to him in Bethlehem. He could take her home, he thought, from her deceased husband's house, for he had no duties toward her children; the four daughters belonged to their father's family.

He said to her: 'The body that has borne must give back. Leave thy daughters to their own relatives and come home! We have no sins on our neck' — in regard to them.»

Sara's father could then, if an opportunity arose, give her in marriage to another man.

But this was going against Ehsen Abdallah's wish on his death bed. The problem for his brothers was how to keep Sara in her deceased husband's house to bring up her daughters.

Ehsen's brother, Rashid Abdallah, had a plan. He would marry Sara, his brother's widow. But he had a wife, Nazha. Yet he might be Sara's visiting husband.

ALYA: »She would be in her deceased husband's house, and Rashid Abdallah's wife, Nazha, would be in her husband's house. When Nazha is away then Rashid and Sara will talk together in secret and sleep together in secret. Everything in secret.

One day when Sara had gone to see her parents in Bethlehem, Rashid spoke to Nazha about his plan, saying:

'God knows that sensible people are advising me to arrange a union between myself and Sara and become a visiting husband to her, so that she can remain here and educate her daughters.'»

But he got no sympathy from his wife. She was furious. In that case she wanted to divorce him.

ALYA: »Rashid collapsed like a mule.»

SITT LOUISA: — »He was terribly ashamed.»

As soon as Sara returned from Bethlehem, the wild Nazha began to quarrel with her, and the quarrel was heard all over the village.

Three months after Ehsen Abdallah's death there was great confusion in the family. Had there been no evil tongues, Sara might have stayed on as a widow in her husband's house, and Rashid might have been the guardian of her fatherless daughters.

I never learned whether Rashid was able to carry out his purpose, or whether it remained merely a plan.

Difficulties in Abd il-Salam's House

Great words had been spoken and solemn promises given at the burial of sheikh Abd il-Salam. His nearest male relatives were willing to take care of the family and to bear all their burdens.

ALYA: »Remain with thy children! We are thy camels and the camels of thy children! — Thus said Salem and Mhammad Ibrahim, her brothers-in-law, to Sheikha, the widow.»

But in the autumn, 1930, there were some alarming rumours as to divergence between Sheikha and her husband's family. The first time I heard of it was in connection with the betrothal of Yusef, the son of Abd il-Salam by his first wife.

ALYA: »Sheikha said: 'I do not give him a drink of water.' For that reason he has betrothed himself. There was no other way out.»

The next quarrel was about her children.

ALYA: »Sheikha wants to put her children into a school.»

SITT LOUISA: »As orphans!»

ALYA added: »Her husband's family said to her: 'We forbid thee! The children of our brother shall not be given away and put into a school'.»

Their blood relatives will bring them up. A mother has no right to decide for her child. The family quoted: »What the body has harboured it must give back.»

SITT LOUISA: »The woman is merely a vessel.»

As usual Alya was well informed.

At the Little Feast, the 18th of February, and on the Thursday of the Dead, the 2nd of April, Sheikha did her duties to her husband, Abd il-Salam, at his grave. She looked sad, but said nothing about her trouble.

I had seen her several times in the past year in the village or on her way to Bethlehem. On the 7th of April I met her in Jerusalem. It was early in the morning, not yet 8 o'clock, and I was waiting for the shop to open. I was on my way to Artas and wanted to buy some food.

Out in Artas I wrote in my Diary:

While I was standing outside the door of the shop, Sheikha Shahin came along Jaffa Street. She had come from Artas that very morning. We exchanged greetings, as is done when villagers meet.

What was she doing in Jerusalem? She may have been making preparations for later events.

On the 9th of April 1931, I wrote in my Diary:

Sitt Louisa and I wandered about for some time in the mountains. The air was depressing and there was a wind from the east.

When it grew dark a mighty quarrel arose in the village, in the house of Abd il-Salam. We could hear it for quite some time. People were sitting outside their houses or on the roofs, listening.

On the 10th of April I wrote:

This morning there was a knock on the gate before 6 o'clock. It was Sheikha Shahin, very much upset, who came to ask if she might rent a room. She wanted what she called the kitchen, for some time only, two or three months, until her rights were restored to her. We tried to comfort her as well as we were able to.

She said that her children had been thrashed, one of her boys so badly that blood was drawn. — Who did it? — »The sons of my husband. I have no 'written rights'.»

— But your children? — »No, there is nothing about them either.» And now she was to apply for her 'rights'!

Sitt Louisa was full of good advice. As to the room, she suggested that the Negroes in the village might have one. We have no room to spare, my lady boarder may return.

Sheikha went away. She was still a good-looking and stately woman. And how energetic!

— Now she is going to fight for her own rights, said SITT LOUISA.

Sheikha had told us that she was going to the *Qaim maqām*, the District Officer at the Muslim Court in Jerusalem. She did not want to go to see the Governor in Bethlehem. He might listen to her enemies, the relatives of her husband.

»But the *Qaim maqām* is greater than the Pasha,» said HAMDIYE.

SITT LOUISA: »She will say: Is there no righteousness? Is there no law? Then she will explain her trouble in detail.»

Yesterday, Sheikha had gone up on the roof to call out her difficulties to the whole village.

Alya had heard the whole story.

— Cannot Sheikha's father do anything? said SITT LOUISA.

— »And is she her husband's cousin (father's brother's daughter)?»

ALYA said. »No, she is in a stranger house! Her husband was of another clan.»

— You see why a woman marries her cousin, a father's brother's son. That is one of the reasons for cousin-marriage, said SITT LOUISA to me.

— »And a cousin is forbearing and patient with her husband and his house,» said ALYA. »But a stranger wants to be pampered and spoilt.»

It was also said that Sheikha would not remain a widow, and that may have been the reason for all this commotion, just to give her father a chance of explaining that he would not have her in her husband's house as she was a widow, a 'stranger'. He has no reason to take any interest in the house of her husband, as the latter was not his blood relative. Sheikha's father may give her in a new marriage again. Sheikha is now a widow for a second time. When her first husband died, her father said: »I shall not allow my daughter to remain unmarried.» He took her away from her husband's house (where she had to leave her daughter) and gave her in marriage to Abd il-Salam. The same thing may be repeated. There is a scarcity of women in the Shahin family.

It has been said above that Sheikha, at her husband's burial, omitted to ask for permission to remain in the house of her husband so as to bring up her children. Was it done on purpose?

In this case, as in that of Ehsen Abdallah, I stayed long enough in the village to see complications and difficulties arise after the burial, but not long enough to see how they were finally solved.¹²

This was a time of anxiety and trouble in the whole country, in the village, and in Abd il-Salam's clan.

SAYINGS ABOUT DEATH AND LIFE

»Do not strew sugar on death!«

This is certainly a true saying considering even the numerous complications arising in consequence of death.

The head of a family has passed away. Disagreements may arise. The members of his family look back on the time when the deceased was still among them, uniting them by his authority. Vehemently, they wish:

O lord of the house
 Return to the house
 Dignity and reverence will come from thee to the house.

A sheikh is dead. There may have been fearful troubles and adversities while he was still alive. But there was always hope. People trusted him, he would find a way out of the difficulties. Had he been there now, they would have said as so often before:

He will arrange it, the clever one
 With the beauty of his brain
 And at the end emerge in safety.

But one must find comfort in the thought that things will be cleared up in one way or another, now as before.

A comforting saying is:

»The Prophet Muhammad died and yet his followers were guided. They settled their affairs.» — Everything turned out all right.

And this saying is a reminder of the Prophet himself and of his reactions.

When the Prophet Muhammad was in trouble he laughed.

The Ṣaḥāba, his Companions, asked him: »Why dost thou laugh when thou art in trouble?» — »Because I know that broadness comes after narrowness and straightness.» — After need comes nothing but relief.

On the 5th of June, 1930, the Arabs were waiting for the Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husseini at the railway station in Jerusalem. He was the leader of an Arab Delegation now returning from London where the troubles in Palestine had been debated — unsuccessfully from the Arab point of view.

— Poor Palestine! said an Arab while smoking his water pipe in a café. But he added: »The sun is not always on the same spot in the sky.» It is sometimes in the east, sometimes in the west, and in the evening it disappears completely. The next day it is there again. — And: »To-day he is a little boy. To-morrow he is a man.»

Sorrow and happiness are not permanent. They may alternate.

Fire at night
 And ashes in the morn'
 And God, the worshipped, shall set it right.

Or,

And the Lord of all mankind shall set it right.

Thus people speak of the interchanges, choosing the sayings suitable for their present mood and experiences.

There are periods when people, for instance, in harvest times, have too much to do, and they exclaim: »Life ends but not work.»

A man's mind changes with the changes in nature.

»The full moon tells me that my life has been shortened, and I rejoice each time I see the New Moon appear.»

In this expression pessimism gives way to joy.

The longer the period elapsed after a death the less people worry.

It has been said above that in the village the graves are in the midst of it. The deceased have found their final resting place among the living.

Each day I pass the graves

I do not know where my grave shall be

I rejoice when my riches increase

But do not weep for the — daily — shortening of my life.

THIRD SECTION

This section contains supplementary material (which could not readily be worked into the text) subdivided into three parts: songs connected with death and burial, mostly collected in 1930—1931; expressions, verses and stories concerning mourning and death, collected in 1925—1931; and, comments made by Jude F. Docmac (1959), not quoted in the text.

SONGS AT DEATH AND BURIAL

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains death and burial songs, not previously quoted in this book, in connection with accounts of customs in association with death. In my former books, I have occasionally referred to these songs. In the following the complete songs are given. Brief comments are made, a few words to facilitate interpretation. Most of the songs concerning death and burial that I have been able to record are included.

The lines of the original songs mostly end in rhymes, and so do the proverbs and sayings.

But, in addition, the songs have their special rhythm which is accentuated by clappings of the hands when they are sung. The modern musician would probably have greater understanding of Arab folk-songs than the musicians of former days, if the original music might be obtained.

Ever since olden times the custom to bewail and lament the deceased in songs has existed.¹ Close details regarding the origin of a death song have been forgotten. In most cases people do not know for whom and by whom a mourning song has first been composed. The songs themselves have survived, and are repeated over and over again.

Naturally they are not obituaries, in the true sense of the word, as they do not give the biographical development of a definite individual, a chronicle of human life »from the cradle to the grave». They do not cover whole periods, they deal with different phases or characteristics of the deceased.

Symbols are sometimes used, for instance, animals: a lion, goat, camel, eagle, sheep or grouse; or plants: saffron, cloves.

What songs the women may choose to sing depends on circumstances, whether the deceased is a man or a woman, adult or child. The deceased's position in society, the relatives left behind: wife, sister, brother, etc., also play a role.

The songs bear the stamp of their origin, e.g. characteristics of Bedouin life.

Singing includes a repetition of the same song, followed by a sudden change, maybe to an entirely different theme with a new aspect.

The songs do not concern the afterlife, but glimpses of the life of the deceased, a glorification of his life on earth. Against the background of the emptiness of death, it stands out in bright contrast; even small features and events take on significance.

The mourning woman sings, or other women do so to express the mourner's feelings.

WAILING SONGS ON THE DEATH OF A WOMAN

The songs on the death of women concern: the stranger wife and death in solitude; and the good woman: the good housewife, the good mother, the good neighbour, and friends.

These songs were given to me by ALYA on the occasion of the death of Mhammediye, who died on a hot day in May when the villagers were out harvesting in their fields. Mhammediye's husband was from Artas. She herself was born in another village. On her sudden and tragic death, all alone, the people recollected that she had come to the village as a stranger, a young stranger bride. Was she still a stranger, in spite of the many years she had lived in Artas? Was her death the death of a stranger?

A Stranger Woman

The one who has not many friends
She dies the death of a stranger,
She dies thirsty, without water.

The reputation and value of a woman in her husband's house depends on the protection and support given her by her father's house. If she is from another place, perhaps from far away, it is more difficult for her nearest blood relatives to give her their support. But the farther away a woman is from her blood relatives, the more she feels the need of them and the more she longs for them.

In the song it is said:

The stranger woman wants a lot of men
 To visit her night and day
 The stranger woman likes to have her brother and her
 father's brother (with her).

The blood relatives say in the same song:
 If she is happy we shall support her and make her life
 richer still
 and if she is sad or in distress we shall support her and
 bring her back.

A woman belongs to her blood relatives when she is dead. Her male blood relatives shall protect her, her honour, and prevent stranger men from looking at her. Her brother shall lay her in her grave. A dying woman thinks of all these things and worries lest her brother should not reach her in time.

The stranger woman:
 Oh, who shall lay me into my grave
 And keep — drive — the stranger men away from me
 Oh, misery! A stranger's death!
 It burnt a cross upon my breast.

DOCMAC: It burnt me with pain in my heart.

And:
 Oh, who shall lay me in my tomb
 And drive the stranger men away from me!
 Oh brother, throw thy mantle over me
 Approach me before the strangers come!

He will come to me before the strangers come
 I want my brother, the son of my father, to dig my grave
 And clear the stones and dust away.

SITT LOUISA: »A woman should have a soft surface to rest on.»

Sometimes a woman has died while her people are moving from one place to another. They bury her in a stranger place, but she would have liked to be taken home.

The tomb of the stranger woman is near the road²
 She needs a muleteer³ and a companion.
 The stranger woman wants to go to her people.

When they are quite alone, and death seems imminent, other women have reason to say, like did Mhammadiye:

I slept in the sun, it burnt me
 Neither mother, nor sister waked me
 Nor did my neighbour come out to see me.

SITT LOUISA: »It is dreadful to lie unprotected and helpless in the sun, and there is no one to help.»

A woman on her sick-bed longs for her own people:

Why did the dear one leave my house
 They no more eat my bread and sit down with me.
 If the beloved ones knew that I am sick
 They would tread on thorns to come to me.

DOCMAC: »They would walk on palm branches and come to me. Palm branches are generally thorny.»

SITT LOUISA: »They would walk through distant palm-groves — they would come in spite of all difficulties and obstacles. They would come from afar, if they knew what was the matter with me.»

But the woman may be too optimistic. It may be that, like in Mhammadiye's case, both mother and sister were dead. Then the father's brother's daughter, who is the nearest relative, says:

My village is far from yours
 And my step is short, I cannot reach you
 My village is far away with many islands in between
 And I am a woman and cannot be blamed.

SITT LOUISA: »That was in olden times before there were any means of communication and people had to walk great distances. A woman has no right to leave the house, but a man can do so whenever he likes, without a word of explanation.»

A daughter living in the same village, or a neighbour, may say:

Thou woman, sleeping in the warmth
 O by God! Come to our house a while!
 Thou, sleeping in the heat and burning sun
 By God! Come to our house, the airy house!

DOCMAC: »The collapsing house.»

The daughter of the departed woman, if she was not present, says:

I wish I had been there when she died
 And she would have forgiven me and calmed my conscience.

Lit. And I would have forgiven her and eased her conscience.

And I should have given her a drink of water
 Tell us, those who were present at her death
 Did she die thirsty or did ye give her water to drink?

Then suddenly she tells herself that her mother is not dead, and sends the mourners away:

O ye women who enter the house, the house of my beloved
 Give place, leave me, the woman owner is returning
 My beloved, oh, thou who combed me
 In her lap I slumbered sweetly
 The breeze was pleasant and the slumber out-of-doors sweet.

She remembers how lovely it was, when 'my beloved', her mother, was combing her hair, »delousing her head», and she was so comfortable that she fell asleep. How sweet was her sleep outside, in her mother's lap, while a breeze was blowing.

SITT LOUISA: »It is only in the hot hours of the summer that the peasants live in their stuffy dark rooms. As soon as the afternoon-breeze sets in, everyone goes out-of-doors. They cook and they eat out-of-doors.»

ALYA: »We are prisoners for six months. The carpet of summer is wide.»
 When once the daughter's thoughts have gone back to the time when her mother was alive, she continues to dwell upon those happy days:

My mother's threshold welcomed me
 My father, the pillar of the house, greeted me.

And:

The house is the house of my mother and father
The one whose dear little mother is no more in the house
Had better set up a tent in the desert.

SITT LOUISA: »She had better go far away when her mother is dead.»

A Good Wife and the Guests

Thou who turneth up thy sleeves ready to wait on visitors
She is all duty and kindness.
The visitors of thy husband asked me
From where is that woman and from where come her relatives?
She stems from the thorough-bred horses of Amer
Lucky is he who shall hold her rein.

DOCMAC: »Amer is the man who owns the horse; can also be the name of the horse.»

SITT LOUISA: »To compare a woman to a thorough-bred horse is common, especially among the Bedouin.»

People ask about the origin of the woman, from where she comes, and about her relatives.

SITT LOUISA: »She comes from a noble family.»

A daughter says:

She is my beloved and I am her beloved
My heart pined for her visits
The sleeves bound up and she attends to the guests
She is wholly duty and courtesy
The border of her dress is like swords.

An explanation of the last line given by SITT LOUISA is: »Her arms' her sleeves, shine like swords.»

But DOCMAC says: »The border of her dress is like swords; the house of swords, i.e. those who fight with swords, i.e. her sons.»

A Good Mother of Daughters

The daughter married in the village or outside it says of her mother:

She is my beloved and I am hers
My heart has pined for her visits
My heart suffered when I had to depart from her.

My secret and thy secret are in a copper vessel
 I do not come out of it, so that people hear it.
 Thy secret and my secret are in an olive jar
 I do not come out of it until she comes into the house.

My love, when my eye grew sore
 She came twice to me that night
 To drop some medicine into my eye
 O welcome, mother, whose shadow I see.⁴
 O woman, whose neck is the neck of the gazelle
 Whose eyes are the eyes of the white antelope and finer still.

And:

She appeared before me, making a sign with her hand
 In her sleeve was cooked and uncooked food
 Fearing I had to retire without my supper
 She came with the basket swinging
 My beloved bringing me tasty things
 Lest I must retire without supper.

A N e i g h b o u r

My beloved and the beloved of my children
 For my sake, the beloved of my neighbours.

A woman living in the same street as the deceased, whether a relative or not, may say:

O welcome! She came to me waving her hand
 With cooked and uncooked food in her kerchief
 Fearing I had to sleep without my supper.

And:

Thou orderly one come and go
 Thou orderly one who tends to thine and mine
 Thou orderly one get up with assiduity
 To help those whose weaving has gone wrong!

SITT LOUISA: »She is the unselfish neighbour who puts her own house in order and helps the others, too. When she dies her help is greatly missed.»

By God, ask her neighbours about her neighbourhood
 The house has not been robbed nor have any secrets been revealed
 Where else is there any one like Amir's mother as a protector
 Where we spread out our beds on her roofs to rest.

SITT LOUISA: »They rest so pleasantly together.»

There is no equal to their neighbourhood
 May God bring back their neighbour
 May the cup of happiness circulate among us
 And being united we come together.

O ye, our former neighbours, return!
 My heart is sad for the old neighbour
 Neighbours depart and neighbours arrive
 Nothing is so sweet as neighbours.

DOCMAC: »Nothing is so sweet as the neighbourhood of a friend.»

My dear has left the street
 Who is to be blamed, oh, neighbour
 My dear has forsaken the house
 Who should be blamed, oh, neighbours!

F r i e n d s

All friends are not good. There are friends and friends.

My beloved ones (male) and my beloved ones (female)
 They who search through my little treasure-boxes
 And they who deny lies told of me.

SITT LOUISA added: »And they who tell lies on me. A woman does not believe in all women. The beloved are: her mother, her sister, but not her brother's wife. The mother protects her daughter, does not begrudge her her possessions.»

Friends are not always sympathetic.

SITT LOUISA said: »Women are often spiteful and insulting.»

Yet,

I wish to keep my friends
 Be they like axes
 For my needs, my sickness, and for my headache.

I wish that my friends (female) remain well
 To be with me when I die
 To give me cold water to drink
 And take the sadness away from my heart.

The woman in the grave says:

The beloved ones passed me by
 They have crossed the border (of the country)
 They have gone far away from me.

WAILING SONGS ON THE DEATH OF A MAN

Songs and lamentations indicate the position of the deceased in the closer or wider family circle, in the small and in the large family, in the clan, or even in the village. They reflect his feelings for the family, and his value in the eyes of its members and of other people.

A F a t h e r

In the songs previously quoted it is said: Father is the giver of good things, the feeder, provider and upbringing of children; through early death, 'abandoner' of his family.⁵

In the following song the happiness of the complete family is spoken of, and the preciousness of the word 'father'.

How sweet are the daughters and their mother
 With the father sitting among them
 Cutting meat with the knife.
 My father! How sweet is the word father
 Like honey and a little sweeter still.

The widow says or sings:

Thou bearer of a burden, on whom hast thou thrown it!
 On a little baby who cannot carry burdens.

Suddenly, in the same song, her thoughts go back to their former happiness:

We spread out the high bed of honour.
 We were sitting with each other, I and the father of the family
 We are laughing at the sweet little boys.

Then again she remembers her loss and changed circumstances:

They have loaded me and urged me on
And made my burdens heavy on me.

This is too much for her. Overpowered, she calls for help:

Bring us a good camel
Accustomed to carry heavy burdens!
The small camels, the children, cannot take our burdens.

Her call does not fall on deaf ears. The brothers of the deceased announce their willingness to share her burdens. »We are thy camels. We will carry thy burdens and the burdens of the little ones.«

The young daughter, too, asks her father's brother if he does not know that the children are orphans, can he not see that she and her mother are dressed in mourning.⁶

The young son who has heard his mother and sister speaking, begs his father's brother for protection:

O father's brother, cover me with thy sleeve!
My father has died, and I have come to thee.
Commend us to your wives!

But he may be disappointed:

My father's brother!
The cold between your houses
Has killed me
I should have been warm
In my father's
And in my mother's lap.

Or,

Their orphan stands by the cooking pot
He fears in his heart to be scolded.

The following lines express the orphan's bitter feelings:

He who says that my father's brother is like my father
He has told me a lie.⁷

The father's brother is not always kind to orphans, he may not be the ideal protector that he promises to be.

An Uncle, a Father's Brother

In the lamentations for Abd il-Salam, his goodness to his brother's children was mentioned. But his brother's son, Salman, who should have been at the death-bed, was not in the village at the time. He was in prison, in distant Akka.

It has happened that brothers of a man who is severely ill have been imprisoned in Bethlehem or Jerusalem for interrogation, and have been released in order to be present at their brother's death-bed. Salman was too far away. Salman's sisters were very unhappy about their brother. They sang of their wish to send him news about his uncle's death in a letter, but it would never have reached him.

Even the paper that flew
 Into the prisons — and failed
 O Salman, get up and read it!
 Thou wilt find thine father's brother's death in it.

Thou paper which has flown into the prisons and embarrassed.
 Thou, Salman, stand up and read it!
 Thou wilt find the tidings of thy father's brother's death in it.

In another song the dying man himself longs for Salman, and wants him sent for. Salman's sisters sing these words in the name of the dying man:

Send a young horse running to Salman
 May he reach me while my ghost is still in my breast!
 Send a young horse with bells to Salman
 May he come while my ghost is still in my head!

An Uncle, a Mother's Brother

A mother's brother is not of the same social importance, he has not the same duties, nor the same rights as the father's brother. An expression is: »The father's brother is included, the mother's brother is excluded» (from inheritance). But as revealed in the songs, he is dearly loved by his sister's children. This love may embrace others of the mother's blood relatives as well.

Mother's brother is a precious word: »sweet like honey»; »uncles, my mother's people — the dearest of God's folk to me»; »I only love my mother's brothers».

Would to God thou blessed maternal relative
That thou couldst now be bought for money.

And if this wish is to be fulfilled:

I would buy thee with all my riches
We care not for our riches —
And with horses, we want not our animals
And with a child, we do not want a newborn.

SITT LOUISA: »They are prepared to give up everything for the maternal relative.»⁸

A Brother

No one is of greater importance to a woman than her brother. If a woman is married he is the connecting link between her and her father's house. If a woman is married in a stranger place she may count upon her brother coming to her with gifts at the Great Feast. Ehsen Abdallah died in 1931, and at the Great Feast of that year, the women sang of how Ehsen on such a day used to say to his wife:

Oh, woman give me my mantle
To go and wish a happy feast to my sister
To support and comfort her, and return.

But now Ehsen had died and the women sang of his sister's woe:

Oh, my visitor at the Feast
Why hast thou deserted me?
Thou hast thought it in vain, dear, to use thy footsteps
to visit me.

He answers:

I have not thought it in vain, with my footsteps
to visit thee
Neither will I desert thee.
They took the bier and carried me into the graveyard.

In such a case the sister wishes: »Do not come, O Feast!»
She and the people in her husband's house will be reminded of the fact that she no longer has a brother. If a woman has no brother who

supports, protects and defends her, she cannot reckon on the same respect among people as before. The very thought of it makes her sing:

Do not take away the law of my head
 Do not show me contempt among the people
 Do not take away the law of my heart
 Do not humble me before those in my company.

These mourning songs might be said also for a woman's father. However, the song below refers only to the brother.

A brother, there is no equal to him
 The brother is the carrier of heavy burdens
 He showed me no sign of complaint.
 Light was thy step, take me with thee
 In the house I will not stay without thee
 Brother, son of my mother, carried me.
 In the dear year he never complained.

If a woman has no brother and her father dies, »heredity is lost, the property goes to others». The daughters have no more a father's house.

Ahmad Jedallah left no sons, no male descendants. The feelings and sorrow of his daughters, married to men from other villages, appear in the following songs.

Be slow ye who wish to inherit
 I see ye hasten
 A father of daughters! And thou dost not sleep at home
 We, thy daughters come to visit thee
 In bad harvest times and in the years of dearth.

Oh, our house where we were brought up
 It shelters us no more and thou art no more our abode
 Oh, our house of red stones
 We have departed and others have come to settle.

Ploughman, do not plough their land
 And do not sing for the cows!
 The herdsman of the cows is angry with them
 I recognized their faces
 But I could not recognize the ploughman.

A Cousin, a Father's Brother's Son

The brave father's brother's daughters
 Their tears are hundredfold
 The father's brother's daughters of the generous one
 Their looks have changed.

Even from outside, from other places, come the father's brother's daughters. Their feet are badly bruised. They have hurried barefoot along difficult paths. When the tidings of Abd il-Salam's death reached them, they were sitting round the wooden bowl filled with coloured rice; they did not eat of it. They started off.

In the name of the hostess, one of the women in the house of mourning sings, first describing the arrival of the women cousins, and in the last two lines quoting their words:

His father's brother's daughters came to me
 With their children in their arms
 And the thorns had eaten into their feet.

When hearing of Abu Abed's death we ate no supper
 We threw away the saffron rice from our wooden bowls.

REACTION TO MESSAGE OF DEATH

The women sing:

The tidings of thee went to seven lands.
 In them there were some who spilled out the coffee
 And some who raised the banners.

Salem, the brother, has thrown out the coffee
 And the enemy has raised the banners.

SITT LOUISA explained: »It is customary that when the tidings of the death of a relative reaches the people, they neither eat nor drink anything.⁹ If they have a coffee pot in their hands, they empty it out. For instance, in Lifta, where Abd il-Salam had relatives-in-law — Sabiha, his half-sister was married there — they said: 'To honour him we throw away the coffee.' Many have thrown out the coffee.

'Banners' — banners of triumph; banners mean victory, and are raised by the enemy.»

A village woman from another clan may come to sing in the house of mourning. Thus did Fatme Khadr who, in her song, praised the deceased for the help he had given her in her trouble with her husband. He acted without reward.

Mayest thou be well, thou newly plucked saffron
 The scent for the virgins on the nights of feast!
 Mayest thou be well, the courtyard of the house,
 Thou gatherer of the family, small and big.

The scent of saffron is sweet. A man whose deeds are kind smells good. In the song the deceased is looked upon as still being alive. He is the watcher and protector of the house, of the courtyard, and of all the family.

In the village there are two types of women: those concerned and those not concerned.

A group of women may be sitting with their legs crossed, as is customary in the east, watching quite unconcernedly the women expressing their deep sorrow.

The relatives and friends of the deceased are deeply grieved at seeing their lack of sympathy, and exclaim:

Oh ye that are looking from behind the club
 Inside the club there are blackened virgins.

A third type is the reluctant outsider, women who keep at a distance from the mourners to save their own feelings. They want to avoid excitement on their own account.

But the daughter of the deceased wants these women to be present, too. She calls to them:

Visit us from afar!
 She — the mourner — is the colour of negroes
 Are ye satisfied with this condition of ours?

And the reply in the same song is:

We are satisfied with your condition while we are absent
 And not satisfied if we are present.

The farther away one is, the less is one concerned. All sorrow seems less at a distance. An unseen sorrow does not trouble very much.

A daughter — whether at home or married in another village — is always deeply touched, and wishes that she had been able to prevent Death from finding her father.

I want to hide thee, my father, in the buttons of my clothes
The black nights searched among the clothes.
If my father visits me I shall spread out my clothes for him
And offer my hands as a pillow for his head.

The daughter wants to hide her father inside her buttons so that Death shall not find him, even if the clothes are searched. Death is here likened to the black nights.

THE DECEASED AND HIS WIFE

The widow says:

If I had known that this was the eve of parting
I should have built a porch on my house
Lest the sun come upon me.

And:

Sun of parting, I wish thou wouldst not rise
Let not the clouds disperse from thee.

ALYA: »The sun should be clouded to make people think that it is night, and then they would not take him away. She would still have him for a while.»

The deceased to his wife:

Rise and keep awake with me
That thou mayest hear my complaints and my sighing
And make the night shorter for me!

Thou woman, stand up and light the oil lamp
Death has come upon the cheeks
The signs of death have appeared on the mourning dress.

It is easy for me to give up my ghost
But not to give up the beloved.

Or,

Not to be separated from the beloved wife.

DOCMAC:

»It is easier for me to give up my ghost, my life,
Rather than neglect a woman's affairs.
He is very much interested in his beloved one's affairs.»

SITT LOUISA thought:

»It was difficult for me to give up my ghost
And the woman had no pity for me.»

A great problem is: shall the widow remain in the house after the death of her husband, or shall she go back to her father's house — and remarry.

The dying husband does not want her to go away:

Oh, thou woman, be not perturbed
Leave not my house!

Nor do the people in his house, his clan, his village, want her to go away.

In Ein Karim, near Jerusalem, these lines have been recited when lamenting a dead husband:

Thy wife, oh so and so, went back to her people
She is dear to us as was her husband.

And in Artas the women say of the widow:

The women, their legal wives, thread cloves on a string
It is said that she is to be married on the day of the feast.
The woman has saddled her camel
She is to leave and go to the house of her parents.¹⁰
Dost thou think it proper or not?

She is dear also because they have had great expenses to get her: the bride price, betrothal, wedding feast, outfit. Not only her husband, but the whole family have taken part. If she leaves her husband, his house, they complain: »Our riches went to others.» A widow is praised if she does not leave her husband's house.

LAMENTING THE DECEASED

His wife or his daughter:

It is a long time since the sweet-footed one came
Nor has he sat on my mattress in my room.
How long it is since the sweet-footed one came
Nor has he sat on my cushions and my mattress.

The moon has set and it is dark in the house
Go to the threshold and kiss it
So often has the foot stumbled on it.

GRIEVING FOR SOLDIERS

At a funeral in the village, a woman who has some one dear to her far away in the battlefield, thinks of him intensely. She longs to know something about him, even in a dream, and says:

I wish I were a shoe on their feet
To see what happened and what befell them.

I wish I were a grape-vine at the door of their tent
To bear grapes to moisten their throats

I wish I were a grape-vine at the door of their tents
To bear pearl-grapes to moisten their throats.

SITT LOUISA: »That is for the soldiers who live in tents. She, the woman, would like to bring them something. The mother or the sister of a soldier away from home says this.»

I wish I were the button of the door of their tent
To imagine that I see them in my dream, see how they are.

DOCMAC: »Button, leather button for closing the tent from inside.»

ON THE DEATH OF A HERO, A LION

ALYA said of Abd il-Salam: »His name as a boy was Lion of the Night.»

Anyhow, the Lion in the following songs means a brave man, and the songs are most probably of Bedouin origin. Bedouin life is risky and dangerous. Some one catches sight of a hero, a 'Lion', returning from a raid,¹¹ and calls out the good tidings. The wife hurries to prepare the house for his arrival. He shall have a good welcome home.

Say, O Sheikha!
 The Lion has looked down from my wall
 I have spread out the beds and illuminated my house
 Lest the Lion be displeased with me.

A woman neighbour says to Sheikha:

I announce good news to thee! The master of the (my) house!

The latter sentence does not seem to be quite clear. The master of 'the' or 'my' house may be Sheikha's husband, the returning hero. Docmac thinks that the neighbour woman is speaking of her own husband, implying that he is ready to help.

In the following song the neighbour may be, or call himself the grandfather of the son of the wife.

DOCMAC: »I consider myself 'thy' (the wife's) father and, as a close relative, I am at thy service.»

The Lion has looked down from above my house
 His shoulders are high like a bridge.
 The eyes are blue like the eyes of a damascene.
 Thy eyes! And I am the grandfather of thy son.

In former days, war and plundering was general among the Bedouin.

SITT LOUISA: »Robbery is not a sin before God. He is a hero who does it. It is an honour to go alone and have no friend with him. The Bedouin is like a lion, a wolf. Like the wild animals, the Bedouin has the right to rob. He does not plant trees.»

ALYA quoted a song of the lonely life of the Lion of the Night, the treader in darkness in the wilderness where he knows all paths and secret caves.

Thou Lion in the desert
 And thou Wolf in the wilderness
 Thou treader in the darkness
 With no companion.

ALYA says of enmity and friendship:

»When [two] Bedouin meet, they call out: 'What shadow¹² is that?'
 — If it is an enemy, there is no reply. — If it is a friend, the reply is: 'I am so and so'!»

SITT LOUISA: »This is when they go out to rob and plunder in the night.»

In the song it is said:

Thou Lion, friend of a Lion like thee
When two Lions meet there is rejoicing.

SITT LOUISA remarked: »A lion makes friendship with a lion.»

DOCMAC interpreted:

O Lion who accompanies a Lion like him
Whoever accompanies two lions will sing.

He added: »It may mean that a person who is in the company of two lions need not worry about his food. A lion eats only part of the prey.»

In a song the wife of a hero, a Lion, says:

Thou reciter, speak to him on the violin!
A Lion is resting in a ruin.

Resting may here mean that the Lion is not only tired, but may be wounded or dead.

In a song already quoted the wife says:

— — —
O blood of the Lion, flowing in the wilderness
Had I been there I would have opened my lap for it.
The blood of the Lion runs in the wilderness
Had I been there I would have held out my headcloth for it.

THE DEAD AND THE VIRGINS

The following song ends in discord, too. A man meets death and the women wait in vain for him.

The virgins have spread out the beds on the roofs
Thou father with the head-rope, stand up! Arise and walk!
The dew has dampened the beds of the virgins.
The beds of the virgins, they did not take them
And have now made friends with the worms of decay.

The above song seems strange in this connection. There is a possibility that Alya had heard it from some visiting reciter.

The same may be said of the following song. It seems more like some lines out of a cycle of a song.

Safiye does not appear herself today
 She is hidden in the house.
 She, the white one,
 Death left her black.

[Of] how many rested virgins [is it not said:]
 Death left her a mourner.

ON THE DEATH OF A SHEIKH, A JUDGE

The death of a great man causes depression in wide circles.

The bell tolled, it tolled loudly
 The tidings of Abu Abed's death has distressed the government
 The bell has tolled — oh thou who art wearing the seal ring
 The tidings of Abu Abed grieved the governor.
 The bell has tolled for thee, o thou wearer of the calico dress.
 The tidings of Abu Abed made the Mufti sad.

SITT LOUISA: »Great mourning is really forbidden.»

Only the closest relative(s) may express themselves in words. Only she who has suffered the great loss is able, allowed, to speak.

Spare thy words and throw on him a coin
 Leave the words to her who has buried the rider!
 Spare thy words and throw over him a kerchief
 Leave thy words to her who has buried the lamp!
 Spare thy words and throw over him a mantle threaded with gold
 Leave the words to her who has buried the eminent one!

Zahiye, wife of the brother of the widow, Sheikha, sang:

Thou stone in the club, thou hast wept for them
 The guest arrived, searched and did not find them.
 Oh stone of the club! thou hast missed them
 The guest came, searched and did not find them.

SITT LOUISA thought that »the stone in the club» meant Abd il-Salam. Thou stone in the club, thus he seemed to them. »Like the corner stone in the Bible.»

DOCMAC: »Even the stone in the house felt the loss and wept. The stone is not Abd il-Salam, the deceased.»

The men's club was in Abd il-Salam's house. The men of the clan

meet at the men's club, which is the guest house. When Abd il-Salam is no more, guests from a distance cannot stay in his house.

His wife is well aware of it, yet she sings:

I heard the sheikhs beyond the wall
 I rose with speed
 I have spread the carpets and lit up the house.
 The sheikhs went to some one else.

For a moment she forgot that her husband was no more there to receive his guests.

In the following five mourning songs the various kinds of guests and the reception of them are mentioned.

Oh, Abu Abed, if government officials are thy guests
 Offer them coffee and much meat!
 Oh, Abu Abed, if Bedouin are your guests
 Offer them coffee while the meat is on the fire!

His club is full of sheikhs.
 O Yusef! Get the cups for us!
 Spread the mattresses at the court doors
 O my father, it seems our guests are princes.
 O Abed! Get us the velvet ones!
 Spread with mats a clean club!
 My father, it seems our guests are princes.

The departed husband is thought to say to his wife:

Double the unleavened bread
 Set double rows on the tray
 O woman, it seems our guests are princes
 Thou coffee-pot filled with coffee!
 In its club it is pleasant to spread words.
 Thou coffee-pot, overflowing with coffee!

Guests came to the club.
 Come out, O Abu Abed, and see!

He says:

One sheep will not feed the guests.
 Send a man to bring a second sheep!

Soldiers came to the club.
 Come out, O Abu Abed, and receive them!
 Thou art the adviser and the chosen one.

SITT LOUISA:

»This time it is just hitting the nail on its head. He was indeed the chosen one, the village chief, and a judge, and the club was in his house.»

Thou sheikh, there are people to consult thee
 There are young men and ignorant people.
 They came for advice, thou named one.
 O sheikh, behold, they are calling thee
 They need thy advice, thou named one
 Thou art the adviser and the preferred one.

SITT LOUISA: »The young people are sent as messengers.»

Messengers may come to a mighty sheikh, a sheikh known to be a clever judge, bringing letters in which he is asked to settle quarrels.

Thou sheikh, it is not thy custom to sleep
 He read the letter while resting on the cushion.
 Thou sheikh, to sleep is not thy habit
 He read the letter while reclining on his side.

O sheikh, it is not thy custom to sleep
 He read the letter while resting on the cushion.
 O sheikh, thou sleepest not at night
 He read the letter on horseback.
 He went, swaying, up to the Government house.

In their sheikh, the nomadic tribes see their leader who is able to take them to green pastures, beside fresh waters.

O sheikh, thy circle is spacious
 Thou art the river
 We are the sand-grouse
 Drinking the water.

When the sheikh has died, they say:

The river has dried up
 The grouse have mourned while thirsty.

TO DECEIVE THE ENEMY

When the sheikh is dying, his enemies say:

How is he?

They answer:

Praise be to God! He is sweating.

ALYA: »That is to console themselves, to strengthen their hearts.»

SITT LOUISA: »They try to lead the enemies astray.»

When a sheikh dies there is great anxiety and alarm in his house. Those present wail and call out loudly. They rend their clothes and the neglected animals bleat and bellow.

When the enemies in the village or in its vicinity hear the clamour they understand what has happened. Yet they may make inquiries to which the mourners give improbable replies, hoping to deceive the enemies, or at least to lead them astray and prevent them from seeing their sorrow.

SITT LOUISA: »The enemies shall not rejoice in our misfortune.»

By God, when thy enemies ask thee

Tell them: We want copper basins made.

If they hear of a torn pocket

Tell them: We have a tailor here

If they hear the sounds of shrieks and shouts

Tell them: We have the singers trilling here

When they hear the oxen bellowing

Tell them: We have a butcher here

When they hear the clatter of copper pots

Tell them: We have a coppersmith here.

SITT LOUISA: »This is to deceive the enemies, so that they shall not rejoice in our misfortune or sorrow.»

Any woman may say to her dying husband:

My husband is the crown of my head.

Oh, crown of my head do not totter!

We have enemies and we have friends

If ye totter, ye make your enemies rejoice.

DOCMAC: »Rejoice in our misfortune!»

TO CURSE THE ENEMY

SITT LOUISA: »From these songs one learns of friendship and enmity.»

A distinction as to the character of the mourning songs is shown by the words and manner of singing. Some of the women sing quiet mourning songs and sit down »calmly», others again stand up and shout them out, cry and scream, and even curse in poetry.¹³ The words, or expressions, used for the former ones, are derived from the verb *nāḥa*, those for the latter are derived from the verb *na'a*. Thus Alya explained these two words for mourning and singing mourning songs.

The name of the enemy need not be mentioned. People know who he is.

In their song, Salman's sisters screamed and cursed because their brother had been thrown into prison, and abused those who were responsible for it.

I wish that those who are the cause
May be separated from their beloved ones
May he die the death of strangers
May he die thirsty without water.

The wish — an indirect curse — is expressed in accordance with old Semitic oriental formulae.

May God make thee a widow, the one in my mind!
A widowhood quickly! Mayest thou take another husband!
May God make thee a widow! the one on whom the eye is cast!
May thou have a widowhood quickly that thou mayest take another
husband.¹⁴

An expression is:

I shall never love thee in my life
When thou diest, I shall build thee a mosque.

SITT LOUISA: »I never loved thee, not until thou wast dead and people gathered around thee.»

Another expression is:

Joy has its singers, death its eaters.

Or:

What thou dost not eat at his time of pleasure
Thou wilt eat at his time of death.

SITT LOUISA: »At his death repast.»

ALYA: »But it has to be recompensed.»

FALSE SORROW

Reveal thy best to thine enemy
Nobody sees what is in thy heart.

SITT LOUISA: »Show thine enemy as if thou lovest him. But the hearts of the enemies are black.»

The daughter says:

The eye of the enemy is dyed with Indigo
She came, and she wailed and wept with me
But the weeping was only a guise
The eye of the enemy is dyed, darkened with tar
She came to weep with me while her heart rejoiced.

A woman relative of the deceased says to the woman enemy who rejoices in the sufferings of others.

I have said to her:

Do not rejoice in death, oh thou malevolent one
All those created come to the graveyard
Do not rejoice in death thou proud one
All created beings come to the chamber of death.

Also:

Mine enemy! Be not a tyrant!
The Lord is one, and the firmament is rotating
For my enemy there might come a night like mine
As black as tar while the mouth is dry.

»While the mouth is dry» may refer either to the deceased or to the dying.

TO THE TRUE MOURNER

Thou eye, before the enemy have patience
But in the loneliness spare not thy tears.

The word translated as loneliness may also mean wilderness.

EXPRESSIONS, VERSES AND STORIES CONCERNING
DEATH AND MOURNING

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE BIER

It has been mentioned before that three stars mourn the deceased. But also the seven stars, the Pleiades, are spoken of in this connection. The Arabs call them the Daughters of the Bier. In folk-lore, this name has two meanings: either seven daughters, seven sisters, living in these stars, or, the constellation of these stars which, in the minds of the people, resembles a bier and is associated with the one on which they carry their dead to the grave.

ALYA: »The Daughters of the Bier, they are the seven stars.¹ They dwell in the stars. And they carry the bier. — They carry the deceased on the heavenly bier.»

In the men's club they say:

The Daughters of the Bier carry the bier
They entered Paradise and I was with them.

SITT LOUISA remarked: »This is a rhyme to be said very quickly. The men joke about being allowed into Paradise with the Daughters of the Bier, the virgins of the stars. — This is also a rhyme said at work to keep time.»²

ALYA: »The voices of the Daughters of the Bier are like the delicate sound of small flutes. They mourn in the sky.»

Sometimes the Daughters of the Bier announce a death, but the death of a great and important man only. There are people who have heard the Seven Stars singing and wailing. One of these was a woman in Surif who was ill at the time.

SITT LOUISA: »The sick hear more than the healthy.»

ALYA: »Her name was Sara. She was the mother of il-Shahade, the Mecca pilgrim, of the Ahmad Khalas family. At noon she was resting by the door of the house. She heard the Daughters of the Bier wailing:

The pot has struck against the cauldron
O thou sheikh, enough of bliss.

Her six sons returned from the threshing-floor.

She said: 'My sons, who has died in the village?' They said: 'No one has died.'

She said: 'I have heard wailing and mourning.' They said: 'O mother, thou art sad. Thou hast had a dream.'

She said: 'O my sons', listen to the wailing!' They said to her: 'Mother, no one has died.'

She said: 'Listen!'

The pot has struck against the cauldron
O sheikh, it is enough of bliss.

The sons went outside to listen and make inquiries. Now they, too, heard the sound of wailing, and actually there had been a message from the Ohedat people saying that their sheikh was dead.»

ALYA had heard also Jedallah Ode, her father's brother, and Sliman Sanad telling of having heard the Daughters of the Bier sing and mourn:

In the morning he prayed with them
And at noon they prayed over him.

And news came from Idiun that their sheikh was dead.

Jedallah Ode heard the Daughters of the Bier another time, too.

O ye sheep that go early to graze
And the successful young men!
O ye who say of the cows
The yoke and the plough have been deserted.

In the morning they prayed with him
and at noon they prayed over him.

ALYA added: »A sheikh has died and the Daughters of the Bier have carried him.»

THIS CUP, THE CUP OF DEATH

SITT LOUISA: »Once there was a very proud Bedouin sheikh. It was said of him that he could be humbled only by his son being taken away from him, and that is what happened. His son fell seriously ill.»

ALYA: »What God decreed has been fulfilled. The son died.»

SITT LOUISA: »The men who were standing around the grave said to the unhappy father: Do not go into the grave for thou art in sorrow. Thy mind is broken. We shall arrange him in the grave. But the sheikh answered: No. I want to bid him farewell once more. Then he said the beautiful words:

Oh grave, take care of Salam
He is the last of my treasures (descendants)
One does not rejoice in death
This is the cup that goes round to all people.»

The cup which goes round to all may be symbolical of death coming to everyone sooner or later, but it may also have a true basis, a reminder of an old custom: a cup of bitter drink, a cup of tears and sorrow, to be emptied at the burial.

In the Old Testament »the cup of consolation» to drink for the father or for the mother is mentioned. Jeremiah XVI. 7. — In Psalm LXXX. 5: »the bread of tears» and »tears to drink in great measures»; in Hosea IX. 4: »the bread of mourners», »their bread for their soul».

ALYA quoted expressions used by the Arabs:

»Separation is bitter not to be tasted.»

And:

»People drink sorrow from other people.»

Or,

»People drink the grief of other people.»

SITT LOUISA said: »Some must mourn for others.»

FRIENDSHIP IN LIFE AND DEATH

I have looked in the sand³
By God! there was still life left
Why, O Death,
Dost thou take away
My friend from me?

'The life left' may be interpreted in two ways. It may mean the life of the friend. The friend has died an untimely death, he has been bereaved of the full measure of his days. Or, it may mean »my life» has to go on as a lonely life without the friend.

There are friends of all kinds. A true friend is a life-long friend. A real friend is a friend for life. He is more than food and drink.

The following verse concerns the indifferent friend.

I weep over my predicament as long as I live
 I loathe cooked and uncooked food.
 The friend who does not help me while I am alive
 What do I want him for when I am buried under the earth.

There is a great belief in friendship.

By seven golden rings hammered out by the goldsmith
 He is a liar who says: there is no friendship in the world.
 He who loves thee, his steps bring him towards thee
 And he who does not love thee will say: I did not know.

SITT LOUISA:

»I did not know that thou wast in need, that I could help thee.»

MAY WE DIE TOGETHER

Before returning home to my country, in June 1959, I said good-bye to the teachers in the Evangelical Lutheran School in Bethlehem where I had been several times. One of the teachers — Mr Fahed Abu Ghazaleh — said to me: »O that I had never seen you.» He added in explanation: The Westerners say: »Glad to have met you. The Arabs say: O that we had never met.»

In Artas I had heard ALYA say: Separation is bitter — — —.

I wish I had not known thee
 Then my heart would have been at peace.
 Now we are united in friendship
 And thou leavest me in sorrow.
 Had I only gone to Gaza
 And had I been shot with a gun
 But not that it had been said:
 A friend has left his friend.

Great friends will say: May we die together.

With thee, with thee
 Where I was brought up with thee

I long to sit with thee
 When we live, we live together
 And when we die, we die together.

I should like to put an end to my life
 That we finish it together.
 When we live we live together
 And when we die we die together.⁴

HAMDIIYE said of the friendship between two clans in Artas:
 »Richness together, joy together, death together.»

Friends have generally to part. One of them is left in sadness. He says:
 »Thou goest before, I shall follow.» They hope to be laid in the same grave.

In this connection Alya told a true story of two sheikhs. One of them was Ali Aliyan from Illar il-Sifle. The other was from the neighbouring Beit Atab.

Mr DOCMAC said to me (1959): »Artas is south of Bethlehem, and Illar il-Sifle and Illar il-Alya, the Lower and Upper Illar, are west of Bethlehem. They are both lovely places with springs and beautiful gardens — now in Israel.» Mr Docmac, himself, used to live in il-Sifle.

I quote ALYA's story, as she told it to me, in her own words:

— On the way to Jerusalem, I met a woman from Illar il-Sifle. I asked her: »From what village art thou?»

The woman answered: »I am from Illar il-Sifle. And from what village art thou?»

»I am from Artas,» said I, and asked her: »How was it with the two sheikhs who died in your village?»

She told me:

— »People from seven villages came to visit Ali Aliyan when he was ill in bed. Ahmad Isma'in il-Lahham went up to him and said: 'Peace be with thee.' — The sick man answered: 'And with thee be peace.'

Ahmad Isma'in il-Lahham said: 'No evil shall touch thee.' He answered: 'May God protect thee from all evil.'

Then Ahmad Isma'in il-Lahham said:

With thee, with thee
 I was brought up with thee
 I long to sit with thee
 I long to meet thee
 I want to end my days with thee.

If we live, we live together
If we die, we die together.

And:

'If thou, oh Ali, wert to die, may we be laid in the same grave, thou and I. — And all these guests around thee. How many animals must be slaughtered to feed all these guests?' — 'Five animals will be needed.'

Ahmad Isma'in il-Lahham went out to order five animals to be slaughtered. They were brought to the house and killed. But before they were put on the fire for cooking, Ahmad Isma'in il-Lahham died suddenly. The people around him started to wail and cry.

They sought and did not find him. He was dead.

On his sick bed, Ali Alyan looked around but could not see his friend.

He asked: 'Where is Ahmad Isma'in? He must come and sit by me.'

They said: 'He is coming.'

He said: 'Bid him come. I want him to hear my last will. Everyone has his own experience.'

Then, suddenly, Ali Alyan heard the sound of voices, the crying and the wailing.

He said: 'Why is this? Is Ahmad dead?'

They said: 'Yes, Ahmad Isma'in is dead. Thou art left. Thy ransom, *afdāk!* He died as a ransom for thee. May thou live long!'

Then Ali Aliyan gave up his ghost, too.

And the two friends were laid in the same grave in Beit Atab.

People from fifteen villages came to be present at the burial of the sheikhs.»

The wish of the two sheikhs to be buried in the same grave was respected.

THE HUNDREDTH MURDER

In a story told to me by ALYA, a man, alone out in the darkness of the night, breaks into the grave of a recently deceased woman. He had always had his eyes upon her while she was alive, and now wished to see her in her grave. The woman's soul returned to her. She begged for protection by God and the Prophet. At that moment she heard the footsteps of a man passing by and called to him for help. He killed the violator with a cudgel and dragged him out of the grave. The woman died again. He closed the grave upon her.

He was himself an evil-doer who had slain 99 men with his cudgel.

He said: »This night I have completed my evil deeds. Now I have killed my hundredth.» But his last murder had saved the honour of a dead woman. He had done a good deed.

This deed wiped out all the sins of the man who had committed so many murders.

LIFE AND DEATH OF HAJJ AREF, A DERWISH

This is ALYA's version of what Fatme from Shiyukh told us about her father, Aref, when she visited us on March 1st, 1927.⁵

»Hajj Aref was the son of Ahmad Saleh. When still a young man he took the cows out to plough the fields. But he left them standing. He emptied the sack of wheat onto the earth and spread it out with the twig of a tree.

His father said to another son, Muhammad: 'Go out with thy brother today!'

Aref il-Hajj took a handful of red earth and pressing it together (to look like dates) he said to his brother: 'Take these dates!' His brother ate of them till he was satisfied, and the remainder he took home in his mantle.

Muhammad said: 'Oh father, he fed me with dates! — Oh father, my brother Aref emptied the sack of wheat and swept it out with a branch.'

His father said: 'He emptied out the wheat! Are we to have no harvest?'

And Aref came along and said: 'It was not from me.'

The father said: 'From whom then?'

Aref replied: 'Pardon, ye men of God! It was not from me, but from my lord, Ahmad il-Badawy.'

The father cursed his son and Ahmad il-Badawy.⁶

Aref said: 'What? Dost thou curse my lord, Ahmad il-Badawy!' He said to his father: 'Ough!' And there came fire into the mantle of his father.

Aref added: 'May God strike thee dumb!' His father's tongue began to grow and grow until it reached his chest. The first chapter of the Quran, the Fatiha, was read, over and over again. And his tongue returned to normal.

Then Aref took his crooked stick and set out on a pilgrimage. He wandered for seven years in the love of God, and the love of the children of God.

Suddenly he noticed that he was among the lepers in Silwan. The lepers said to him: 'Why art thou so ragged and uncovered? Why hast thou nothing on thy head?' The lepers clothed him and he went on.

— 'Where art thou going, oh my lord?'

He said: 'I am on a pilgrimage to Nebi Musa.'

They said to him: 'It is no time for a pilgrimage now.'

He said to them: 'It is no time for talking now!'

Suddenly he found himself between Bethany and Abu Dis, and some men were gathered there.

He said: 'Why this gathering?'

He approached them. They were trying to roll the pearl of the well, the great stone at the mouth of the well, but it could not be moved.

He greeted them: 'Peace be upon you!' They said: 'Upon thee be peace!'

He said to them: 'Away with you!'

He went to the pearl, smote the stone with his crooked stick and said to the stone: 'Go, thou blessed one, by the permission of God, to the place where thou belongest!'

The pearl ran to the door of the well.

Abu Rab'a — may God have mercy upon the dead — said to him: 'It seems to me that my daughter Rab'a has been born for thee. She is a gift and with her thou wilt have no expenditure. Ye who are present, witness my words!'

Aref il-Hajj went his way.

After seven years he returned to his family, his father's house in Surif. And then they went to fetch Rab'a, and all the expenses were paid by the derwishes.

Rab'a gave birth to Fatme, and then to Saleh, and then to Nazha, and then to Jamil.

Later, in addition to Rab'a, Hajj Aref married another woman, called Hisen; she was from Shiyukh. Hisen slept with him in his bed. He laid his sword between them from eve until morn. And then he married her.

He went to Mecca. Fatme, also, made the pilgrimage. She took the rosary. He was on Mount Arafat.

He returned from the pilgrimage. Then he was taken ill.

But he had already planted the mulberry trees. Measuring the length of his body, he had set a tree where his head was to be and another at his feet.

He sent a message to the derwishes.

'I am to depart this life, to die'. Fifteen different processions of his derwishes arrived.

He said: 'Listen ye! Hear! Do not take me back to Surif or to Shiyukh!'

— 'Where, my lord, shall we bury thee?'

He said: 'See, here under the mulberry trees is my grave!'

— 'Give us our orders, oh lord; what dost thou owe, and what hast thou?'

He said: 'Fetch sheikh Muhammad, my brother!' They did so.

And he said to him: 'Oh, my brother! Hear me! Take not Hisen when I die!'

She said: 'Why, il-Hajj! Why dost thou speak so to Muhammad? All the garments in the chest belong to me.'

He said to her: 'Well. Go and see to them!' She went along and found a heap of ashes.

She then said to him: 'Hast thou made fire in my garments!' He said: 'Take them out!'

And he expired.

And they heated some water and washed him. They wrapped him in the death clothes, and sprinkled henna under him and camphor upon him. And they gave him a mattress in the grave. And they gave him a cushion. And they wrapped him in his mantle and laid him down to sleep in his grave.»

THE DEATH OF THE PROPHET MOSES

The Prophet Moses, Nebi Musa, is called the Speaker with God.

ALYA: »Moses, the prophet, came to Jerusalem. The people were at a burial.

He said: 'I will not remain in a land with graves.' He withdrew into the wilderness.

Our Lord sent four angels to dig a grave.

Moses said to them: 'Peace be unto you!'

They said: 'And unto thee be peace!'

He said: 'For whom dig ye this grave?'

They said: 'For one who has thy length, is like thee, and has thy shape.'

Then he entered the grave and stretched himself out full length.

He said: 'This grave is my measure.'

They said: 'O Prophet of God, this is for thee!'

He said: 'Oh my Lord! I have given Thee glory and honour, and Thou sendest me into this wilderness alone!'

SITT LOUISA: »Moses was complaining.»

ALYA: »God said to him: 'Be reasonable, oh Moses! Every year people shall visit thee here. They shall come over land and sea.'»

SITT LOUISA: »Every year there will be a feast for thee — the Nebi Musa Feast.»

ALYA added: »He said to Him: 'Oh, Almighty God, my Lord! Art Thou putting this fine length into the earth? Art Thou putting these hands which have held the pen and the book into the earth? And the tongue which has spoken to Thee, my Lord, art Thou putting it into the earth? And the mouth that has spoken to God, its Lord, wilt Thou hide it in the earth? The ears which have heard the call to prayer, wilt Thou bury them in this dust? And the eyes which have seen their Lord, and the land and the sea, wilt Thou conceal them in the earth? And the feet which have stood on the Minaret of the Mount of Olives⁷, wilt Thou sink them into the earth?'

— 'Be reasonable, Oh Moses! Death is near; the time of death, appointed by God, is near. It is the end.'⁸

And Azrael, the angel of death descended from heaven and removed his soul.»

ALYA: »The Prophet Muhammad said:

'He who is not able to come to me shall make a pilgrimage to [the grave of] Moses, the son of my mother's sister!'

It is probable that Alya's surprising remark on the close relationship between the two prophets, Moses and Muhammad, is based on folklore.

THE DEATH OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

ALYA quoted a song at the hand-mill:

The Prophet was ill for ninety nights

He had not taken food or fresh water.

Fatme went to her father.

She said: Oh my father, how art thou?

He said to her: Oh Fatme, I am nearing the end.

Then ALYA told me the following story, a dialogue between Muhammad and his daughter.

— Muhammad, the Prophet, was dying, and his daughter Fatme was with him.

F.: Oh, my father, a guardian is standing at the door.

M.: Oh, Fatme, how tall is he?

F.: Oh, my father, his head reaches heaven.⁹

M.: Oh, Fatme, what colour is his horse?

F.: Blue, like heaven.

M.: Oh, Fatme, what colour is his face?

F.: The colour of the fourteen-day-old moon.

M.: Oh, Fatme, what colour are his eyes?

F.: Oh, my father, flashing like the lightning among clouds.

M.: Oh, Fatme, stand up and open for him!

F.: Oh, father, I am afraid of him.

M.: Oh, Fatme, this is Azrael.

F.: Oh, my father, what is his errand, his wish, the purpose of his coming?

M.: Oh, Fatme, he has come to fetch my soul.

Fatme screamed and exclaimed:

Oh, father, there will be a want of men (to protect me).

DOCMAC: After thy death, there are so few men left with me.

M.: Oh, Fatme, may the lives of thy sons — Hasan and Ehsen (Husein) — be spared after me! May Ali, this fine man (her cousin-husband) be protected, and remain with you!

— Oh, Fatme, with what wilt thou wash me?

F.: Oh, my father, with 'living' water.

M.: Oh, Fatme, my people are poor. Wash me with common water from the river, so that my people can follow me and do the same.

ALYA said that living water means water from the holy well of Zamzam at Mecca. SITT LOUISA remarked that Alya had earlier given the explanation: rose water.

M.: Oh, Fatme, of what wilt thou make my grave-clothes?

F.: Oh, my father, of green silk.

M.: Oh, Fatme, my people are poor. Take white calico and green cotton, so that my people can follow me.

— Oh, Fatme where wilt thou bury me?

F.: Up above in the sky, on the throne of heaven!¹⁰

M.: No, Fatme! Beneath the earth, so that my people can follow me and do the same.

F.: Oh, father! I shall waste away with misery for thy sake. Misery will afflict me, my body be emaciated.

M.: Oh, Fatme, may God protect thee and make thee swell!

SITT LOUISA remarked: »The enemies must not see her sorrow and rejoice.»

M.: Do not show your sorrow! The heart alone must mourn. — Go. Break off an olive branch. Inside it, thou wilt find the black of mourning. Its core is black with mourning.

Here ALYA interrupted herself and told me about the mourning of the trees, the trees mourning the Prophet.

The trees which shed their leaves are like a mourning woman who rends her clothes.

The abode of sorrow is the heart.

The lemon, olive tree and St. John's Bread do not shed their leaves.

Then ALYA continued her story:

M.: Mourning should last for forty days. Dress thyself in black, but cover it with silk, scarlet silk. The black to pad thyself and the red for the enemies.

F.: What am I to do these forty days?

M.: Go not with the women to market in the town. Go not with the washing women — with the women to wash or bath. Go not with the women singers. At home only shouldst thou mourn. Thy mourning is: from the threshold into the house.»

Thou shouldst mourn in thy home not outside the threshold.

COMMENTS MADE BY JUDY F. DOCMAC IN 1959

Page 18 line 15

The general belief is that when someone sneezes evil spirits are driven out of him. People who hear it wish him well, by saying: May you live! May you keep well and eat a stuffed chicken. — The answer to this is: May God make you live, lit. grow, and protect you against your enemies. — After sneezing the person himself says: O Lord, grant me Thy relief!

Page 49 line 13

ihuāt il-salame ilha 'atāme. Lit. The blow of safety has its sign. — But we do not see that sign of health on your face; so there is no safety to be expected.

Page 50 line 19

Turn me to the East! is said by Christians. The East is looked upon as the place of splendour and glory of God. When a church is built, the altar should be in the Eastern direction, and the church should be built East to West. In Bethlehem all cemeteries of the Christians of all denominations are situated in the Eastern part of the town. In the grave the body is always placed facing East.

Page 51 line 8

»Relieve» thy body from the hell fire; the same word is used for setting a slave free from bondage.

Page 55 line 22

Desert not rock. — Thou going to the desert. This word is here the symbol of a grave, a waterless land.

Page 113 line 24

Lit. This town is out of bonds, because Salem is not there.

Page 114 line 15

The Hazabniye, a well known Christian family still living in Bethlehem, were famous for settling blood and murder cases.

Page 145 line 29

Health to you! a consoling expression used at the death of a person.

Page 151 line 18

These tears are the tears of pity (for the dead). Mrs Docmac: It is a duty.

Page 182 line 6

As a sign of mourning, Christians refrain from going to church, because when they do so, they have to put on their best clothes and appear before other people. A mother in Bethlehem, from the Lutheran Congregation, lost her son (by murder). She did not go to Church for two years, while in normal times, she regularly went to Church.

Some ladies, who are used to wearing heavy jewels on their heads, would catch cold and fall ill if these jewels were removed. That is why they wear them but cover them up with a cloth, black or green, or even white, as a symbol of the shroud. When this piece of cloth is worn out, they do not remove it, and put a new one on, for fear that some other misfortune may lie ahead. Earrings are also covered with a cloth.

Page 210 line 16

Mourning song from Ein Karim, given to me by Mr. Docmac.

PARALLELS AND REMARKS

In this study, like in my previous books, I have added parallels found in the literature.

As far as I know, no specialized investigations of Muslim death and burial customs in Arab communities have been made and exhaustively reported. Articles on the subject and books dealing with Arab customs in general have been published. The latter mostly contain a chapter or a few remarks on death and burial. The passages which I have quoted or referred to are often mere details but valuable, even as such, and several of them may open channels to wider spheres of Semitic and Muslim culture and traditions.

The references to the Bible reveal that, in many respects, life in Palestine illustrates the days of the Old Testament. In »Palästinischer Diwan» (p. V.) Gustaf Dalman says »dass es keinen die biblische Forschung wirksamer unterstützenden Anschauungsunterricht gibt als eben die palästinische Volkssitte». These words written in 1901 still held good in 1925—31, as is seen from the present study.

INTRODUCTION

Pages 9 – 16

Page 11

¹ In books of reference, such as *Enzyklopaedie des Islām* and *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Ed. Vol. I–II; Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition* and Wensinck-Kramers, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*: dh, gh, kh, sh and th (underlined), are used. For quotations of greater length, sayings, proverbs, verses and other texts, another system should be used — all Arabic letters should be represented, each by its own phonetic symbol. Thus d not dh, r not gh, h not kh, š not sh, t not th. In my Notes the Arabic words are transliterated similarly as in the book of the author quoted.

Cragg, *The Call of the Minaret*, p. X: »I have followed what seem to me proper patterns in the transliteration of Arabic words. — — — Where the adjective 'Muhammadan' occurs, it refers strictly to what concerns the person of the Prophet, as in 'Muhammadan revelation'. The word has no proper meaning as a synonym for 'Muslim'. The abstract from it ought not to exist. 'Islam' is the proper and sufficient substantive for the faith it describes — — —.»

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² Quotation from IZZAT TANNOUS (M.D.), 'A Visit with the Palestine Arab Refugees', in *Newsletter* No. 15, November 1958, p. 8.

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³ Cragg, *op. cit.* (1956), p. 3: Chapter I. ISLAM SINCE 1945. — NINETEEN FORTY-FIVE may seem altogether too near a date from which to assess the contemporary situation in the Muslim world. Perspective is usually a prerequisite of sound judgment and a decade is nothing in the evolving story of so vast and massive a reality as Islam. But when the date is not too strictly enforced, there is merit in its closeness, if only because it serves to measure the speed and inclusiveness of contemporary change . . .»

And p. 8: »Muslims of the same contemporary context have come into its process of change at a greatly accelerated pace. The opportunity to digest newness which the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century European enjoyed has been far less gradual for the twentieth-century Asian. The newness, more concentrated in its nature, is also more urgent in its impact. The accumulated results of processes of industrialization and technology, stemming from modern science, have pressed upon older societies so as, in some cases, to link Abraham with Henry Ford.»

MOURSI SAAD EL-DIN says in his Introduction (1954) to LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, p. IX: »The historical significance of Lane's book derives from its accuracy and from the fact that Lane was the last and the greatest writer to describe at first hand a society that is now gone . . .»

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⁴ See also IZZAT TANNOUS on Education in *Newsletter* No. 15, November 1958, p. 4: »The older generation of the refugees are very keen on educating their children. 'Take away our ration, but let our children go to school', they say.

The UNRWA, UNESCO and the Arab Governments cooperated in an elaborate scheme of education for the refugees. All refugee children receive primary education. The total number of refugee children registered in elementary schools in 1957 was 101,504, 13,201 in secondary schools, 369 in universities and 251 in vocational schools.

The vocational schools are the most interesting, at the same time more cheering . . .

I am extremely glad to say that general satisfaction has been expressed by the refugees for the education of their children.»

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⁵ *Svenska Jerusalemsföreningens Tidskrift* 59 (1960), p. 112:

According to a new School system, issued in summer 1960, children must attend Kindergarden, an Elementary School for six years, — a Preparatory School for three years, and finally a Secondary School for three years. Those who wish to do so may continue their studies at a university.

FACTORS AFFECTING HEALTH — MORTALITY

Pages 18 — 41

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¹ LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, I. p. 282: »When a man happens to sneeze, he says 'Praise be to God!' Each person present (servants generally excepted) then says to him 'God have mercy on you!' to which the former generally replies 'God guide us and guide you!' or he returns the compliment in words of a similar purport.» WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 219: Eulogies after sneezing; to cover the mouth when sneezing.

KOWALSKI, 'Nase und Niesen im arabischen Volksglauben und Sprachgebrauch', p. 193—218. On p. 215 he speaks of the »Rolle des Niesens bei Krankheiten, in Ohnmachtsfällen oder im Schlaf», and says: »Das Niesen bildet da ein Anzeichen der Besserung, Wiederbelebung oder des Erwachens.» Cf. *2 Kings IV.34f.*: Dead child brought back to life by the prophet Elisha. The child sneezed seven times and then opened its eyes. The method used by the prophet is somewhat similar to the modern mouth to mouth method.

GERHARD LINDBLOM, *Nose Ornaments in Africa*, p. 49: ». . . I think opinions are unanimous as to the East African plug in the nose being of Indo-Arabian

origin, and the same applies on the whole to plugs and rings worn in the Arab-influenced parts of northern and northeastern Africa and the Sudan.» — «Perhaps it may here also be mentioned that nose ornaments do not appear to be worn by the Jews of Africa. In the Old Testament they are, as we know, frequently referred to (called *nezem*): Genesis XXIV: 22, 30, 47; Exodus XXXV: 22, Isaiah III: 21; Ezekiel XVI:12; Book of Proverbs XI:22». *Ibid.* p. 48: «From Africa I have in the literature not been able to find any evidence of supposed magic power in nose ornaments . . . There cannot, however, well be any doubt that also in many parts of Africa nose ornaments possess some magic significance, although records of it are absent.»

KOWALSKI, *op. cit.* p. 204: Nose washed three times at ablution; a man throws water up his nostrils, snugging it up at the same time, and then blows it out. «Nach dem Schlaf angewandt, diene dies Verfahren dazu, den Teufel, der in dem Nasenknorpel des Menschen übernachtet, zu vertreiben.» *Ibid.* p. 200 f.: «Alle vorerwähnten Vorstellungen gehen auf die pneumatische Lebensauffassung zurück. Das belebende Princip wird als Lebensodem aufgefasst. Entsprechend der biblischen Vorstellung von dem Einblasen des Lebensodems in die Nasenlöcher Adams (Gen. 2, 7), brachten wohl auch die Araber das Leben mit der Nase in nächste Beziehung.» *Ibid.* p. 217 f.: Muslim Legend of creation of Adam. And p. 200: «Mit dieser Lebensauffassung kreuzt sich mannigfaltig eine andere, die humorale, die im Flüssigen, vor allem im Blut, den Träger des Lebens (der sterblichen Seele, *nafs*) erblickt.» See also MIRIAM SELIGSON, *The Meaning of nephesh mēth in the Old Testament* (with references to the literature).

Yawning should be avoided. LANE, *op.cit.* I. p. 282: «it is believed that the devil is in the habit of leaping into a gaping mouth.» Similarly KOWALSKI, *op.cit.* p. 213. WENSINCK, *op.cit.* p. 263: Demoniacal nature of yawning; placing the hand before the mouth when yawning.

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² For neighbour(s), see JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 327: «Les droits du voisin». DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 57, 126 ff.: The protection of and duty towards tent neighbour. And p. 339: «If your neighbour hates you, then change the door of your house.» Neighbour(s), mentioned in the Bible, e.g. *Proverbs XXVII. 10*: «for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.»

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³ See also *St. Matthew XXV. 36* and *43*: «I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me»; and: «sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not» — a religious and social duty fulfilled or neglected.

⁴ *St. Luke XV. 24, 32.*

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⁵ MATTHEWS, *Mishkāt*, I. p. 354 f. marg. n.: «Advantage of dying in a foreign country.» WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 147: «Death in a foreign country is martyrdom.»

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 11: Adam, created out of the different parts of the earth. Cf. GRÜNBAUM, *Neue Beiträge zur Semitischen Sagenkunde*, p. 55. See also GRANQVIST, *Birth and Childhood*, I. p. 36.

⁷ SITT LOUISA asked a merchant from Hebron: »Is it going to rain to day?» — »God alone knows», he answered, and gave the following explanation: »God sent four books from heaven. The Quran for the Muslims — and the Prophet Muhammad. The Torah to the Jews — and the prophet Moses. The Gospel, *injil*, to the Christians — and Our Lord Jesus. The Psalms He sent to everybody, to all people, through David. And in these Books He has revealed much to us.

But five things He has not revealed. And these things are: What to-morrow will bring with it. Whether it will rain or not, that we do not know. Whether a pregnant woman will give birth to a boy or a girl, we do not know. (No, said Fatme Jabr, and added: She is a closed box.) We do not know when our death will occur, nor what will be the cause of our death, whether it will be caused by water or fire, or if it will be a natural death. Nor do we know where our dust will be collected.»

Cf. MATTHEWS, *Mishkāt*, I. p. 337: »There are five mysterious treasures, known to none but GOD . . . 'verily the knowledge of the *Sa'āt* (i.e. the hour of the resurrection) is with GOD, he sends down rain, and knows what is in wombs: and no one can tell what he will do to-morrow; nor in what land he will die; verily God is wise and knowing.» In *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, I. p. 115, DALMAN refers to *Hosea VI. 2 f.* and says: »der jüdische Midrasch findet dann gerade hier den Regen der Totenaufstehung gleichgestellt; beide sind ein göttliches Wunderwerk, und zu den drei Schlüsseln, die in Gottes Hand sind, gehören neben der Fruchtbarkeit des Weibes der Regen und die Auferstehung, die beide dauerndes Leben bewirken. In der Tat, als Totenerwecker wird in Palästina alljährlich der Regen erlebt.»

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⁸ Cf. *St. John IX. 2.*

⁹ Cf. WESTERMARCK, *Customs Connected with Homicide in Morocco*, p. 35: »there is a curative power in the cairn of a murdered person.»

¹⁰ LANE, *The Thousand and One Nights*, I. p. 357: »Would that I had been her sacrifice (*fadu*)!» — i.e. had died instead of her.

WENSINCK, *op.cit.* p. 11: God shows him (Adam) Daud and tells the latter that his life-time shall be 40 years; Adam gives him 60 years of his own. *Isaiah XXXVIII. 5*: The Lord said to Isaiah: »Go, and say to Hezekiah . . . : behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.» LANE, *op.cit.* I. p. 380: »greeted him (the king) with a prayer for a long life, kissing the ground before him.» And *1 Kings I. 31*: Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth and said: Let my Lord king David live for ever! *Daniel II. 4* and *V. 10*: O king, live for ever!

¹¹ DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 162: Sexual intercourse loved, men and women equally love the act, which is said to keep man young, »just like riding a mare».

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¹² MATTHEWS, *Mishkāt*, I. p. 351: »Great merit of visiting the sick.» *Ibid.* I. p. 339: »Feed the hungry, and visit the sick, and free the captive, if he be unjustly confined. — — — The duties of one *Muslemān* to another are five; answering a *Salām*; visiting the sick; walking behind a bier; accepting invitations; and if a person sneezes and says, 'praised be GOD!' you say 'GOD have mercy on thee.'»

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¹³ Cf. CANAAN, 'The Fear Cup', in JPOS III. p. 122—131.

¹⁴ Cf. *Idem*, 'Dämonenglaube im Lande der Bibel'. DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 505: Sickness generally put down to one of two things: the evil eye or witchcraft, and the hand of God.

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¹⁵ DALMAN says (*Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, I. p. 370): »Als eine sonderbare Grösse wollen beachtet sein die unserer Calla verwandten Aronarten (Arum Dioscoridis und palaestinum, ar. *luf*, *zibb el-'abd* 'Negerglied', *ḡān el-fīl* 'Elefantenoehr') . . . Ihre Essbarkeit, welche schon die Juden kannten, wird für den Palästinenser freilich wichtiger sein als ihr Aussehen. Wirkung gegen Schlangenbiss hat man ehedem von ihnen erwartet.»

¹⁶ DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 511 f.: Fractures, simple, how treated.

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¹⁷ WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 93: Derwish, »'Türabsucher' im Sinn von 'Bettler'.»

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¹⁸ *2 Kings XX. 7*: Hezekiah, sick unto death, was healed. »Isaiah said: Take a lump of figs. And they took it and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.» *Revelation XXII. 1—2*: »a pure river of water of life; and the tree of life with twelve manner of fruits, and leaves for the healing of the nations.

¹⁹ This custom is well known from the literature in connection with sacred trees. Cf. JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 185. FRAZER, *Folk-Lore in the Old Testament*, p. 331.

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²⁰ See e.g. BAUER, *Volksleben im Lande der Bibel*, p. 12: »Die Derwische zerfallen in vier Rangstufen oder Orden». — »Jede hat besondere Kräfte und Obliegenheiten.» Also SPOER-HADDAD, 'Volkskundliches aus el-Qubēbe bei Jerusalem', p. 241.

²¹ *St. John IX. 6*: Spittle used for healing blind eyes. MATTHEWS, *Mishkāṭ* I. p. 341: »When any person complained of being out of order, or having a wound, or sore, the Prophet would say, when passing his finger over the part affected, 'In the name of GOD, the earth of our ground mixed with the spittle of our mouth; we have done this in order to restore the sick to health, by the permission of our LORD.'»

²² In *St. Luke IV. 36*, it is said of Jesus that »with a u t h o r i t y and p o w e r, he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.» *St. Matthew X. 1*: »He gave them (his disciples) p o w e r against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to h e a l all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.» *St. Luke X. 19*: »I give unto you p o w e r to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.»

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²³ See also b a t h: dipping seven times in Jordan healed leprosy, *2 Kings V. 14*. The water in the pool of Bethesda healed the sick who first stepped in it at a certain season, *St. John V. 3 f.*

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²⁴ MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea* III. p. 155: Hands of guests are washed. Cf. *Matthew XV. 2*: Jesus was asked: »Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.» *St. Luke XI. 37 f.*: The Pharisee who invited Jesus to dine with him marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner. Washing of hands and feet, *Exodus XXX. 19–21*; of feet, *Genesis XVIII. 4, XIX. 2*; *St. John XIII. 4 ff.*; also *St. Luke VII. 37 f., 44.*

²⁵ WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 239: In how far urine of babes (boys and girls differently) defiles clothes. Again, DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 56: »Dirty he and his wife always are, but theirs is the dirt of the field, a thing totally different from the dirt of the town. . . and the wife bathes her hair once a week in she-camel's urine, and thus rids her head of vermin for a few days.» Similarly, MUSIL, *op.cit.* III. p. 162.

²⁶ LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, I. p. 400: »It is a general custom among the Egyptians, after washing clothes, to pour clean water upon them, and to say, in doing so, 'I testify that there is no deity but God; and I testify that Mohammad is God's Apostle.'» — Cf. *Exodus XIX. 10*: »Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes.»

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²⁷ For the Prophet Muhammad's passion for toothbrushes and toothpicks, see WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 517, and WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 230.

²⁸ For a description of Muslim prayer with drawings to illustrate the various postures of the body, see LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, I. p. 107 ff.

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²⁹ QURAN VI. 146 ff.: Prohibited Foods.

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³⁰ JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 294 f.: »Le petit ouvrier, le portefaix, le balayeur des rues, en un mot le petit peuple aime à se réunir dans la salle d'un estaminet pour prendre sa minuscule tasse de café noir et fumer un narguileh; car à son avis, 'la fumée du toumbac est excellente contre certaines maladies, spécialement contre les rhumatismes et fortifie l'estomac.'» (Fumigating of hashish). MUSIL *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 73: »Symbolische Bedeutung des Kaffees.»

LANE, *op.cit.* I. p. 182: The cup of coffee and the pipe in the morning at an early hour. And II. p. 36: »It may further be remarked, in the way of apology for the pipe, as employed by the Turks and Arabs, that the mild kinds of tobacco generally used by them have a very gentle effect: they calm the nervous system; and, instead of stupefying, sharpen the intellect.»

DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 195 ff.: The ritual of coffee-making, and p. 89 f.: Illustrations of utensils for coffee-making.

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³¹ LANE, *op.cit.* I. p. 398: »One of their objections against wine is, that it is unclean». *Ibid.* I. p. 133 f.: »Wine and all inebriating liquors are forbidden, as being the cause of 'more evil than profit'. . . . Some sectarians have pronounced tobacco, and even coffee, to be unlawful.» For intoxicants, see QURAN II. 219, IV. 43 and V. 90 f.

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³² DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 513: Curative effect of mother's milk for ordinary sore eyes caused by flies and dirt; thus for child's sore eyes. In case of a man it never must be the milk of his own wife but the milk of another woman. P. 160: »A pink dye, used a good deal in towns for sore eyes among children and grown-ups.»

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³³ For sicknesses and diseases, see BAUER, *Volksleben im Lande der Bibel*, p. 233 ff., and JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 104 ff.

DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 507 ff.: diseases of grown-up men and women; p. 511: smells and disease; p. 512: smells and wounds.

³⁴ For cure of mad dog bite, see DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 540, and MUSIL, *op.cit.* p. 414 f., where also cure of snake-bite, of bite of spider and of scorpion are mentioned.

³⁵ For expressions used to indicate age, see GRANQVIST, *Marriage Conditions*, I. p. 36 f. and *Child Problems*, p. 187.

DEATH

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¹ Cf. *Revelation II. 7*: »to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.» *XXII. 14*: »have right to the tree of life».

² Cf. JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 333: Last will expressed before witnesses. MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea III*. p. 421: Formulae used. WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 797: *wašīya*, »Auftrag; als Terminus technicus: letztwillige Verfügung, Testament, Legat; *wašī*, der Beauftragte, besonders der Vollstrecker des letzten Willens.»

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³ WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 251: »Heirs must not be bereft of their portion nor be wronged through liberality towards others».

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⁴ WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 200: »Sehr bekannt ist auch die Vernachlässigung des Körpers im heiligen Zustande bei den semitischen Völkern: Die altarabischen Klageweiber, welche sich im heiligen Trauerzustande befanden, werden als schmutzig und zerzaust beschrieben.» — »Die Juden dürfen sich während der Trauerzeit weder baden noch die Nägel schneiden.» *Supra*, p. 108.

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⁵ For formulae when asking »forgiveness» at death bed, see also MUSIL, *op. cit.* III. p. 423.

⁶ Fruits of Paradise, QURAN II. 25, LXIX. 23.

⁷ MATTHEWS, *Mishkāt*, I. p. 368 f. on greetings sent by the dying to the dead: »Give my *Salām* to him.» The dying: »May GOD pardon thee: what is this thou sayest? I shall be more engaged than to know, or carry the *Salām* of anybody: that is, 'I shall have so much business about my own concerns, and difficulties, that I shall not be myself; how then, can I carry a *Salām* to any one?«

Then he who asked the dying to convey the greetings to his deceased friend, says: »did not you hear the Prophet of GOD say, 'verily the souls of *Muslemāns* are put into the crops of green birds which feed upon the trees of paradise?«

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⁸ *Ibid.* I. p. 363: »... ABŪ HURAIRAH mentioned to the Prophet about the fragrance of a *Muslemān's* soul, and mentioned musk, viz. that a smell of musk issues from it. And the Prophet said, 'the people of the heavenly regions say it is a pure soul which is come from the earth, 'and they say to the soul, 'the peace of God be on thee, and on the body which you inhabited and kept alive.' Then it is carried to its creator; when GOD says, 'carry it to the place which has been created for it until the day of resurrection.' And verily, when the soul of an infidel comes out; (and ABŪ HURAIRAH mentioned to the Prophet of that soul; and called it cursed) the people of the upper regions say, 'a vile soul has come from the earth,' and it is said, 'carry it away till the resurrection.' ABŪ HURAIRAH said, 'then the Prophet put his garment to his nose.«

⁹ In MATTHEWS, *Mishkāt* there are several traditions on this subject, discussions between the Prophet and his companions on the death of a faithful Muslim and that of an infidel.

I quote some marginal notes. I. p. 365: »The angel of death gently receives the souls of the good». I. p. 362: A person who dies has angels present with him. »The angels comfort the soul of a good man at the hour of death. — The reception of that soul in heaven.» — A first interrogation about the soul by the door-keepers of heaven. — I. p. 367: »The angel of death tears the soul of a bad man from his body with violence.» I. p. 363: »The angels denounce vengeance against the souls of the wicked at the hour of death. — The gates of heaven shut against such a soul.»

Ibid. I. p. 364 ff.: ABŪ HURAIRAH. »When a *Mu'min* is nearly dead, angels of mercy come, clothed in white silk garments, and say to the soul of the dying man, 'come out satisfied with GOD, and with whom he is satisfied; come out to rest which is with GOD, and to the sustenance of GOD's mercy and compassion; and to the LORD not being angry.' Then the soul comes out, like the smell of the best musk; so that verily it is handed from one angel to another, till they bring it to the doors of the celestial regions. Then the angels say, 'what a wonderful pleasant smell this is, which is come to you from the earth.' Then they bring it to the souls of the faithful; and they are very happy at its coming; more than ye are at the coming of one of your family from a long journey. Then the souls of the faithful ask it, 'what has such a one done, and such a one?' viz. how are they?

and they mention the names of their friends left in the world. And some of them say, 'let it alone, do not ask it, because it was grieved in the world, and comes from thence aggrieved; ask it when it is at rest.' Then the soul says, after getting ease, 'verily such a one, about whom you asked, is dead; is he not come to you?' When it informs them that he is dead, and they do not see him amongst themselves, they say to one another, 'surely he was carried to his mother, which is hell fire.' And verily, when an infidel is near death, angels of punishment come to him, clothed in sack cloth, and say to his soul, 'come out, thou discontented, and with whom GOD is displeased: come to GOD's punishments.' Then it comes out with a disagreeable smell, worse than the worst stench of a dead body, until they bring it upon the earth, and they say, 'what an extraordinary bad smell this is; till they bring it to the souls of the infidels.

BARĀ'-IBN-'ĀZIB said, 'I came out with the Prophet at the bier of a man of the assistants; and we arrived just at the grave, when they had not interred it: and the Prophet sat down, and we around him; with our heads down and silent; you might say that birds were sitting upon our heads, so that, if we shook them, or turned them to the right or left, it would make them fly away. And there was a stick in the Prophet's hands, with which he dug, and drew a line on the ground; as is the custom of the afflicted. Then he raised his head and said, twice or thrice, to his companions, seek protection in GOD from the punishments of the grave.' After that he said, 'verily when a *Muslemān* servant separeth from the world, and bringeth his soul to futurity, angels descend to him, from the celestial regions, whose faces are white; you might say their faces are the sun; and they have a shroud of the shrouds of paradise, and perfumes therefrom. So they sit from the deceased, as far as the eyes can see. After which, the angel of death, who is 'IZRA'ĪL, comes to the deceased, and sits at his head, and says, 'O pure soul, come out to GOD's pardon, and pleasure.' The Prophet of GOD said, then the soul comes out, issuing like water from a bag; and the angel of death takes it; and when he takes it, the angels do not allow it to remain in his hands the twinkling of an eye. That is, when the angel of death has taken the soul of a servant, he resigns it to his assistants, in whose hands is a shroud; and they put it into the shroud and the perfumes: when a fragrance issues from the soul, like the smell of the best musk that is to be found upon the face of the earth. The Prophet said, then the angels carry it upwards, and they do not pass by any concourse of angels who do not say, 'what is this pure soul, and who is the master of it.' And they say, 'such a one, the son of such a one,' calling him by the best names by which he was known in the world: till they reach the lowest region of heaven with him. And the angels ask the door to be opened for him, which is done. Then angels follow it through every region; the angels of one region to those of the next, and so on, till it reaches the seventh region: when GOD says, 'write the name of my servant in *Illiyūn*, and return him towards the earth; that is to his body which is buried in the earth; because I have created man from earth, and return him to it, and I will bring him out from it again, as I brought him out at first.'

The soul then returns into the body and is examined in the grave. In a marginal note p. 366, it is said: »A voice from heaven pronounces his absolution.»

Illiyūn, i.e. »The highest heaven or starry firmament; also the register in which

the actions of the good are written.» Cf. QURAN LXXXIII. 18: »Nay, surely the record of the righteous is in the highest places.»

¹⁰ CRAGG, *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 98: »Tradition, as a matter of record, is called *Hadīth*; as a matter of obligation it is called *Sunnah*.»

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¹¹ Similarly SPOER-HADDAD, 'Volkskundliches aus el-Qubēbe bei Jerusalem', p. 243. LANE says (*Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 286) that even before the spirit has departed, or the moment after, the women of the family »raise the cries of lamentation called 'welweleh' or 'wilwál'; uttering the most piercing shrieks, and calling upon the name of the deceased.» The most common cries that are heard on the death of the master of the family, from the lips of his wife, or wives, and children are: O my master! O my camel! O camel of the house! O my lion! O my dear one! O my only one! O my glory! O my resource! O my father! O my misfortune!

Cf. BARROIS, *Manuel d'archéologie biblique*, II. p. 319: »Les lamentations sont improvisées le plus souvent par des professionnels, sur des modèles stéréotypés.» The author quotes the following passages from the Old Testament: »and they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother!» *1 Kings XIII. 30*; and »They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!» *Jeremiah XXII. 18–19*.

¹² BURTON, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to el-Medinah and Meccah*, II. 288 f.: — »it is esteemed disgraceful for a man to weep aloud. The Prophet . . . forbade aught beyond a decent demonstration of grief. And his strong good sense enabled him to see the folly of professional mourners.» LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 293: »The wailing of women at funerals was forbidden by the Prophet; and so, also, was the celebration of the virtues of the deceased. Moḥammad declared that the virtues thus ascribed to a dead person would be subjects of reproach to him, if he did not possess them, in a future state.» DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 210: It is against the strict Wahhabi tenets to mourn the dead.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

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¹ In the Bible: a punishment and an often repeated threat is that dead bodies be given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven and to the beasts of the fields. For example, *Deuteronomy XXVIII. 26*; *1 Samuel XVII. 44*; *Jeremiah XV. 3*; *Revelation XIX. 17 f.*

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² The 'Vätergrab' and its value in the Old Testament. But a still greater misfortune and punishment than not to be buried in the graves of their fathers was not to be buried at all. Cf. BARROIS, *Manuel d'archéologie biblique*, II. p. 317 ff.: Rites funéraires, and 322: Violations de sépultures.

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³ IDEM, *Précis d'archéologie biblique*, p. 65: «de nos jours les Ta'amirés portent leurs morts auprès du tombeau de Rachel et les lavent sur une grande pierre avant de les confier à la glèbe sous la garde de l'aïeule.»

⁴ A tradition with evidently still older roots, *Jeremiah XXXI. 15*.

⁵ WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 704: Explanation of *Sunna*.

⁶ LANE, *The Thousand and One Nights*, I. p. 367: Unlawful to behold corpse uncovered. WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 214: «Shrouds must be paid for from the sum of inheritance.»

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⁷ LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. 285: «It is common, also, for a Muslim, on a military expedition, or during a long journey, especially in the desert, to carry his grave-linen with him. Not unfrequently does it happen that a traveller, in such circumstances, has even to make his own grav.»

⁸ For grave-clothes (*kafan*), see also JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 334; IDEM, *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab*, p. 98; DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 213; LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 288. WESTERMARCK, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, II. p. 527: «grave-clothes will keep the body clean, and, besides, are required by decency; 'they should be seven'».

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⁹ HADDAD, 'Political Parties in Syria and Palestine (Qaisi and Yemeni)', in *JPOS*, I. p. 209—214.

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¹⁰ In the Bible there are some corresponding expressions. For example. *Job XXIX. 14*: «I put on righteousness, and it clothed me . . .» *Isaiah XI. 5*: «And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.» See also GRANQVIST, *Child Problems among the Arabs*, p. 163.

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¹¹ LANE, *op.cit.* II. p. 181: «leef», «or fibres of the palm-tree, used in washing, as we employ a sponge».

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¹² DICKSON, *op.cit.* p. 214: «Should a very poor man or woman die without relatives then it is incumbent on the next-door neighbour (*jár*) to arrange the washing and burial.»

¹³ CRAGG, *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 109: on *niyyah* or intention. For its meaning and importance, see also WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *op.cit.* p. 589.

¹⁴ LANE, *op.cit.* II. p. 288: The ordinary ablution preparatory to prayer is performed upon the corpse, with the exception of the washing of the mouth and nose; the whole body is well washed.

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¹⁵ SITT LOUISA said that she was not sure of what the Arabic word *ṣirāṭ* (path, way) meant here. She thought that it might have some connection with a local tradition in Jerusalem. On the Day of Judgment a wire is stretched from the side of the Mount of Olives to the Mosque in the Temple Area. The deceased have to walk along this wire, when they rise from the dead. He who has sinned will fall down, and he who is innocent will be successful.

LANE does not translate the word but says (*op.cit.* I. p. 101): «O God, make firm my feet upon the *Ṣirāṭ*, on the day when feet shall slip upon it»!. Cf. WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 40: «Bridge (*ṣirāṭ*, *ḩaṩara*, *djisir*) over Hell will be erected on the last day and the faithful will pass over it very quickly; instruments of torture on it.» In WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 329, there is the remark that the word *ṣirāṭ* appears only once in the QURAN (XXXVII. 23) as *ṣirāṭ al-djaḩīm*, «eine blosse Anspielung auf den 'Weg zur Hölle'. Daraus wurde in der Tradition die 'Brücke', mit genauerer Beschreibung 'die Brücke über den Rücken der Hölle'.» — QURAN XXXVII. 22 f.: «Those who did wrong . . . lead them to the way to Hell»; I. 5: «the right path».

¹⁶ CRAGG, *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 110: «At death there are prayers over the dead body in the mosque or dwelling or at the graveside, after the corpse has first been thoroughly washed, beginning with those parts which are customarily cleansed in the *wudu'* before prayer. The *imām* and those present recite the *ṭakbīr* and the *dhikr* of the Prophet with variant forms of intercession in which there will be phrases like the following:

'Forgive O God our dead and our living . . . Cleanse him with water, with snow and with ice and purge him of sins as Thou cleansest a white cloth of its stain.'

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¹⁷ WESTERMARCK, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, II. p. 527: «By stuffing the apertures of the body defilement or evil influences are prevented from entering into it.»

¹⁸ DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 214: «Nothing is done by way of combing or plaiting the hair, but the person washing the body must go through the ceremony of *talqīn* while doing so, that is, she or he must sing the praises of the dead person, the good works he or she did in this life, how he or she fasted and prayed, and call on God to give the dead peace in everlasting heaven.»

¹⁹ WENSINCK-KRAMERS' definition of *qirā'a*, *op.cit.* p. 325: «Art und Weise der Rezitation, Punktation und Vokalisation des Kur'āntextes.»

²⁰ CRAGG *op.cit.* p. 136: The «technique of the *dhikr*» — «the use of rhythmic recitation and rhythmic movements of the body». GUILLAUME, *Islam*, p. 75: Allah «the living, the ever-existent One». See *supra*, p. 151.

²¹ STEPHAN, 'Palestinian Nursery Rhymes and Songs', p. 67 n. 11: «*bihallilo*» means originally «repeating the sentence *lā ilāha illa-llāh* but is also used for praising and singing.» For the ceremony of *tahlīl*, Praising God, performed after the burial, see JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 339: The Muslim formula of faith, «There is no God save God», repeated a certain number of times, a thousand times or more.

Similarly BAUER, *Volksleben im Lande der Bibel*, p. 246. Cf. LANE, *op.cit.* II. p. 307 f.

²² For *talqān*, see *infra*, p. 248 n. 32.

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²³ The ceremony must be generally known but I have not seen it mentioned in the literature except in *Naplouse*, by JAUSSEN. I quote p. 333 n.:

«Le véritable sens de *suqûḷ aṣ-ṣalât* est le suivant: quand un musulman pauvre meurt sans laisser une aumône destinée aux indigents qui devraient prier pour l'esprit du défunt, un usage populaire entre en vigueur pour ne pas frustrer le mort des prières habituelles. Un des parents du défunt prie un voisin de lui prêter un objet de valeur comme un bijou, une bague, un collier et dont le prix peut s'élever jusqu'à 20 à 30 livres. Le voisin, au courant des usages, présente l'objet demandé, '*an rūḥ al-mayyit*, 'pour l'esprit du mort'.

En possession du bijou, la personne qui l'a demandé, le confie à une autre en disant: '*an rūḥ al-mayyit*, 'pour l'esprit du mort'. Celle-ci le passe à une troisième et la troisième à une quatrième et ainsi de suite; l'objet circule de main en main jusqu'à ce qu'il revienne à son vrai possesseur; toujours '*an rūḥ al-mayyit*.

Cette sorte de don simulé remplace l'aumône ordinaire pour l'esprit du mort et s'appelle *suqûḷ aṣ-ṣalât*, littéralement: 'cessation de la prière', mais dans l'esprit du peuple: 'remplacement de la prière'.

Témoin du *suqûḷ aṣ-ṣalât*, Allah pardonnera au défunt ses péchés, comme si l'aumône aux pauvres et les prières avaient été faites régulièrement.»

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²⁴ In its way this ceremony is a parallel to prayer and requiem-mass for the soul of the deceased, and also to giving of alms, money or property — indulgence among Christians. — WENSINCK, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 191 f.: Recovering prayer if it has been forgotten, or postponed, or neglected; p. 188: obligatory prayer performed . . . he will enter Paradise; p. 189: Prayer and forgiveness of sins, as an atonement, sacrifice, wages, reward. P. 193: Value of voluntary prayer.

²⁵ LANE on the funeral-prayer over the deceased, and on intercession and its reward, in *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 301: «He (the deceased) hath become in need of thy mercy; and Thou hast no need of his punishment. We have come to Thee supplicating that we may intercede for him. . . . O God, withhold not from us our reward for him [for the service we have done him].»

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²⁶ *Tobit I. 17* and *II. 3-9*.

²⁷ Cf. *Numbers XIX. 16*: «And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.» — RIENECKER, *Lexikon der Bibel*, p. 123: «Kam es zur Verunreinigung durch Leichen, so diente die Asche der 'roten Kuh', nachdem man sie mit Quellwasser vermengt hatte, als Spreng- und Reinigungsmittel für Menschen, Geräte und Kleider (4M. 19, 18; vgl. Hebr. 9, 13).»

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²⁸ MATTHEWS, *Mishkāt* I, p. 374: »The dead should be carried quickly to the place of interment.»

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²⁹ This might happen because of earth-gases. Erich Maria Remarque gives in his novels (*Der Funke Leben*, and *A Time to Love and A Time to Die*) macabre descriptions of a second, a »chemical» death of unburied corpses filled with gases.

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³⁰ DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 214: »It is commonly believed that a person who has lived a good life, has not spoken evil of his neighbours, and has been generous with this world's goods, will after death remain soft and pliant as if still alive up to the hour of burial. If the opposite has been the case, the body, arms and feet will become immediately stiff. Hence, when it is found easy to bend the right arm and place the right hand under the right cheek of the dead person, all men know that the deceased has lived a good and virtuous life; if the operation is done with difficulty then that person is known to have been a non-virtuous person, and God will know how to reward him or her hereafter.»

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³¹ 'Munkar' (vulgarly 'Nākīr') and 'Nekeer' (Lane). WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 543: »Nach der Lehre der Karrāmīya-Sekte sind Munkar und Nakīr mit den beiden Schutzengeln, die den Menschen begleiten, identisch.»

³² JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 336: »Au cadavre ainsi disposé dans la fosse, est adressée à haute voix l'admonestation, *talqīn*. Celui qui la prononce, *al-mulaqqīn*, s'exprime en ces termes:

'O un tel, fils d'une telle (et il nomme le nom de sa mère, ou le nom d'Ève, s'il ne connaît pas le nom de la mère), souviens-toi du témoignage: il n'y a de dieu qu'Allah, Muḥammad est le serviteur et l'envoyé d'Allah; tu as reconnu Allah comme Seigneur et l'Islam comme religion, Muḥammad comme prophète et le Qoran comme guide; la Ka'abah comme Qiblah et les Croyants comme frères: le paradis est une vérité; l'enfer est une vérité; la résurrection, une vérité; sans aucun doute, l'heure vient où Allah ressuscitera les morts des tombeaux.'

Le cheikh dit aux assistants: 'Qu Allah vous récompense, *adjrakum Allah*.'»

See also SNOUCK HURGRONJE, *Mekka*, p. 191: »Die Vorbereitung des Gestorbenen auf die im Grabe von zwei Engeln anzustellende Prüfung seines Glaubens, das *Talqīn*, besorgt ein damit beauftragter Mann, sobald die Leute den Friedhof verlassen haben.»

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³³ Similarly LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II, p. 305.

³⁴ MATTHEWS, *Mishkāt*, I, p. 40 f.:

» — — — The Prophet of GOD said 'When a dead body is placed in its grave, two black angels come to it, with blue eyes, the name of one MUNKIR, and the other NAKIR, and they ask about the Prophet of GOD. If the dead person be a *Muslemān* he will bear witness to the unity of GOD and the mission of MUHAM-

MED; when the angels will say, 'we knew thou wouldest say so;' after which the grave will be expanded seven thousand yards in length and seven thousand in breadth. After that a light will be given for the grave, and it will be said, 'sleep'. — — — When the angels will say, 'sleep like the bridegroom, till GOD shall raise thee up from this grave on the day of the resurrection.' But if the corpse be that of a hypocrite; it will be asked, 'what sayest thou about MUHAMMED?' It will answer, 'I know him not.' And the angels will reply, 'we knew thou wouldest say so:' Then the ground will be ordered to close upon it, and it will break its sides, and turn its right side to its left, and its left to its right; and it will suffer perpetual punishment in the grave till GOD raise it therefrom.

— — — The Prophet of GOD said, two angels come to a dead body and cause it to sit up, and say 'who is thy defender?' And it will say 'my defender is GOD.' 'And what is thy religion?' It will say 'my religion is *Islām*.' Then they will ask 'who is this man who was sent to thee?' It will say 'he was the messenger of GOD.' 'And how didst thou know that he was the Prophet of GOD?' It will say 'I read the book of GOD, and put faith in it.' Then a voice will come from heaven saying, 'My servant hath spoken true.' And a bed shall be prepared and clothes provided for it from paradise; and a door shall be opened for it towards paradise, when a fragrant gale will breathe upon it from above, and a place will be opened for it in the grave to see out of. But the soul of an infidel will be replaced in its body in the grave. Two angels will come to it and say 'who is thy cherisher?' It will say 'alas! alas! I know not.' And it will be asked its religion; it will answer 'alas! alas! I know not.' Then the angels will ask about MUHAMMED. It will reply 'alas! I know him not.' A voice will then come from heaven saying 'this servant hath lied; then give it a bed from hell and clothes also, and open for it a door towards hell.' Then a hot wind will come to it, and its grave will be contracted so as to break the bones of each side, after which an angel will come to it, deaf and dumb, with a mace of iron, with which if a mountain were struck it would turn it to dust. Then the angel will strike the body with the mace, the noise of which will be heard by everything between the east and west excepting the genii and man; and it will turn to dust: after which a soul will be returned to it, and it will be tormented to the day of resurrection.)

Prayers for the dead, *ibid.* p. 42: «When the Prophet had finished the interment of a corpse, he stood upon the grave, and said to his companions, 'ask grace for this body:' and they prayed accordingly and said 'God strengthen him on thy own unity and on the mission of thy Prophet; for verily at this time the dead are asked.'

— — — The Prophet said, 'verily they are appointed for the grave of the unbeliever ninety serpents to bite him, to the day of resurrection, any one of which breathing upon the earth, would blast it.')

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³⁵ MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 424: To the deceased in the grave are given, different articles which vary according to the tribe: a pitcher filled with water placed at the head, also a stone underneath the head; others take pebblestones and dust from the place where the deceased died and put it on the floor of the grave, still others give to the man flour and to the woman her paint, *kuḥl*, with her.

³⁶ JAUSSEN, *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab*, p. 99, on Ta'amre Bedouin:

»Le caveau n'est pas toujours parfaitement fermé; on laisse une ouverture en forme de petite fenêtre comme cela se pratique du reste dans les cimetières de Jérusalem.» MUSIL, *op.cit.* III. p. 434: »Bei Gott öffnet dem Grabe ein Fenster, /ich wünsche zu sehen die Freunde, /ich wünsche zu sehen meine Schwester . . .»

³⁷ *Ibid.* III. p. 443: »O Gräber des Grabes . . . mach' im Grabe Haken zum Aufhängen der Gewehre . . . O Gräber des Grabes . . . mach' im Grabe Haken zum Aufhängen der Rüstung . . .»

³⁸ *Ibid.* III. p. 425: »Das Grab . . . wird womöglich immer mit Wasser begossen. Die es gegraben haben, waschen darüber die Hände . . . begiessen es mit Wasser und sagen: 'Wir reinigen deine Schuld, o N., durch unsere Mühe deinetwillen'. — »Die Zullâm bestreuen das Grab mit Schiesspulver.« — WESTERMARCK *Ritual and Belief in Morocco* II. p. 459 f.: Water poured or sprinkled on the grave.

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³⁹ SPOER-HADDAD, 'Volkskundliches aus el-Qubēbe bei Jerusalem', p. 244: »Nach der Beerdigung liest der *ḥafīb* etwa eine halbe Stunde lang aus dem Qorān vor; alle Anwesenden sitzen dabei. Wenn dies beendet ist, stehen alle auf und sagen *tā ilāha illallāh* — etwa eine Stunde lang . . . Dann stürzen die Bewohner des Dorfes auf die Angehörigen des Toten zu und küssen ihnen den Kopf . . . indem sie sagen: 'Mögen eure Häupter gesund bleiben nach diesem Todesfalle (eigentl. diesem Toten)!'. . . Die Anderen antworten: 'Das, was übrig geblieben ist sei eurem Alter hinzugefügt! So Gott will bleibt ihr ewig gesund, o Bewohner unseres Dorfes! Der Tote, Gott mache es ihm leicht!'« — In *Isaiah XXXVIII. 10* it is said: »I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.«

⁴⁰ QURAN XXIV. 35: »God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. . .» CRAGG, *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 42: »The Prophet, it is said, was once asked about seeing God. 'Can one see light?' was his reply.«

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⁴¹ MUSIL *Arabia Petraea* III. p. 450: When a man passes the grave of a dead friend he says prayers, but curses the dead enemy. »Er fürchtet sich vor dem Toten, denn dieser kann ihm selbst aus dem Grabe schaden.«

⁴² GRANQVIST, *Marriage Conditions*, II. p. 199 f.

⁴³ BURCKHARDT quotes (*Arabische Sprüchwörter*, p. 279) the proverb: »Der Tod war nicht hinreichend für den Todten, das Grab musste ihn noch drücken.« He explains: »Die Muhammedaner glauben, dass das Grab den Leichnam des Todten mehr oder weniger drückt, je nachdem seine Sünde oder Verdienste grösser oder kleiner sind.« — WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 543: »In einigen Quellen wird ein Unterschied zwischen der Strafe und der Bedrängnis (*ḍaghta*) im Grabe gemacht; die rechtschaffenen Gläubigen sind von der ersten, nicht aber von der letzteren ausgenommen, wogegen die Ungläubigen sowohl Strafe wie Bedrängnis erleiden.«

⁴⁴ Similarly SPOER-HADDAD, 'Volkskundliches aus el-Qubēbe bei Jerusalem', p. 246. For gravestones see also, JAUSSEN, Naplouse, p. 337.

⁴⁵ In a poem quoted by SPOER-HADDAD, *op.cit.* p. 251 f. it is said: Wisse, vom Hause der Vergänglichkeit (*dār il-fanā*) müssen wir scheiden! »*Ecclesiastes XII. 5*:

»because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets». Also *Isaiah XIV. 18*: »All the kings of the nations . . . lie in glory, every one in his own house.»

⁴⁶ Cf. *Psalm XIII. 3*: »sleep the sleep of death».

⁴⁷ MATTHEWS, *Mishkât*, I. p. 38 f.:

»ANAS. The Prophet of GOD said, 'when a servant is put into the grave and mankind leave him; verily he heareth the noise they make in walking away; when two angels come to the dead man, and make him sit up in his grave; and say, 'what was your opinion about MUHAMMED?' Then that person who is a *Muslemān* will say, 'I bore witness that he was the servant of GOD and his Prophet.' Then it will be said to the dead person, 'look towards thy place, which was in hell, but GOD hath now changed it for thee to paradise;' and he sees them both. And it will be said to the hypocrite; 'what sayest thou with respect to MUHAMMED?' He will answer 'I know him not.' The angels will then say to him, 'did not thy understanding and reading inform thee?' Then he will be struck with an iron hammer, and he will roar out, which will be heard by all animals that may be near his grave, excepting man and the genii.»

Here belongs a marginal note: »The Prophet's camel is frightened by hearing the infliction of torment on infidels in their graves.»

Every morning and evening the deceased is shown his future place either in heaven or hell, »and it is said to him, 'this grave is thy sitting place until the day of resurrection.'»

Ibid. p. 39: A Jew said: »May God protect thee from the sufferings of the grave.»

»Ayshe, wife of Muhammad, heard his words, and told the Prophet, who said: »yes, punishments in the grave are true.»

»And» — thus »Ayshe said — »I always observed the Prophet, at the end of every prayer, implore God to defend him from the sufferings of the grave.»

AFTER THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

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¹ See e.g. SNOUCK HURGRONJE, *Mekka*, p. 192: »Zweck der Versammlungen: Qurānvortrag im Namen des Verstorbenen.» P. 190: »Vertheilung von Speisen an die Fāqīh's und die Armen auf dem Friedhof.» On the other hand, p. 191 f.: »Bekämpfung der Todtenmahlzeiten von Seiten der Gelehrten.»

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² Cf. *supra*, pp. 151 and 232: »The tear of compassion», and, »the tears of pity for the dead» — a duty. In the Bible tears are often mentioned. For example. *Sirach XXXVIII. 16*: »My son, let tears fall over the dead». — HEMPEL (*Die althebräische Literatur und ihr Hellenistisch-Jüdisches Nachleben*, p. 27: ». . . Leichenlied (hebr. *kīnāh*). Die Klage um den Verstorbenen gehört zu den notwendigsten Bestandteilen der Begräbnissitten. Wer sie unterlässt, setzt sich übler Nachrede aus (Sir. 38, 16 ff); es ist darum ein harter Befehl, wenn Jahve dem Propheten

daran teilzunehmen untersagt, sogar bei dem Tode des eigenen Weibes (Jer. 16, 5 ff.; Ez. 24, 15 ff.), und es ist eine arge Drohung, wenn einem Lebenden ihr Nichtvollzug angekündigt wird.» — »(Jer. 22, 18—19 vgl. Soph. Antigone 29 . . .). Die Totenklage hat ja die Bedeutung für das jenseitige Schicksal, sie ist ein Bestandteil des Totenkultus.»

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³ SITT LOUISA: »Old custom. David sent men to condole his enemies. They did not believe in his good intentions and distrusted him, interpreting his actions in their own way.»

According to them David did not send his servants to honour the deceased (king), he did not send comforters but rather men »to search the city and to spy it out, and to overthrow it.» So David's servants were taken, and one half of their beards was shaved off and their garments cut off in the middle, even to their buttocks, and then the men were sent away. David's men were greatly ashamed. In this case the condolence led to war. 2 Samuel X. 1 ff.

See also WESTERMARCK, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco*, II. p. 442 f. *Idem*, *Wit and Wisdom in Morocco*, p. 245: »blasphemous condolers».

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⁴ Cf. SNOUCK HURGRONJE, *op.cit.* p. 195: »Schreikonzerte (*Ta'did*)» till several days after a death.

⁵ For public or professional wailing women, see LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 286. Also WESTERMARCK *op.cit.* II. p. 437. In the Bible: 2 Chronicles XXXV. 25, Jeremiah IX. 17.

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⁶ For death dance, see SPOER-HADDAD, 'Volkskundliches aus el-Qubēbe bei Jerusalem', p. 244 f.: »Bei der Totenklage teilen sich die Frauen in zwei Gruppen, und zwar sowohl beim Trauerhause als auch auf dem Friedhofe. Die älteren Frauen sitzen; die jüngeren stellen sich in einen Kreis, drehen sich um sich um, schlagen sich, raufen sich die Haare aus und weinen und klagen . . . Jede, die im Kreise ist, legt ihre Hände auf die Schultern ihrer Nachbarin, und dann drehen sie sich ganz um sich herum und klagen; und wenn sie zu Stellen kommen, worin der Name des Toten vorkommt, so springen seine Angehörigen in die Mitte des Kreises, springen und schlagen mit den Händen auf Brust und Gesicht, kehren dann wieder an ihren alten Platz zurück und drehen sich mit den übrigen herum, und andere nehmen ihren Platz ein . . . Dieser Klagetanz (*laḥm*) wird sieben Tage lang wiederholt, sowohl auf dem Friedhofe als beim Trauerhause. Eine Frau, die die Sache versteht (*wāḥade ṣāḥra*) stimmt die Totenklage an, die übrigen wiederholen das Gesungene. Die Klagelieder haben verschiedene Melodien». See also MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 441. LANE describes (*Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 309 f.) a dance customary among the peasants of Upper Egypt. The female relations and friends of a deceased person meet together by his house on each of the first three days after the funeral, and perform there a lamentation and a strange kind of dance. »They daub their faces and bosoms, and part of their dress, with mud; and tie a rope girdle, generally made of the coarse grass called 'ḥalfa', round the waist. Each flourishes in her hand a palm-stick, or a nebbot

(a long staff), or a spear, or a drawn sword; and dances with a slow movement, and in an irregular manner; generally pacing about, and raising and depressing the body. This dance is continued for an hour or more, and is performed twice or three times in the course of the day.»

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⁷ MUSIL, *op.cit.*, III. p. 149 f.: »Als Leckerbissen gelten die Fettstücke. Es wird als Geringschätzung des Gastes aufgefasst . . . wenn ihm kein Fleisch von der Keule, al-mġāġ, auf der Minsaf-Schüssel vorgelegt wird. Das Schaf wird gewöhnlich der Ziege vorgezogen». — »Nie darf einem Gaste vorgelegt werden: Sâġ, die Hinterbeine von dem Knie herunter, und ebenso Drâ⁶, die Vorderbeine. — Auch sieht man nicht gern auf der Schüssel el-Adale, die Vorderbeine vom Knie bis zur Schulter, und el-Ġitef, die Schulter.» — »Das Rindfleisch isst man nicht gerne», etc.

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⁸ For the custom of visiting the tombs, ALYA also used the word *fuqde*. Compare DALMAN, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, I. p. 439 for *fuqde*, »Bedauerung», with food on the grave and lamentation by the women, the men eating and the rest of the food given to the poor on the »Totentage der Griechen am Sonnabend vor Pfingsten.»

LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 309: »Towards the close of the first Thursday after the funeral, the women of the family of the deceased again commence a wailing, in their house, accompanied by some of their female friends . . . On the Friday morning, the women repair to the tomb». This is »repeated on the same days of the next two weeks; and again, on the Thursday and Friday which complete, or next follow, the first period of forty days after the funeral: whence this Friday is called 'el-Arba'een'. Also on the Little Feast and on the Great Feast there are visits to the grave. The authour describes customs and ceremonies performed on these occasions, II. p. 241 and 253.

⁹ SNOUCK HURGRONJE, *Mekka*, p. 193: »Der 7te, 20ste, 40ste Tag des Todes und das Haul». — »Alle diese Tage werden mit ihrer Zahl bezeichnet, z.B. sagt man: 'heute ist Qirā'jeh für den seligen N.N., es ist sein 40ster Tag'. . . »dann tritt eine Pause ein bis zum Jahrestag des Todes (Haul). Am Haul giebt es ferner jährlich regelmässig Molid und Qirā'jeh, und diese werden dann häufig wie die übrigen 'Molid's' mit einer Mahlzeit beschlossen.» The Haul of the deceased is celebrated until such time as a new generation no longer remembers him.

See also MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 450 ff.: »Totenopfer».

Every year in the spring people go on a pilgrimage to the graves of their fathers. A sheep, a goat, or a camel is sacrificed on or at the grave. — — — »Wenn das Opferblut auf das Grab fließt oder die Milch auf die Gräber gesprengt wird, so spricht man: 'Dies ist eine Spende für die Seele des N. . . !'» — »Auch legt man auf das Grab ex voto leere Patronenhülsen, Knöpfe, bunte Fäden, Saltzstücke u.dgl. m.»

Cf. JAUSSEN, *Coutumes des Arabes au pays de Moab*, p. 102: »Les nomades eux aussi aiment à visiter les tombes de leurs défunts. — — — Ils aiment, dans leurs longues pérégrinations au désert, à camper durant quelques jours auprès d'un maqbarah. A Jérusalem, depuis quelques années, je vois un brave boucher

musulman dresser chaque année, huit jours durant, une tente auprès de la tombe de son fils, et habiter en quelque sorte avec lui pendant ce laps de temps.

L'idée de bâtir une *qubbeh* sur les tombeaux dérive sans doute de cet usage de la tente.»

Ibid. p. 102 n. 1: »Sur l'usage ancien de dresser une tente sur la tombe du mort, voir GOLDZIEHER, *Culte des ancêtres* (tirage à part, p. 24).» See also *Idem*, *Naplouse*, p. 340.

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¹⁰ Musil, *op.cit.* III. p. 449: »Die Toten zeigen sich nach der Meinung der Amârîn insbesondere im Traume. Da verlässt die Seele des schlafenden Menschen ihren Körper und begibt sich zu dem Toten, den sie in seiner alten Gestalt wiedersieht. Aber man kann den Toten auch vorladen. Dies tun gewisse Personen, denen jeder Tote folgen muss.» — — — »Die Hêwât wissen ebenfalls, dass man den Toten vorladen kann. Wenn er erscheint, so erscheint er in seinem eigenen Körper, ist aber verschieden angezogen. Trägt er ein schönes Kleid, so ist das ein Zeichen, dass er im Paradiese weilt, erscheint er aber in armseliger Gestalt . . . so beweist dies, dass er leidet.» — See also *1 Samuel XXVIII*. 7 ff.: A witch, »a woman that hath a familiar spirit» brings up the prophet Samuel unto king Saul.

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¹¹ EYSENCK, *Sense and Nonsense in Psychology*, p. 145: »The prototype of the prophetic dream is of course Pharaoh's of the seven fat cattle and the seven lean cattle which Joseph interpreted.» (P. 172—174. Freud theory and the psycho-analytic school). For great faith in visions, and in dreams and their interpretations, see LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, I. p. 294 ff. *Ibid.* p. 357 f.: Some people »on lying down to sleep, at night, beg of God to direct them by a dream». — »When one person says to another, 'I have seen a dream,' the latter usually answers, 'Good' (i.e. may it be of good omen), or, 'Good, please God.'»

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¹² For Muslim tradition and view, see also DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 212 f.: »I once asked Amsha, wife of Salim al Muzayin, if she would be Salim's wife in heaven, as she was here. She replied that she would know him and her children, and live close to him, and visit her children by him, and be supremely happy, only she could not cohabit with him, as in Heaven Salim would have to live with his first wife, who died long ago, and before he took her. This seemed no hardship to her, however, and was taken for granted.»

¹³ For *Sale's* account ('Preliminary Discourse', sect. IV.) of the opinions of the Muslims respecting the state of souls in the interval between death and the judgment, see LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (Last reprinted 1954), p. 531 n.

¹⁴ In the Old Testament death means to go *down* to the grave, to the chambers of death, into the pit, to hell. For Sheol-Hades, see e.g. JOH. LINDBLOM, *Boken om Job och hans lidande*, p. 176. *Ibid.* p. 182 f. the author quotes *Job XIV*. 13 ff., and says that the classic idea, in the Old Testament, of the 'kingdom of death' is here expressed in a lively way. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (*St. Luke XVI*. 19 ff.), it is said that between hell and 'paradise' there is

a great gulf which cannot be passed over from either side. But anyhow there is some kind of communication between the two sides. When the rich man being in torments in hell lifted up his eyes, he saw Lazarus (who had been carried by angels into Abraham's bosom), and was even able to speak to the Patriarch.

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¹⁵ MUSIL (*Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 448 f.) on life after death: »Die Seele des Menschen, rūḥ al-insân, lebt auch, nachdem sie den Menschen durch die Nasenlöcher verlassen hat, noch fort. Sobald der Leichnam beerdigt ist, fliegt der Geist nach Jerusalem und durch die Öffnung des Geisterbrunnens (auf dem Tempelplatze in Jerusalem) in die Unterwelt. Was er da macht, weiss man nicht. Manche sagen, dass er isst und arbeitet, andere leugnen es; 'nur Gott weiss es, wir nicht'. . . . Unterhalb von Jerusalem ist der Versammlungsort der Geister . . . Dort warten sie, bis Gott die Menschen richten wird».

— »In eš-Šôbak heisst es: '. . . Das Paradies und die Hölle liegen nebeneinander unter el-Kuds, Jerusalem.'

Nach der Meinung der Şḥûr kommen die Seelen aller, der Juden, Christen, Muḥammedaner und Beduinen an einen und denselben unterirdischen, unbekanntem Ort. Manche verlegen ihn nach Jerusalem. Dort auf dem Tempelplatze soll eine tiefe Zisterne sein, durch welche der Eingang in die Unterwelt führt. Hierher kommen die Seelen in Gestalt von Fliegen.

Wie bereits erwähnt, liegen sowohl das Paradies wie die Hölle unter der Erde, dicht nebeneinander, sind mehr dunkel als hell, etwa wie zur Zeit der Dämmerung, al-fagr, nur dass in der Hölle viel Staub und Sand und kein Wasser ist. Im Paradiese gibt es Wasser, aber man weiss nicht, ob dort etwas wächst.»

¹⁶ JAUSSEN says (*Naplouse*, p. 340 f.) of the souls of the dead: »Le vendredi, l'âme des défunts, par une permission particulière d'Allah, apparaît sous la forme d'un papillon blanc, farâšah ou baššârah. Ces papillons disparaissent le samedi matin, au soleil levant. D'après la crédulité du vulgaire, les âmes des morts reviennent à leurs tombes, le vendredi soir, avec la faculté de reconnaître ceux de leurs parents ou de leurs amis qui les visitent; elles les voient sans être aperçues par eux. De toutes façons, les femmes ne doivent pas se découvrir au cimetière, car les esprits des morts les voient.

Très souvent aussi, on aperçoit, le vendredi soir, un oiseau qui voltige doucement au-dessus des tombes: c'est un ange d'Allah, ou l'esprit d'un mort. Ordinairement il présage un événement heureux. Au contraire si un hibou fréquente une tombe, il annonce certainement un malheur, car le hibou sent le cadavre et présage la mort.»

¹⁷ MUSIL, *op.cit.* p. 449: »Der Tote, dessen Leichnam . . . von Raubtieren oder Raubvögeln verzehrt worden ist, leidet auch nach dem Tode. Seine Seele, rūḥ, umkreist als Fliege die Knochenreste, summt traurig und bittet, man möge ihr helfen. Sind die Reste bestattet, so begibt sie sich in die Unterwelt».

¹⁸ Such things surely happened in Palestine in ancient days, too. This might explain the fear expressed by the chief priests and the Pharisees that Christ might be stolen from the grave, in this case by friends, his disciples. *St. Matthew XXVII. 64* and also *XXVIII. 13*. Mary Magdalene sees the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, and weeping she says: »They have taken away my Lord, and I know

not where they have laid him.» *St. John XX. 13*, also 2. And 9: «For as yet they (the disciples) knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.» — See also BARROIS, *Manuel d'archéologie biblique*, II. p. 323.

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¹⁹ To sing a song with a definite rhythm when monotonous manual labour is performed makes all movements more or less automatic and easier. For explanations and examples, from various countries and times, of numerous songs of this type, see BIRKETH-SMITH, *Kulturens vägar*, I—II, p. 86.

²⁰ JAUSSEN, *Naplouse*, p. 339: «Pendant trois jours, — ou quelquefois sept, — les proches parents du défunt ne mangent pas chez eux, mais prennent leurs repas chez des amis.»

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²¹ Cf. LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. 309: «When the master of the house, or the owner of the furniture, is dead, and sometimes in other cases, they also turn upside-down the carpets, mats, cushions, and coverings of the deewáns.»

²² MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 443: In a wailing song the dead man says: «Es trauern um mich von den Frauen drei, /meine Schwester und die Tochter meiner Schwester und die Tochter meines Oheims» — *bint il-khāli*.

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²³ MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea*, III p. 427: Hair pulled out, curls cut as a sign of mourning. Cf. *Job. I. 20*: At the message of the sudden death of his sons and his daughters Job rent his mantle and shaved his head. *Isaiah XXII. 12*: Weeping and mourning combined with baldness and girding with sackcloth. *Jeremiah VII. 29*: Cutting off hair and lamentation.

²⁴ In ancient Israel mourning 7 to 30 days and even more. Joseph mourned 7 days for his father after the Egyptians had mourned for him already 70 days, *Genesis L. 3, 10*. Aaron and Moses were both mourned for 30 days. *Numbers XX. 29* and *Deuteronomy XXXIV. 8*.

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²⁵ The first and the third lines in the verse are not quite clear, but they seem to indicate that a woman in deep mourning or affliction gave expression to her grief by putting ashes upon herself, and perhaps even smearing herself with tar and dyeing herself with indigo. *Supra*, p. 219.

Cf. LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 308: «The men make no alteration in their dress in token of mourning; nor do the women on the death of an elderly man; but they do for others. In the latter cases, they dye their shirts, head-veils, face-veils, and handkerchiefs, of a blue, or of an almost black, colour, with indigo; and some of them, with the same dye, stain their hands, and their arms as high as the elbow; and smear the walls of the chambers.»

In times of great mourning it was customary to put ashes on the head, put on sack cloth with ashes, or even wallow in the ashes, to lie in sack cloth and ashes, and «to spread sack cloth and ashes under them», according to the Old Testament. Cf. HASTINGS, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, I. p. 447, on nakedness and

mourning customs: *Micah I. 8*,» ('I will go stripped and naked'), especially if taken in conjunction with the phrase, 'in nakedness and shame' of v. 11, points to a still earlier custom, when the mourner went quite naked'. But »the general practice of putting on sackcloth» — also ashes or earth — »as a substitute for all other garments must have set in pretty early». *Isaiah XXXII. 11.* — »The mourner put off his sandals», a custom meant to accompany the girding on of a sackcloth. — *Ezekiel XXIV. 17; 2 Samuel XV. 30.* — The custom to wear no sandals in sacred places led to »the supposition that it was essentially a ritual practice. But here again the original meaning was probably self-humiliation, which would suit both the grief of the mourners and the attendance at sacred places.» — »The mourner cut off his hair, or beard, or both», possibly a kind of adjunct to the removal of one's clothes.

²⁶ DALMAN, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, I. p. 624: »Für den Araber ist *es-safār* die letzte Zeit vor Sonnenuntergang. . . . Die Toten sollen zu dieser Zeit sich Wasser von den Quellen holen. Wer dann näht, durchlöchert mit jedem Stich den Wasserschlauch seines nächsten Verwandten, der im Grabe weilt. . . . 'Wer am Sonnenuntergang näht oder kaut, näht oder kaut das Fleisch der Toten (nämlich seiner nächsten Verwandten).' Offenbar ist Sonnenuntergang, wenn die Sonne zur Unterwelt hinabsteigt, die Zeit, in welcher die Toten zur Oberwelt hinaufsteigen. Man tut gut, sie nicht zu schädigen.»

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²⁷ *Ya-Seen*, the title of the 36th chapter of the QURAN.

UNNATURAL DEATHS

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¹ QURAN IV. 29: »And kill not your people.» Maulānā *Muḥammad 'Alī* explains in his Commentary: »*your people or yourselves*. In the first case, the significance is that life must also be protected; in the second case, it is an injunction against suicide which according to the law of Islām is a grave sin.» — WESTERMARCK, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, II. p. 247: »Muhammedans say that it is a greater sin for a person to kill himself than to kill a fellow-man; and, as a matter of fact, suicide is very rare in the Moslem world.» — For cases of suicide in the Bible, see *1 Samuel XXXI. 4 f.*, *2 Samuel XVII. 23*; *1 Kings XVI. 18*, *2 Maccabees XIV. 41 ff.* and *St. Matthew XXVII. 5*.

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² Cf. WESTERMARCK, 'Customs connected with Homicide in Morocco', p. 15: In the Hiáina a homicide, if caught by the authorities, is put in prison, but is often released after some months if a sum of money is paid to the governor.

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³ Cf. Omar Effendi EL-BARGHUTHI, 'Judicial Courts among the Bedouin of Palestine', p. 25: »When the murderer is a young boy, those that are of age in his family are responsible for the blood-money.» That is, the relatives on the paternal side must pay the blood-money.

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⁴ Similarly, HADDAD, 'Blood Revenge among the Arabs', p. 104.

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⁵ See also MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 367: »Wenn der Schuldige und seine Sippe nicht in stande sind, den Blutpreis zu erlegen, so verkauft er sich, ḥašše, mit seinen Kindern dem Bluträcher.» — Further, ceremony and formulae.

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⁶ See also HENNINGER, *Die Familie bei den heutigen Beduinen Arabiens und seiner Randgebiete*, p. 59 ff. on blood revenge, blood price; girl as blood price. — LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, I. p. 145: Law respecting murder; the law of the avenging of blood, murder punished with death, or paying a fine.

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⁷ There are similar expressions in the Bible.

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⁸ See also, KAMEL HUSSEIN, *City of Wrong. A Friday in Jerusalem*. — Introduction by Cragg.

⁹ *Nehemiah V. 8*: »have redeemed». *Galatians III. 13*: »Christ hath redeemed us». *Ibid. IV. 5*: »To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.»

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¹ WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 754 f.: »TURBAN, die Kopfbedeckung der Männer im islamischen Orient, bestehend aus einer Mütze oder Kappe und einem darum gewundenen Tuch.» According to a tradition, *ḥadīth*, Adam had a turban which the angel Gabriel gave him after he had been driven out of Paradise. Previously Adam had had a crown, *tāj*. Turbans have a religious significance. »Vor allem bei der Ṣalāt und beim Besuch der Moscheen und der Gräber wird das Tragen des Turbans angeraten, und es heisst: Zwei Rak'as (oder: eine Rak'a, oder: die Ṣalāt) mit Turban sind besser als siebenzig ohne Turban; denn vor seinen König ohne Schmuck hinzutreten, schickt sich nicht. Oder: Gott und die Engel segnen den, der einen Turban trägt am Freitag.» The turban may be taken off before or after prayer, if the heat is great, but not

during prayer. »Noch in neuerer Zeit spielte der Turban beim Vordringen des Islâm eine wichtige Rolle, z.B. in Afrika im Sudan».

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² *Joel II. 13*: »And rend your heart, and not your garments».

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³ *Supra*, p. 67.

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⁴ Cf. *supra*, p. 77 and 84.

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⁵ LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, II. p. 293: »Among the women, the relations and domestics of the deceased are each distinguished by a strip of linen or cotton stuff or muslin, generally blue, bound round the head, and tied in a single knot behind: the ends hanging down a few inches.» And in a note on the same page: »In the funeral-scenes represented on the walls of ancient Egyptian tombs, we often see females with a similar bandage round the head.» — MUSIL, *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 427: »Zum Zeichen der Trauer tragen die Frauen einige Tage auf der Stirne ein weisses Band.» P. 445: »schwarze Stirnbinden (aus Ziegenhaaren)«. Again, DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, p. 213: »A dead woman's forehead is bound round with a white piece of cloth (*assaba*) such as women wear when they are sick». — *Isaiah III. 20* and *23*: headbands, and veils.

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⁶ HADDAD mentions ('Political Parties in Syria and Palestine', p. 213) the family Derwish in Malha.

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⁷ Cf. CRAGG, *The Call of the Minaret*, p. 202, 209 n. 9 and 252.

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⁸ See also DALMAN, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, I. p. 427 ff.

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⁹ GRAGG, *op. cit.* p. 119 f.

¹⁰ Cf. GUILLAUME, *Islam*, p. 66. See also LANE, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, I. p. 104 n. and 105.

¹¹ RIENECKER, *Lexikon zur Bibel*, p. 1220: »Man sieht im Schlaf nicht nur das gesunde Ausruhen nach harter Arbeit (Pred 5, 11), sondern findet etwas Bedrohliches in seiner Nähe zum Tode». TALLQVIST says (*Paradisets nyckel*, p. 26): »Sleep and unconsciousness are conditions reminiscent of deathlike trance. The resemblance of sleep to death is also brought to mind in the poetic expression in Arabic a k h û - l - m a u t i, i.e. 'brother of the death'. The idea that man is defiled by sleep, is also found among the Pythagoreans and in Judaism where its relationship with death is expressly pointed out. In the Jewish book Zohar it is said: 'Everyone who by night sleeps in his bed has a presentiment of death.'» Transl. from the Swedish.

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¹² After my return to my own country, in 1931, my thoughts often went back to Artas, and I wondered how things were with Sheikha Shahin. While visiting the village of Artas, in 1959, I did not see her. She was ill and away.

Mr. Doemac wrote to me in 1960: »Sheikha Shahin, widow of Sheikh Abd il-Salam, was in hospital, but returned because her sons wanted her to be at home. There are Homes for the Aged, one in Beit Jala, and another one in Bethlehem, for both men and women, but many families still do not think it proper to send a father or mother, grandfather or grandmother, to live in such a home, away from their children who are supposed to, and it is their duty to look after them in their old age.»

Bishop CUBA'in has had the kindness to send me a report of *The Diocese of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria of the Episcopal Church in the Middle East*, Within the Archbishopric in Jerusalem, 1960. I quote p. 29: »Before concluding this presentation of the Diocese with its story of the past, its recent developments, its material assets, its very great responsibilities to minister to the spiritual needs of a people going through a period of crisis, it is important to include some of the projects under consideration for the future. . . .

An urgent need is for a Home for the Aged. It has long been the custom in the Arab World for elderly members of families, parents, uncles, aunts, and unmarried relatives to live within the family circle and be cared for by the younger members of the family. Today, not the least of the problems of the refugee situation is that it has become almost impossible for younger members to perform this 'ancient duty' and increasingly the aged have to be cared for by outside agencies. To meet this need of the elderly members for adequate care, the Church Council has undertaken the task of opening a home in Jordan to be called 'Home for Aged Friends'. The location of the home is undecided but Ramallah, Nablus, or Jericho are possible. Plans are going forward and it is hoped that the home in one of these centers will be available for residents in 1960. A welltrained, experienced woman is needed to serve as matron for this home as much of its success will depend on able management.»

Building of Homes for the Aged is a necessity, but means a very great change in social care and social thinking.

SONGS AT DEATH AND BURIAL

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¹ References to the Bible: *Jeremiah IX. 17 f*: Call for the mourning women and for cunning women, to take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may »run down with tears!» — *Amos V. 16*: »They shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing.» — *Jeremiah IX. 20*: »Teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation!» — Widows generally weep and lament. Exceptions are found in *Job XXVII. 15*, and *Psalms LXXXVIII.*

64. — *St. Mark V. 38 f.*: Weeping (in the house of the ruler of the synagogue).
St. Matthew IX. 23: The minstrels and the people making a noise.

King David lamented over Saul and over Jonathan (*2 Samuel I. 17–25*); and over Abner (*2 Samuel III. 33 f.*). *2 Chronicles XXXV. 25 f.*: »And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.» *Ezekiel XIX. 1 ff.*: Lamentation for the princes of Israel: mother a lioness, her whelps young lions. *XIX. 14*: »This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.» *Ezekiel II. 9 f.*: A roll of a book written within and without; written with lamentations and mourning, and woe.

The lamentations in the Bible are not always for the deceased (Leichenklage, Leichenlied). They may also be allegorical and allude to a city or a nation, as, for instance, Jerusalem in *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, Chapters 1, 2 and 4, or Israel in *Amos V. 2*. See BENTZEN, *Indledning til det gamle Testamente*, p. 248–252.

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² *Genesis XXXV. 19*: Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife »died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.»

³ Sitt Louisa: A muleteer, or mule-driver, has a lower standing than a dragoman. He goes on foot, or has just one small donkey or mule. A muleteer is a man who accompanies people riding mules or donkeys, as in olden times for instance riding to Jordan, Nazareth, etc.

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⁴ If someone is coming, his shadow is first seen. Cf. *Judges IX. 36*: »And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men.» It was men.

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⁵ Cf. *supra*, p. 147.

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⁶ *Supra*, p. 147.

⁷ Or, They have told me a lie.

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⁸ Sacrifice of property, not of man.

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⁹ Cf. MUSIL *Arabia Petraea*, III. p. 428: »Bei den 'Amârîn heissen die trauernden Verwandten el-Mukassarîn. Nach dem Todesfalle essen sie abends nichts und werden am nächsten Tage in ein anderes Lager eingeladen.» — *2 Samuel III. 35*: David denied to eat, till the sun be down, because of Abner's death. Again, *2 Samuel XII. 15 ff.*: God »struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.» David besought God for the child, he fasted and lay all night upon the earth and did not eat bread with the elders of his house. On the seventh day the child died. »Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord,

and worshipped; then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.» The servants were very astonished. «What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread.» David explained: «While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.» See also *1 Samuel I. 7.*

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¹⁰ See also LITTMAN, *Neuarabische Volkspoesie*, p. 113—119: wailing songs used by the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Nr 61. The wife of the deceased: «Bringt das Kamel und legt meinen Mantel darauf/und entschuldigt mich bei meiner Schwiegermutter!»

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¹¹ For *ghazu*, raiding, see e.g. LITTMAN, *Arabische Beduinenerzählungen*. Also, MUSIL, *op.cit.* III. p. 369 ff: «Kriegführung». And DICKSON, *The Arab of the Desert*, chapter XXVI: Badawin Warfare. P. 341: «Raiding is the breath of life to the Badawin. Prevent him from raiding and he becomes the most melancholy of men.» P. 344: Concentrating for war or a big raid. P. 346: Raids. P. 350: Famous raiders I have known.

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¹² *Supra*, p. 261 n. 4.

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¹³ MUSIL, *op.cit.* III. p. 429: «Die Totenklage, die man mit tiefer Stimme vorbringt, heisst an-Nwâh, die mit hoher Stimme vorgetragen wird, an-Na'î.»

¹⁴ Widowhood desired, i.e. may husband die! Cf. GRANQVIST, *Child Problems*, p. 157 and 258 n. 79.

EXPRESSIONS, VERSES AND STORIES CONCERNING DEATH AND MOURNING

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¹ Cf. Greek mythology: Orion is a man, or the constellation called so. The Pleiades, daughters of Atlas and Pleione, loved by Orion who persecuted them for seven years; Zeus placed them among the stars and changed them into stars, the Pleiades. JENNINGS-BRAMLEY, 'The Bedouin of the Sinaitic Peninsula', in *Palestine Exploration Quarterly XXXVIII. 1906*, p. 27: «The Pleiades are known to them as the seven sisters (*saba' benāt*).»

² For singing at work, cf. *supra*, p. 105.

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³ Fortunes are told in sand.

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⁴ Cf. the *Book of Ruth*, I. 16 f.: Ruth expresses her wish to live and die with her mother-in-law. »Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried.» 2 *Samuel* I. 23 about Saul and Jonathan: They »were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.» (It is added: »They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.»). 1 *Samuel* II. 34: In an unpleasant way, in a prophesy of evil against Eli's house (really a curse), it is said of Eli's two sons: »In one day they shall die both of them.» In the Second Epistle, Paul, the Apostle says, to the *Corinthians* in VII. 3: »Ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.»

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⁵ *Supra*, p. 125

⁶ *Ahmad al-Badawi*, *Sidi*, founder of a numerous and highly respected Derwish order.

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⁷ *Tur, el*, The mountain, the Mount of the Olives. Cf. Horeb, the Mountain of God, *Exodus* III.1; *Deuteronomy*, V.2, 5 f.

⁸ See also GRÜNBAUM, *Neue Beiträge zur Semitischen Sagenkunde*, p. 182 ff., the death of Moses: his reluctance to die, Moses and the angel of death, angels dig his grave and bury him. Several versions quoted by Tabari and Ibn el-Athir are referred to. — In the Bible (*Deuteronomy* XXXIV. 7) it is said: »And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.»

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⁹ For *Izra'il* (Azra'il) of cosmic size, see also WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *Handwörterbuch des Islam*, p. 235.

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¹⁰ Similar expressions are found in the Bible. — *QURAN* II. 256: The throne of God. Cf. WENSINCK-KRAMERS, *op. cit.* p. 362: *Kursi* ('arsh).

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