THE WORLDVIEW OF ISLAM furnishes us with a number of concepts which, when actualized in all their sophistication at various levels of society and civilization, yield an integrated infrastructure for distribution of knowledge. At least five Islamic concepts have a direct bearing on the distribution of information: adl (justice), ilm (knowledge), ibadah (worship), khilafa (trusteeship) and waqf (pious endowment; charitable trust). An examination of the early history of Islam reveals how these five concepts were given practical shape and generated a highly sophisticated infrastructure for the distribution of information and knowledge" (Sardar, 1999).

Again, "The all-embracing concept of ilm shaped the outlook of the Muslim people, from the very beginning of Islam. Islam actually made the pursuit of knowledge a religious obligation: by definition, to be a Muslim is to be deeply entrenched in the generation, production, processing and dissemination of knowledge. Moreover, the concept of ilm is not a limiting or elitist notion. Ilm is distributive knowledge: it is not a monopoly of individuals, class, group or sex: it is not an obligation only for a few, absolving the vast majority of society; it is not limited to a particular field of inquiry or discipline but covers all dimensions of human awareness and the entire spectrum of natural phenomena. Indeed, Islam places ilm at par with adl: the pursuit of knowledge is as important as the pursuit of justice. Just as adl is essentially distributive justice, so is ilm distributive knowledge. One is an instrument for achieving the other. The ideal goal of the worldview of Islam, the establishment of a just and equitable society, cannot be achieved without the instrument of distributive knowledge. Only when knowledge is widely and easily available to all segments of society can justice be established in its Islamic manifestations" (Sardar, 1999).

[Abstract: Islam is the religion of book, including the book par excellence, the Quran. Interest in books developed through reading, and dissemination. Books became a visible medium within the first century of Islamic civilization. Muslims soon came to know the use of paper, calligraphy, illumination, binding, publishing, marketing, lending and collection development, to name a few. Books became popular thro’ book stores, writers, editors, copyist, translators, and most importantly, libraries. Libraries began in mosques, then in private homes and palaces. Public, school, academic and research libraries soon followed. Despite this advancement of book in the civilization, no single comprehensive survey exists on its historiography. Hence outlines of its development is attempted here. A profile is presented to facilitate writing the subject in a holistic way].

1. Introduction:
The present work deals with history of book in particular, and with history of libraries (or infostructural development) in general, in the context of Islamic civilization. This work spans fourteen centuries, and for this primarily uses English-language sources. The aim is to: a) develop an outline of the status of historicity of book development, and b) prepare a profile, for writing a readable history of the development of book in a holistic sense.

While book as a source of information has many takers, librarianship is the most concerned area in the study of its development. The book in the Islamic civilization, hence, is discussed under the generic name of Islamic librarianship. Another contextual point needs highlighting here. Islamic librarianship appears in the following frame of reference:

(a) Islamic worldview is based on the book -- Quran -- and its interpretation, application, etc. The concern of librarianship is with providing access to and facilitating bibliographic control of these sources. Given the importance of the book which Muslims were inspired for and ordained to, its utilization became a duty for all -- irrespective of gender, race, status, age, educational level, etc. Due to the intensity and extensity of an all-round effort in spreading the message of God -- contained in the Quran -- it soon led to an effective spread of book in this civilization. Resultingly books became common and were written, circulated, reproduced, and were even zealously referred. By implication there existed a practice of free movement of books and where the rule was: 'books are for use'.

For an understanding of the correlation between Islam and librarianship, and the role of Islam in promoting books, there is an extensive published work (Sardar: 1986; Oli Muhammad: 1986; H. A. Khan: 1986; Rizvi: 1986; and Taher: 1997h). Further, Islamic values add support to the library profession’s basis -- a support that will provide a live wire for the, otherwise, withering profession. Islam as a way of life, promotes motivation for just and welfare state. Value based professionalism can be developed, by adopting Islamic perspectives, resulting in material and spiritual rewards in this life and in the hereafter (Taher: 1997h).

(b) Islam facilitated paths to develop ideas (by way of analogy or qiyas, and consensus or ijma'), as well as promoted inquiry in natural and physical sciences. This led to a scholarly movement and tremendous advances in all branches of learning -- a precursor of Renaissance (Nakosteen: 1964; Grabar: 1992)! It means, every idea its user;

(c) Islam deals with information in a holistic sense, and synthesizes spiritual and mundane. All revealed knowledge is applied in geo-political context, and to meet this end gathering additional information becomes a socio-cultural necessity. It means, every user his/her ideas;

(d) In Islam dissemination of knowledge is a holy duty. A saying of the Prophet, reported by Tirmidhi, is: "A Muslim is never satiated in his quest for knowledge till it ends in paradise". Based on the Prophet's emphasis on seeking knowledge, even, from as distant a land as China, education and training gained momentum -- a precursor of the information age! The golden age of this civilization (8th -13th century, AC) facilitated, firstly, saving ancient learning from extinction, and secondly, disseminating knowledge in an enlarged and enriched form (Fernini: 1998). While the glory gradually disappeared, dissemination continued, as a service to save the time of the user (Haider: 1979). All these factors resulted in book development.

2. Book Development: Before venturing into development of the book, it is worth highlighting the facets that deal with book in this civilization. Book, as a system and treated in its holistic sense, comprises of paper, ink, calligraphy, illumination, binding, writing, translating, copying, book trade, book lovers narratives, book collection development in private, as well as, public domains, book trade, etc.. Book development here simply points on how the infrastructure for dissemination evolved during the golden age of Islamic civilization.

The first revealed verse of the Quran dealt with reading. It came in a predominantly illiterate society --a society which had an oral culture, and the new message was indeed revolutionary. Superficially it conveyed theological content of proclaiming God's unity and majesty, but by
the underlying order literacy became obligatory on every Muslim, male or female. Reading was meant for improving one's own personality, and for improvement of the society too. Resultingly, teaching was taken up seriously. For instance, the prisoners of war were offered by the Prophet a choice for their freedom, either by payment, or by teaching, to read and write ten Muslim children. Such inspirations -- the religious need to ponder and be creative, and social efforts -- led to the growth of unparalleled scholarship.

In this civilization, penmanship expanded its scope with the expansion of the geographical boundaries, enabling access to works in Persian, Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, etc. Their scholarship was not limited to translations, it was creative, deductive and revolutionary -- their efforts led to discoveries in astronomy, astrology, medicine, geometry, arithmetic, botany, zoology, natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, etc. Book as a physical entity came with the advances in binding and physical bibliography.

The first book in Islam is the Quran. As and when the Prophet Mohammed received the revealed messages, it was written by the scribes on a variety of sources (leaves, date seeds, bones, stones, etc.), and preserved due also to the total memorization by many Muslims. To spread this message contained in Quran, Uthman bin Affan, third Caliph of Islam, arranged for compilation of the Quran in a single written source. In view of the variations of the dialects popular in Arabic, consensus was to preserve in the standard Arabic dialect -- dialect of Quraish of Makkah. In this regard Uthman is rightly called Jami'ul Quran (collector of Quran in a single manuscript). This collection of the Quran led to standardizing the reading and writing style, as well as, spreading copies of the newly collected single book, all throughout the Muslim lands. According to the present day surveys, copies of this first compilation are still available in major libraries of the world.

Relevant to this original preserved copy is an interesting description: "In 1870 Governor-General of Turkestan, Konstantin P. von Kaufman, presented to the Oriental Manuscript Section, National Library of Russia, an outstanding manuscript -- a copy of Quran which under the tradition had been copied by Khalil Osman and stained with his blood. According to one legend the book had been brought from Asia Minor by one of Khojah Akhrar's disciples, according to another, it used to belong to Amir Timur. Anyway it had been kept in Khojah Akhrar's Mosque in Samarkand and even restored there in the late 18th and early 19th century by the Tatar of the Volga Gabduraahim Utyz Imani. Nominally the Quran was not the property of the mosque, it was owned by the Bukhara state. Probably by this reason the 'ulama of the mosque "granted" the manuscript without any objections "in exchange to a money donation which major-general Abramov, the chief of the Zarafshan district made in favour of this Moslem temple" (Vasilyeva: 1999, 17).

Paper brought a series of changes in the Islamic civilization. But this knowledge of paper making was not retained in its own boundaries. It spread to Iraq, Egypt, North Africa and, finally, to Spain. And this last destination, and the resultant role which emerged in the Gutenberg's era surely remains explicit to all -- though the European historians of paper have ignored the centuries thro' which this knowledge traveled from China to Europe. "This pivotal role is evident in the way we still count paper in units--today they are units of 500 sheets--called reams. That word comes from the Arabic rizmah, meaning a bale or bundle" (Bloom: 1999: 1).

Under the Mughals in India, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan developed his own unique interest in book development. "As Khan-i-Khanan was very fond of tracing-paper, he invented for him a tracing paper of seven colours, and developed this art to a high degree. For this he received many favours and rewards (obviously from his Mughal masters). He was the inventor of variegated paper also" (quoted in Taher: 1994: 55).

With paper (waraq in Arabic) came the profession of Warraq. The title Warraq has been used for paper dealers, writers, translators, copiers, book sellers, librarians, illuminators, etc. "The profession of the Warraq", is generally believed to have started shortly after the introduction of the art of paper-making into the Muslim world. Baghdad was probably the first major city where the "warraqeen" bookshops first appeared. As the manufacture of paper spread, the number of these bookshops increased dramatically throughout the Muslim empire" (Sibai:
Book binding, calligraphy, and other artistic achievements gave Islamic civilization a distinct place among the otherwise known patterns of art and aesthetics. "The widespread rejection of representational imagery within the religious art of Islam fostered the perfection of calligraphy and illumination as a visual art form" (Grabar: 1992, 126).

On the spectacular progress made in bookbinding it is apt to quote Don Baker, who is an independent Paper Conservator in the care of Islamic manuscripts: "The world of Islam has produced some of the most beautiful books ever created. The need to write down the Revelations which the Prophet Muhammad, may peace be upon him, received, fostered the desire to beautify the object which conveyed these words and initiated this ancient craft. Nowhere else, except perhaps in China, has calligraphy been held in such high esteem. Splendid illumination was added with gold and vibrant colours, and the whole book contained and protected by beautiful bookbindings" (Baker: 1984: 13).

How learned were the rulers and the ruled? About the great Mughal ruler, Akbar, we have a narrative which suggests the trend. Abul Fazal (d. 1602) in his Ain-i-Akbari mentions that Akbar would listen daily to the perusal of books by paid readers. Their remuneration depended on the number of leaves read; and that of the leaves perused, Akbar wrote daily with his own pen in numerals the number of leaves gone through; on the basis of which the remuneration was calculated and paid in cash to the readers then and there. Similar is the report about a grandson of Akbar, Shahjahan. "At about 8.30 p.m he returned to harem. Good (male) readers sat behind a purdah which separated them from the royal bed chamber and read aloud books on travel, lives of saints and prophets, and histories of former kings -- all rich in instruction" (quoted in Taher: 1994: 53).

The elite everywhere had a fashion to show their taste for books. One Indian elite, Syed Abdul Jalil (d.1725), wrote to his son, "My love, the book ... is put in that trunk which was brought from Gujarat. What should I write to you about the care and precaution to be taken for the books. You know well how much I love books, and after how much labour and search I have collected them ... Air the books in the sun as often as possible" (quoted in Taher: 1994: 57).

Viewed from another perspective, reading and knowledge promotion, or rather book development, has gone through various periods of ups and downs: Observes a modern historian of Muslim India, S M Ikram, "Yet despite the cultural eminence of the capital (Delhi, during periods of Sultanate rule), it cannot be claimed that the Sultanate is a period marked by that solid scholarship and study of sciences which distinguished Baghdad and Cordova. The reason is obvious. Learned and gifted men had come to India, but without their libraries. Those who were escaping with their lives could not be expected to carry loads of books over long distances. We get a glimpse of this in the case of Fakhr-i-Mudabbir, who fled from Ghazani without his family papers, and had to wait for an opportunity to go back to reclaim them. The result was that only those cultural activities gained prominence which, like poetry, belles letters, local history, architecture, and music, were not dependent on accumulated stores of knowledge. Probably for the same reasons--the lack of libraries--great educational institutions of the kind found in Baghdad and Cairo did not develop in India. There were, however, schools and colleges, in Delhi and all important provincial capitals" (Quoted in Taher: 1994: 68). In fact this is the same story of the Mughals, who despite all the wealth of the world and glory that was Delhi during their rule for almost three centuries plus, could not develop another Baghdad or Cordova.

What constituted a collection of reading or readable material, as book, in a broad sense, existed as soon as the manuscripts emerged. "Whether the early books were merely a collection of student's notes and little treatises in the form of letters or more formal books, of which there were at least a few, the collecting of them, the recognition that such materials were worth keeping, can legitimately be considered the beginning of Moslim libraries" (Mackensen: 1935).

After its invention in China, missionaries, traders etxc., transmitted not only paper to the neighboring lands, but also the knowledge of paper making. The art of paper making was
already flourishing among Muslims of Samarkand, Central Asia, by 704 and this lead to gradual disappearance of manuscripts (Bloom: 1999: 1).

In short, ornamentation of book binding, illumination of the books and decorative book binding paved in, enriched by the already dominated calligraphic styles of a variety.

Books are for use: “Books which were painstakingly copied and purchased at great expense were worthy of preservation; and their possessors bequeathed them to mosque, shrines, or schools where they could be properly cared for and made accessible to scholars for ages to come. Professors of colleges quite frequently gave their own works and private libraries to their respective institutions. Books are often mentioned among the waqfs or pious bequests made in perpetuity by scholars and men of wealth. This was one way in which writers could make sure that their works would not be lost. They often willed their books either to the people of learning or to Muslims in general” (Mackensen: 1932: 279-280).

Bibliophiles: Numerous instances in annals of history point at the extraordinary efforts made by scholars to collect vast reading materials and private libraries were enormous (Sibai: 1984: 197). These book lovers would even reach any distance in search of a book. How difficult was identification of books, how strenous was identifying titles from manuscripts, and how much demanding was the task to reach farthest areas in the need for a specific title? Historians have a few such instances. The famous historian al-Biruni spent forty years searching a copy of Mani’s Sifr as-Asrar. Ibn Rushd wanted to consult a monograph dealing the Mutazilah philosophy, but had no access to it.

Another book hunt’s interesting narration is by Al-Tawhidi: "Abu Bakr al-Ihsid had for years looked for a copy of al-Jahiz’s Kitab al-Farq Bayn an-Nabiyy wa-l-Mutanbibi, but was unable to secure it; he then performed the pilgrimage and during his stay in Makkah hired a public crier to call out for a copy at Arafat. Even though the congregation at Arafat was the largest ever gathering of Muslims from all over the world, Abu Bakr still did not find the book he desired" (Sardar: 1999: 2).

Book hunt in most possible remote corners was made by the historian Muhammed Firishta. Firishta visited the royal library of Faruqi Sultans at Khandesh, India, in 1604. From one of the books in this library he copied the history of Faruqi’s (Quoted in Taher: 1994: 62).

Another narrative relates to this very royal library. The British Muesum has a letter of one Malik-ush Shura Faizi written to Raja Ali Khan, a Faruqi Sultan, requesting some pages of the Tughluq Nama available in this library (Quoted in Taher: 1994: 62).

While it is common practice among private book collectors to have a scholarly interest and this was the rule among Muslim bibliophiles too. However, some collectors had special interests. Some joined the collection development spree as a fashion and some were lesser mortals. While Yaqut reports the latter, Makkari has a narration about an illiterate book collector. We present both the instances: a) According to Yaqut, “the unscrupulous and stingy Ibn al-Khashab, who frequently attended book auctions and visited bookshops, would, unnoticed, tear and hide a page from the book he wanted to buy. After doing so, Ibn al-Khashab would point out the defect to the seller, and, subsequently buy the book at a much reduced price". Yaqut adds that "Ibn al-Khashab never returned a borrowed book to its owner. His usual excuse was that the borrowed book became mixed with his other books, and, hence could not be retrieved" (Sibai: 1984: 205).

b) The historian Makkari (or al-Maqarri) relates a story about al-Hadrami, a passionate, but illiterate bibliophile in Muslim Spain: ‘I resided once in Cordoba for some time, where I used to attend the book-market every day, in the hope of meeting with a certain work which I was anxious to procure. This I had done for a considerable time, when on a certain day, I happened to find the object of my search, a beautiful copy, elegantly written and illustrated with a very fine commentary. I immediately bid for it, and went on increasing my bid, but to my great disappointment, I was always outbid by the crier (auctioneer), although the price was far superior than the value of the book. Surprised at this I went to the crier, and asked him to show me the individual who had thus outbid me for the book to a sum far beyond its
real value, when he pointed out to me a man of high rank, to whom, on approaching, I said, "May God exalt you O doctor (faqih, lit. scholar), if you desire this book I will relinquish it, for through our mutual bidding its price has risen far above its real value." He replied, "I am neither learned nor do I know what the contents of the book are, but I have just established a library, and cost what it may, I shall make it one of the most notable things in my town. There is an empty space there which this book will just fill. As it is beautifully written and tastefully bound I am pleased with it, and I don't care what it costs, for God has given me an immense income." (Inayatullah: 1938).

Book lovers always find their counterpart, i.e., the book burners. The latter took their book burning spree by the common usage: devil quoting the scripture. Those who desired to destroy certain books took recourse in justifying their action by referring to a statement which they claimed that Umar Ibn al-Khattab (died 24/644), had once said: "Touching the books you mentioned, if what is written in them agrees with the book of Allah they are not required; if it contradicts they are not desired. Destroy them therefore" (Sibai: 1984: 395).

Book burning became a fashion as and when the time and tide were against a particular movement or situation. In addition to these human elements that destroyed vast reading materials, there were many more internal and external factors that have led to its destruction. "As if the carnage was not enough, mosque and other libraries were occasionally robbed of their precious resources by dishonest patrons and custodians alike. Earthquakes and inundations could also be blamed for the destruction of some collections. Fires, accidentally or intentionally ignited, were frequently a source of grief to many bibliophiles and hardworking librarians" (Sibai: 1984: 412 - 13).

Content Analysis: How fascinated were the outsiders, reading the advances made by Muslim scholarship and further to find these books freely available in libraries under Muslim rule? How envious were they of such a shining civilization? San Alvaro, a Christian ecclesiastic, lived in Cordoba during ninth century in Muslim Spain, and lamented the superiority of Moors (or Muslim) scholarship: "Many of my co-religionists read the poems and stories of the Arabs, and studied the writings of Mohammedans, theologians and philosophers, not in order to refute them but to learn to express themselves most elegantly and correctly in the Arabic tongue. Alas! All the young Christians who became notable for their talents know only the language and literature of the Arabs, read and study Arabic books with zeal and at enormous costs from great libraries, and everywhere proclaim aloud their literature is worthy of admiration" (Nakosteen: 1964: 8).

Muslim Scholarship: While reviewing the high level of scholarly achievement in this civilization, one wonders as to what factors necessiated, or played a part, in reading the writings of alien cultures, preserving the classics, and then, disseminating such records with so much energy and perseverance? An answer may be found in the fact that, although Muslim scholarship bit every byte in reading the revealed word, Quran, they, nevertheless, were equally committed to the translation of literature of other cultures. This in a way directly helped in bringing to the Europe all, otherwise lost ancient classics. They were simply bibliophiles in all respects and the end result was they developed major library collections in search of the lost knowledge. In a Hadith (or saying of the Prophet), it is recorded that all useful knowledge is a lost property of the Muslim, and wherever he finds it he will pick up". Hence observes Mackensen: "The written word fascinated him (the Prophet Muhammad), and through the ages it has continued to fascinate his spiritual posterity. The Arabs brought a book with them from the desert, and wherever they went they found more books. Many felt that these foreign books were of no value as compared to their own, but others, though continuing to hold the Koran unique, hastened to read whatever they found. And so, with the eagerness of a child in a toy shop, they collected books and translated them into the language of the Prophet" (Mackensen: 1935: 115).

Book/Information Dissemination: "... history of Muslim librarianship and book trade shows how the infrastructure for dissemination of information evolved naturally during the classical Muslim period. In one respect it is quite astonishing that in fewer than one hundred years after the hijra of the Prophet from Makkah to Medinah, the book had established itself as an
easily accessible and basic tool for the dissemination of knowledge and information. However, when viewed from the perspectives of ilm (knowledge), waqf (pious endowment) and ibadah (worship), which the early Muslims put into operation at the level of the individual, society and civilization, the phenomenal spread of books and bookmen in early Islam does not look all that astonishing. Indeed, when actualized at all levels of society, the conceptual matrix of Islam would work to produce an infrastructure for the dissemination of information in any society, even if it had serious flaws. The eternal concepts of Islam are for the real world; they do not operate in or have much significance for an idealized society. During the early days of Islam, the dictates of distributive ilm and waqf were institutionalized in a society that had many serious problems, including sectarianism (numerous sects were constantly at war with each other and, indeed, many libraries were established to promote sectarian views), disunity and political divisions. In spite of this strife, the conceptual matrix produced an information infrastructure that took the Muslim civilization to its zenith" (Sardar, 1999).

Role of Library of Congress: "Book in the Islamic world" has been a fascinating topic for the West, and in 1990, Library of Congress organized a seminar on this same theme. I participated in this, and found that the East and West can still find meeting grounds and platforms for advancement of understanding of the other cultures. The conference papers, published later, were edited by George N. Atiyeh (1995).

The diversity of the themes dealt in this conference proceedings is evidently vast: "The Islamic system of book production differed from that of the West. This volume shows the peculiarities of book making and the intellectual principles that governed a book's inner structure, mysteries, and impact on culture. Investigated and explained are the issues involved in printing; the compilation of the Koran, the most important book in Islam; biographical dictionaries, an important genre of Islamic books; the grammatical tradition; women's contribution to calligraphy; scientific manuscripts; the transition from scribal to print culture; the publishing in the modern Arab World; and the new electronic media, a non-book vehicle of communication, and its impact on education" ('About the book').

The contents of the book are:

Introduction/ george Atiyaah
1. From the manuscript age to the age of printed books  by Muhsin Mahdi (1-17)
2. The Koranic text: from revelation to compilation/Jacques Berque p. 17-32
3. Of making many books there is no end: the classical mulim view/ franz Rosenthal 33-56
4. Oral trnsmission and the book in Islamic education/ Seyyed Hossein Nasr 57-70
5. The book of life-metaphors connected with the book in Islamic literatures/ Annemaarie schimmel 71-92
7. The book in the grammatical tradition: development in content and methods/ Ramzi Baalbaki 123-140
8. Women's role s in the art of arabic calligraphy/salah al-Din al-Munajjid 141-148
9. Some illustrations in islamic scientific manuscripts and their secrets/ David King 149-178
10. A royal manuscript and its transformation: The life history of a book/ Priscilla Soucek and Filiz Cagman 179-208
11. Faris al-Shidyaq and the trnsition from scribal to print culture in the Middle East/ eoffrey Roper 209-233
12. The book in the modern arab world : the cases of Lebanon and Egypt/ George atiyeh 233-254
Appendix: Ottoman imperial douments relating to the history of books and printing 283-293
Notes on conributors.
are those that are attached to mosque, madrasa (school, or college), dargah or qanqah (shrines), palaces, research centers, etc. The term Kitab in Arabic refers to book. The place which housed the book collection -- libraries in western terminology -- were designated, according to their location, by names such as: bait (room), khizana (closet), dar (house). And according to their activity, they were designated as: hikma (wisdom), ilm (knowledge), kutub (books), etc. While these terms were interchangeably used, and called as bait al-hikma, dar al-ilm, dar al-kutub, nevertheless, did designate an information center.

Oriental Libraries: Islam, studied by western scholars, came to be called as oriental studies and is still a relevant designation. Considering the storming of bastions of orientalism -- Edward Said's Orientalism (1979) -- we must be quick to state that not all Orientalists have treated Islam in a derogatory context (Farah: 1999, 9). Therefore, libraries of oriental institutions are also our concern (Taher: 1997f, 1997g).

The mosque, are unique being the first social institution, in the world, performing multiple tasks, including facilities for reading and learning. The first libraries in Islamic civilization were at the mosques. While the first book to enter the Mosque was the Quran, the number of copies increased mostly due to donations. Such collections gradually grew to become a reading corner until some time. Sibai calls these sizable collections as 'forefathers of many a mosque library' (Sibai: 1984: 407).

The actual systematic beginnings are later, so observes Sibai: "Mosque libraries began to appear shortly after the rise of the Abbasid dynasty and the settling down of the Muslims in the newly-conquered lands. It should be noted, however, that not every mosque had a library. Though almost all mosques regularly received generous gifts of "masahif" (Quran), it was mainly in the large and spacious congregational mosques, or "jawami", that books, other than the Quran, were eagerly and readily deposited. And while the majority of mosques were content with one library, a few 'jawami" had several and often large book collections" (Sibai, 1984, 408).

Baghdad, Egypt: "Books which were painstakingly copied and purchased at great expense were worthy of preservation; and their possessors bequeathed them to mosques, shrines or schools where they could be properly cared for and made accessible to scholars for ages to come ... Yakut, author of the celebrated geographical and biographical dictionaries, on his death in 1229, left his books as waqf (pious bequest) to the Zaidi shrine (also known as the Zaydi Mosque) on Dinar Street in Baghdad" (Mackensen, 1932, 279-280).

Cordoba, Spain: "From the customs of the common use of mosques and their belongings it is evident that those mosque libraries to which Ribera (in his dissertation) refers were used not only by students but also by teachers and worshipers and any others who wanted to use any particular book available in any mosque. Therefore, even if we suppose that there had been no public libraries distinct from the mosque libraries it will be a negation fact to say that there were no public libraries in Cordoba. The mosque libraries were in practice the public libraries" (Imamuddin, 1961).

Fez, Morocco: "The Sultan of Morocco, Abu Yusuf, having concluded peace with Don Sancho, demanded back the beautiful books which fell into his hands during his campaign in Moslem countries. The Spanish prince complied with his request, and sent to him a large number of books, which the Sultan deposited in a college which he had built at Fez. The books, thus, were placed at the disposal of the literary men who might require their use (Khuda Bukhsh, 1902, 128).

Delhi, India: Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari reports about the, supposedly illiterate bibliophile, Moghul Emperor Akbar : "His majesty's library is divided into several parts; some of the books are kept within, and some without, the Harem. Each part of the library is sub-divided according to the value of the books. Prose books, poetical works, Hindi, Persian, Greek, Kashmiri, and Arabic are all separately placed. In this order they are also inspected. Experienced people bring them daily and read before His majesty, who hears every book from the beginning to the end (Taher: 1994, 49).
Other places: "Libraries, public and private, were however not confined to the capital of Baghdad, but in course of time they made their appearance in almost every important cultural center of Islam. When the Abbasid empire was split up into many independent and semi-independent kingdoms and principalities, it undoubtedly meant a weakening of the central power of the Muslim state; but the cultural life of the people as a whole did not slow down as a result of political dismemberment. On the contrary, it received a fresh impulse at the hands of different rulers, who each vied with another in the patronage of learning and the promotion of arts and sciences. We thus find that the Umayyads of Spain, the Fatimids of Egypt, the Hamdanids of Aleppo, the Buwayhids of Persia, the Samanids of Bukhara, and the Ghaznavid rulers, all collected and established libraries in their respective seats of government" (Inayatullah, 1938, 135).

Madrasa Libraries: "A great impulse was given to the foundation of libraries by the wazir of the Saldjuk Sultan Malik Shah, Nizam al-Mulk, when he founded in Nishapur and Baghdad and other places college or Madrasas for public instruction. These colleges were not only endowed with funds for the salaries of the professors, but also provided with the most precious manuscripts of works dealing with the sciences taught at these institutions" (Sibai: 1984: 221)

Private libraries: Scholars all over had private collections for their own use. But some did it merely as a bibliophiles, and this activity was not limited to the scholars or elite. The famous Khuda Buxhsh Library, Patna, India, and the Salar Jung Museum & Library, are leading examples of one man's life long aim at building a unique collection. A single collection of over 25000 volumes was built by an automobile mechanic, Mr. Samad Khan, who resides in Hyderabad, India, and the same collection was recently acquired by the Chicago University Library Consortium for microfilming. Even nonliterates adopted this fashion.  While history has many, and the following amusing anecdote tells its own tale, the present century too has some of its kind.

Palace Libraries: According to Ibn Abi Usaybiya, famous biographer, it was in response to a summon from Sultan Nuh Ibn Mansur (sultan 366/976-387/997) that Ibn Sina visited the Samanids' capital, Bukhara. Ibn Sina's narrative about the Sultan's library makes interesting reading: "Having requested and obtained permission (from Sultan Nuh) to visit the library, I went there where I found many rooms filled with books which were packed up in cases (or trunks) row upon row. One room was allotted to works on poetry and Arabic philology; another to jurisprudence, and so forth, the books on each discipline being kept in a separate room. I then read the catalog of ancient authors and requested the books I needed. I saw (in this collection) books the very titles of which were unknown to most people, and which I myself have never seen either before or since" (Sibai: 1984: 197).

Royal Libraries or State Libraries: A state library other then private palace library is in case important in Islamic civilization, in tracing public library development. The palace in Cairo had a internal library called "Khazain al-Dakhila, and a State Library called Dar al-Hikma. Dar al-Hikma, a name common for information and library centres in the Muslim period, of Baghdad is most famous. A little lesser known, Dar al-Hikma, was founded in Cairo by the Fatimids ruler al-Hakim (Caliph 386/996-412/1021). The Egyptian historian Maqrizi in his Khitat provides a readable note about the library: "On Saturday, the tenth day of Jumai II of the year 395 (1004 AD), the building called Dar al-Hikma was opened in Cairo. Seekers of knowledge took up their assets. Books were brought from the book-chests of the palaces (residences of the Fatimid Caliphs), and the public was permitted to enter. Anyone was at liberty to copy the book he wished, and whoever wanted to read a certain book found in the library could do so. Men of learning studied the Quran, astronomy, grammar, lexicography and medicine. Moreover, the building was adorned by carpets and all doors and hallways had curtains. Managers, servants, porters, and other menials were appointed to maintain the building. From the library of the Caliph al-Hakim, books which he had donated, were brought (to Dar al-Hikma). (They were) in all sciences and literatures and of superb calligraphy such as no other potentate had even been able to collect. Al- Hakim permitted admittance to everyone, without distinction of rank, who wished to read or consult any of the books" (Sibai: 1984: 187).
4. **Education & Research**: Today very few Library and Information Science programs, in universities, include library history and history of book in general and Islamic librarianship in particular. Even wherever such a course exists, mostly it is included as a part of a foundation course. No University teaches, directly and explicitly, a course in Islamic librarianship.

For instance, Bahrain University has a course, "Libraries in the Arab world" (in 2-year undergraduate diploma); In Sultan Qaboos University, Oman has a course "History of information materials and institutions" (in Second year of BA in Library Science) Manuscripts and Arabic writing (in Third year of BA in Library Science) and Arabic Documents (in Fourth year of BA in Library Science); In Saudi Arabia the Course entitled "Foundations of Library and Information Science", includes 'history of books' (offered as core course in the library school) (Ashoor & Chaudhry: 1999, 45-65).

London University, Aligarh Muslim University, McGill University, etc., have courses to train Oriental librarians (Taher: 1997, 335). What is meant by Oriental librarians? Study of the Orient (or Eastern hemisphere), came to be called as Oriental studies. Librarians specializing in languages and cultures of the Orient came to be known as Oriental librarians. Since a large part of the Islamic resources emerge from the Orient, it is still pertinent to treat Oriental studies as inclusive of Islamic studies. In between the seventeenth and nineteenth century Oriental studies was considered as synonymous to Islamic studies. In the present century, Oriental studies as a term moved from Hindu Studies towards South East Asian area studies, that is, from theme based to geographic study. But for our present discussion we can still treat Oriental studies to include Islamic studies. One instance to support this scope of our definition, is the School of Oriental and African Studies, in UK., which includes Islam among its various religions of the Orient.

A number of research areas in Islamic librarianship are to be explored, including historical perspectives. Some themes that are of high priority include interdisciplinary dimensions and area study vistas, and many are highlighted in my published work (Taher: 1997, 28-29).

5. **Professional vistas**: We can deal this theme with technical, professional and marketing. In terms of technical area, the field of Islamic librarianship is yet to come to terms with a variety of issues. The debate is still on almost every aspect, such as, cataloging, classification, indexing, automation, data entry formats for bibliographic description (Arabic and other language MARC formats, or such adaptations are yet to be evolved). Ziauddin Sardar, a prolific professional, has developed a classification scheme in 1979 for Islamic studies, based on the facet analysis idea of Dr. S R Ranganathan. But this is not yet accepted in the professional circles. Some technical networking and documentation hurdles have been removed by ALESCO, Gulfnet, and so on. But much remains to be achieved, and this needs real mindset, attitudinal changes and professional commitment by all those who are concerned.

The first librarian in the Islamic library history, must have not dreamt that he will be in a future date termed as a book doling manager, who was otherwise a full-time bibliophile to the core. That professional might not even have dreamt that the scholarship which was integrated in his occupation, would be divorced in the 19th century, and the librarian, will be mechanically cataloging and classifying book titles, without an iota of thought on what the books contain. There is ongoing debate on this marital dispute that has engulfed that profession of the librarian of the historic era (Shera: 1980: 8).

To promote professionalism among Muslim librarians of the world, a significant platform exists, with its registered office at Malaysia, under the banner, Congress of Muslim Librarians and Information Scientists: (COMLIS) http://www.islam.gov.my/pustaka/k60.html. Its meetings are held, once in four years (1982, 1986, 1989, 1995 -). Founded in 1982 informally at its first
meeting, in Indiana, it has held its meetings (and conferences, simultaneously), at Malaysia (1986), Turkey (1989), Iran (1995), and next meeting is in offing. It has published many works, including its own conference papers. Another professional body is Islamic Library Association, with its registered office in Hyderabad, India, functionally located in the US. It has compiled a Directory of Islamic Libraries and Librarians, by Mohammed A S Khan (1983).

Apart from these, a valuable professional publication, worth mentioning here is a series, published by Library & Information Science Department, University of Karachi, Pakistan. It has published volume 1 'Fact sheet on Libraries in Islamic Countries' (1974), and volume 2 'Librarianship in the Muslim World' edited by Anis Khurshid and Malahat Kaleem Sherwani.

These apart, the profession has a solid base from other friendly clubs, associations, organizations, to gain momentum if it needs any, including, Middle East Studies Association in North America, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Va., Islamic universities at Islamabad, Malaysia, etc. While there is little to re-invent the wheel, there is an urgent need to use the available Islamic resources -- there are a host of publications already in market, such as, Islamic Culture (Hyderabad, India); Islamic Studies (Islamabad); Studies in Islam (New Delhi); Muslim World Book Review (U.K.); American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (Herndon Va., USA), Index Islamicus (London), (available now in CD-ROM), and so on.

6. Historiography: What is the sort historicity and type of historiography exists in Islam, in general and Islamic library historiography in particular? Let us reiterate that historiography is Islam faces the same issues that are faced by other historians and historicity, and nothing is so much unique in Islamic historiography. Hence it is apt to remind the realistic approach which a historian follows and which is different from other research, even social research. What makes a historians task different from other social scientists is well described by Reitzel and Lindeman (1982, 168). Why I am raising issues of historical evidence? The simple reason is as a student of history I fail to provide exact answers to various questions on historicity of the historiophiles of the Muslim countries. I fail to answers questions about why there are only few documents that need in-depth analysis of certain periods or certain activities, or why are instances of chronological difficulties in constructing the history as would be desired by a social scientist. Such questions are too many. What is the methodology of Islamic historiophiles can be viewed in the extensive analysis of a Western Islamists, Prof. Ataullah Bogdan Kopanski (1996: 17).

Islamic historiography: The state-of-the-art of this field is summarized "Muslim historiography appears to have originally developed independently of European influences. Until the 19th century Muslim writers only very seldom consulted Christian sources and almost never noted events in Christian countries. Fortunately, they displayed at times more curiosity about the non-Muslim peoples of Asia. The first and best history of the Mongol conquests in first half of the 13th century was the work of a Persian, Joveyni" (Encyclopedia Britannica: 1988, v.20, 627). What is evident is that while there was historicity and historic interests among Muslims, they relied on their own resources. This is may look localized in approach, but consider the contribution of a single scholar to the field of historiography, that of Ibn Khaldun (1302-1406 CE), the universal historian. His work, The Muqaddimah, is applauded by 20th-century English historian Arnold Toynbee: "a philosophy of history which is undoubtedly the greatest work of its kind that has ever yet been created by any mind in any time or place" (Encyclopedia Britannica: 1988, v.6, 222). The Book VI of the work deals with 'a sociology of knowledge'.

On the intermingling of sources and technology, or interface of history and computers, there is a need for some elaboration. Let me quote a Social Scientist who has made extensive studies of Islamic literary genres, Brannon M.Wheeler (1999:15), and who highlights the facets that an Islamists would face in terms of analyzing and dissemination of information, in print and electronic forms: "The culture surrounding the Internet and the ideas connected to it about access to and transmission of knowledge are quite different from those familiar to classical Islam. With the proliferation of easy book production, the impact of the Protestant Reformation, and an increasingly industrialized and segmented society, Western culture
adopted a less personal and more individualistic approach to the transmission of knowledge. Knowledge, especially religious knowledge and the knowledge of the past, is thought to be obtained from books. Written information is considered to be the primary source of knowledge, whereas oral information is useful as a secondary companion or commentary on the written. In some segments of Western culture, written knowledge is paramount to the extent that reliable knowledge is only to be found through a relationship between the book and the reader without the interfering mediation of information transmitted orally. Notions once common in Medieval Christendom, of books as a tangible link to past authority or reading as an act of piety, are replaced by a more strictly utilitarian notion of reading as the expedient acquisition of knowledge. ... The attitude shift represented by the Internet, placing value on the equality of access and ability to transmit information, is at odds with the basic principles inherent in the classical Islamic notions of knowledge and its transmission. Most integral to the classical Islamic ideal is using the probity of the transmitter to verify the reliability of the information transmitted. The stress is to be laid on establishing the character of the person doing the transmitting, and for transmitters of knowledge within the Islamic sciences one has access to many biographical dictionaries, but the circumstances of the Internet do not allow for reliable knowledge of the transmitter. In addition, the classical Islamic notion is centered on the controlled environment of the 'Majlis al-ilm' in which students are slowly and carefully initiated into positions from which they are authorized to transmit knowledge. The easy access of the Internet displaces the restricted access of the Majlis al-ilm and the social and intellectual stratification which surrounds it, especially the personal example of the Shaykh. There are no means to adjudicate between one piece of information and another, nor is there means to evaluate the significance of a given piece of information. The surfer on the Internet does not have physical contact with the Shaykh to help understand how to use the available information".

What has been done in Islamic library historiography is our concern here. Writing the history of libraries has been undertaken by many, some are named above and the bibliography appended to this work gives many more citations. How is this history written and what has gone in writing this is more important. As yet there is no single comprehensive work on Islamic librarianship. It is one way consoling that there is much written in the field of Islamic historiography and these have even ideological manifestations, such as, Taha Hussainism, Zia Golkapism, etc.. Whereas, Islamic librarianship, does not even have any ism, as such. It is all in almost a virgin area and it needs fresh simulation, and scholarly data mining of all that is lying scattered in enormous sources and multiplicity of languages and physical formats.

We may at best summarize the state-of-the-art and draw the outline of the field. The literature in English has the following historiographical attempts:

To understand the trends in the field of Islamic library history, historiophiles have published results in English and other languages. The list of these historians is long, including, Mohamed Sibai Sibai, Ruth Stellhorn Mackensen, S M Imamuuddin, Khuda Bukhsh, Sheikh Inayatullah, Ziauddin Sardar, etc.

Khuda Bukhsh seems to be the first Islamists in the East to collect original sources, Oriental and Occidental (Khuda Bukhsh: 1902). However, all history is to be improved upon, and Bukhsh is not an exception -- for instance, Bukhsh observes 'book stores were all small in size during the golden period of Islam' (Khuda Bukhsh: 1926:105-12). Whereas, the huge book store of al-Nadim narrates a different story.

Mackensen is probably the first European historian of Islamic librarianship, who worked during 1920s and 1930s. She spent considerable time documenting afresh all that was scattered. Her published works are still a primary source in non-Oriental literary genre (Mackensen: 1932-1939).

Her contemporary was then working in the East, Inayatullah (1938: 156). On the lack of historical sources he observes: "So far as I know, apart from the Egyptian writer Maqrizi’s description, in his Khitat, of the libraries that existed in his country and another Arabic work on libraries in Muslim Spain mentioned by Casiri, no systematic or satisfactory treatise on the numerous libraries that arose in the Muslim world has come down to us. It is only from
occasional notices in works on biography, history and belles-lettres that we learn of their existence and a few details about them. The sources of our information on this subject are scarce and scattered; and it is often the case that we learn of a library or collection of books only when we come upon a report of how it came to a regrettable end, either by dispersion or destruction by accidental fire or through an act of vandalism".

From 1940s to almost 1980s, Imamuddin, published works on major developments in Islamic history. He deals with the scholarship in general and includes, among others, library developments in Muslim countries. He has extensive research on the progress made during Muslim rule in Spain (Imamuddin: 1960).

Prof. Sibai’s (King Saud University, Riyadh) historical assessment is both, descriptive and analytical. It provides extensive references to Islamic librarianship, development of book, penmanship, professional approaches, types of libraries that emerged in the Islamic civilization, and related topics. This doctoral work appeared in print covering some major parts of the thesis, as an exclusive survey of Mosque librarianship (1984; 1987). Comments the reviewer, of this book: "Utilizing an extensive bibliography, Sibai (Library Science, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia), traces the beginning of mosque libraries in presenting a coherent picture of their procedures, services, and physical make-up. He provides the reader with some insight into the extent, value, and subject matter of the book collections found in mosque libraries, and covers several important issues including the management and finance of these libraries, their procurement and lending policies, as well as other regulations pertaining to their support and maintenance" (Book News: April 1, 1989, cited at Amazon.com)

Sibai (1984:174), like Inayatullah, laments on the poor status of the field of historical analysis of the book and library development, and deals with the reasons for such a sad story: "It is a matter of deep regret that Arab historians, Muslims or otherwise, have not left any consecutive or systematic account of the numerous libraries which flourished throughout the length and breadth of Islsamdom. Furthermore, almost all non-Arabic works on books and libraries, until very recently, said little or nothing about this subject which has significant bearing on understanding the whole spectrum of Muslim scholarship. As a result, we have to depend largely on 'stray and desultory scraps of information' found in various works on Muslim literature, religion, history, geography, biography, travel, etc."

Dr. Sardar (1986 and 1999) (leading information scientist, presently located in U.K.), provides new insights to the field. The Index Islamicus lists 57 publications of Dr. Sardar. Among many of his pinpointed observations, one such is: "In addition to bookshops, another institution of this period --ijarah-- seems to have been overlooked by Muslim historians. As a legal term, ijarah signifies permission granted for a compensation to use something owned by another person. In the specific context of bookshops, it refers to a book that has been 'hired' not just for study but also for the purpose of copying, and the right to copy it ... Not simply commercial lending libraries, they also served as centers for the dissemination of books" (1999: 12).

Those who made this history, include, Ibn al-Nadim (10th Century, A.C.) who was the first bibliographer, Ibn Sina (or Avicena) (10th Century, A.C.) the first librarian designate, Ibn Khaldun (14th Century A.C) the first Islamic historian (social historian in general, and specifically book and cultural historian).

Warraq Mohammed Ibn Ishaq Ibn al-Nadim (died 385/995), the author of the first catalog in Islamic librarianship, compiled his bibliographic work Kitab al-Fihrist. From this work a valuable reference is available on the levels, both intensity and extensity, of Muslim scholarship, and also on how the scholarly work progressed. For instance, Ibn Nadim wrote that Prince Khalid (son of Ummayad Caliph Ibn Yazid, 45/665-90/708) was the first to officially order the translations from Greek and Coptic works, in medicine, astrology, and alchemy. Ibn Nadim also reports that this scholar-prince was himself the author of several works, particularly in alchemy. This scholar-cum-book seller was fortunate to have witnessed the growth of the splendor that was Baghdad and its academies' collections. He was meticulous in his hunt for titles and identifying its location, whenever it was possible. The Fihrist has a
subject classification, and probably a contemporary scheme to represent the knowledge base of libraries: Koran, Grammar, History, Poetry, Dogmatic, Jurisprudence, Philosophy, Light Literature, Religion and Alchemy.

Writing history of Islamic library is one thing, creating professional paths for writing history is another. The latter is the concern of historiography. A trend set in the above studies of using case studies and literature surveys, hints at the techniques adopted and tools of the trade that are available for the historian. But the most significant point that comes up from the above literature review of work already done is, all these are individual efforts. Historical research done at individual levels is necessary to clear starting problems, but unless the work is taken up as a team research and with full-fledged institutional support, there is all chances of historic developments going at a very slow pace. How do these historians working get a boost in promoting the work they have taken up single handedly and painstakingly? How does the work get institutionalized and built solid foundations for further progress. Historiography combined with the skills of librarianship, archives, museums, anthropology, sociologists, etc., can form a basis for concerted efforts in a direction that will be unique in its historicity and singularly creative in area studies perspectives, where Islamic studies could be a standing example for other area study subjects.

Given the emergence of electronic publications in Islam, history, librarianship, etc., it is possible that team research could be done across the globe without much of the travel and loss of time in transit. Electronic copies of any and every document can be transferred instantly and major libraries of the world are facilitating digitizing of all documentary sources. In a few years of time from now, and with the availability of core research sources on the Web, major research projects in Islamic library history can be done across the continents and the results utilized universally without loss of time and energy. To digitize all Islamic library history related sources major funding hassles have to be accomplished, which will also take care of web hosting and archiving of such full text of the documents.

What is required for consolidation of historic resources and furthering its activities is the requirement of institutionalizing the art and craft and science and historicity of Islamic librarianship, all in one. The pattern to be adopted could be like that of the American organization, SHARP (Society for the History of Authorship, Reading & Publishing). Such a body, sponsored individually or collectively in a Muslim or non-Muslim space, could be the ideal frame of reference for all to join and collectively address the problem so far neglected from all corners.

7. Prospects: Whether there is end of history, or not, and whether it applies to Islamic library historiography (Mazrui: 1993: 513). This is not our concern. We are still beginning to write the real history of Islamic librarianship and when we have well advanced, then historiophiles can pose this question. At this stage our questions are methodological, critical, analytical, and strategical. Our concern, as professionals and belonging to an intellectual community is to review our own house and set all matters in order. Senior Orientalists Librarians, such as, Prof. W.C. Smith, the promoter of intellectual role for Islamic librarians (Smith: 1965), Prof. James D. Pearson, the man behind the single largest index of Islamic studies in European languages, Dara N Marshall, whose library history of medieval India (or Muslim librarianship) is informative source. Such outsiders have made significant contributions to promote Islamic librarianship. Are there any takers from inside?

If library history is the analysis of precursors and causational factors, there is not yet any such history of libraries. What is library history, otherwise? In Richard Krzys, opinion it is: “that branch of history that investigates the actions of people, the activities of agencies, or the effects of social movements within or contributing to the development of librarianship for the sake of professional awareness” (Krzys: 1975: 295). Even from this point of view there is not a single work in Islamic librarianship that can contribute to the development of librarianship for the sake of professional awareness.

Research in a narrow specialization is not our concern. A holistic approach to write the
history of Islamic librarianship is overdue (Taher: 1984). Such a holistic study is even today a necessity, for reasons, such as, a) to have clear understanding of the contributions it has made to the sociology of knowledge, to the growth of librarianship in general, and to the growth of a professional awareness about the real contributions of the Islamic librarianship in the society. A clear picture of the glorious days of librarianship in the context of golden age of Islamic civilization is a must. I intentionally use the phrase ‘glorious days of librarianship’, not with a pun, but with the tragic status of libraries, yesterday and today. By any simple definition of what is termed as libraries (not to say any thing about usable and user friendly libraries), the existing library situation in Muslim countries, with a few exceptions, is tragic, pathetic and least professional. It is common sense among the intellectuals and the professionals, alike, the if a library does not meet minimum standards, it can be called a reading room, or a coffee shop, with books, or an archive, but not a library in any case.

Let us go one step further, and ask what is the use of a history of usable libraries that have existed, as exceptions? James G Olle opines: "One value of library history needs little justification. Properly understood the library world as it is today, one must know how it has reached its present state. ... There are several valid reasons why we should study library history, but I doubt whether anyone who questions its value will be convinced of it usefulness by argument. The study of library history begins as an act of faith. It is easier to believe that it is worthwhile than it is to prove it" (quoted in Krzys: 1975: 297). Such conviction is writing library history is yet due and Islamic library history is just one such that has to be tackled by all concerned scholars. It is a pity that the profession of librarianship has not been able to do one single piece of creative work, which they do occupationally for others, as a religious duty, that is, organize and maintain their own printed documents, unprinted thoughts and reports.

8. Profile for good history: Proposing a profile of Islamic librarianship is important to present a framework for writing a useful history and a utilitarian historiography of the Islamic civilization. Such a profile of the field will help all others to follow the model, with necessary adaptations.

A. Quran, Hadith,
B. Islamic Law, (written word);
C. consensus of the Muslims Community (unwritten word);
D. historical narratives, diaries, biographies, autobiographies, travelogs, original manuscripts and other primary sources,
E. secondary sources, tertiary sources, printed and non-printed sources, including electronic and digital records,
F. printed histories of the land, socio-political conditions, cultural patterns,
G. survey of major libraries, archives, museums, palaces, individual and private collections
H. Library development in comparative perspectives in the respective era and respective geographic environments
I. Literacy contributions of the pre and the Islamic civilizational basis for Renaissance,
J. Collaboration with human experts in the field
K. Coordination with private agencies, NGOs, political bodies, dealing with Islamic studies, sociology, history, Oriental Studies, area studies, anthropological studies, cultural studies, philosophical studies, theological studies.
L. Coordination with academies, madrasas, Islamic centers of learning, research centers in traditional and modern institutions, universities departments of Islamic studies, Oriental studies, comparative religious studies, language and literature schools,
M. developing state-of-the-art machine based resources (software, retrieval tools) which can facilitate data entry, data storage, data sorting, data retrieval in different approaches and compatibility with languages, physical formats,
N. training of manpower who can start the work, prepare platform for the progress of work and facilitate future continuity of such herculean tasks.
9. **Summation**: If the Ummah, that is, the Muslim community, has to make use of its own glorious heritage and not attempt at re-inventing the wheel, they have to better know how and where they have missed the bus and set right the records of their own movement. Those who forget history will be forced to repeat it, and this is not necessary for a historically conscious society!!!

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"Books are needed in all useful scholarly pursuits. A student, therefore, must in every possible manner try to get hold of them. He must try to buy, or hire, or borrow them. However, the acquisition, collection and possession of books in great numbers should not become the student's only claim to scholarship. ... Do not bother with copying books that you can buy. It is more important to spend your time studying books than copying them. And do not be content with borrowing books that you can buy or hire. ...The lending of books to others is recommendable if no harm to either borrower or lender is involved. Some people disapprove of borrowing books, but the other attitude is more correct and a preferable one, since lending something to someone else is in itself a meritorious action and, in the case of books, in addition serves to promote knowledge," Ibn Jammah.

"The book is silent as long as you need silence, eloquent whenever you want discourse. He never interrupts you if you are engaged, but if you feel lonely he will be a good companion. He is a friend who never deceives or flatters you, and he is a comrade who does not grow tired of you," Al-Jahiz al-Hayavan.

"A book is the only orchard, I have ever seen which can be put in one's sleeve and the only park which accompanies a man as he goes. The book is the tongue of the dead and the voice of the living. He is an evening visitor who never sleeps until you sleep and never utters a word except what pleases you, never reveals a secret or abuses a deposit. He is the most faithful neighbor, just friend, obedient companion, submissive professor, expert and useful comrade with no desire to argue to or weary of his owner," Ibn al-Arabi, the great Muslim philosopher.

"We have companions, of whose conversation we are never tired, They are intelligent and trustworthy, whether they be present or absent. They give us the benefit of their knowledge -- and the knowledge of their past times -- and the benefit of their wisdom, their instruction and their sound judgment. We do not fear any disorder or ill treatment on their part; nor have we to guard ourselves against their tongue or hand. If you said that they were dead, you would not be wrong; and if you were to say that they are alive, even then you could not be contradicted," Ibn al-Tiqtaqi al-Fakhri.


"The Pen is the ultimate arbiter of human actions in the sight of the Lord," Justice Syed Amir Ali, Spirit of Islam

Book Borrowing: "Ask for me anything but not a book, my friend, and my house, my wings" (Arabic saying).

"A book is like a garden carried in the pocket" (Arabic saying).

"The book is the tongue of the dead and the voice of the living" (Arabic saying).

"Buy books, and write down knowledge, for weather is transitory, but knowledge is lasting," (Arabic saying).

"He who is one day older than you is a year wiser," (Arabic saying).
"It is for its contents that one kisses a book" (Arabic saying).

"The man who does not know how to think doesn't know how to live" (Arabic saying).

"Men are four: He who knows not and knows not he knows not; he is a fool - shun him; He who knows not and knows he knows not; he is simple - teach him; He who knows and knows not he knows, he is asleep - wake him; He who knows and knows he knows; he is wise - follow him," (Arabic saying).

"More precious than the blood of a martyr is the ink of knowledge," (Arabic saying).

"Mosques functioned as repositories for books," (Arabic saying).

"No man has enough knowledge," (Arabic saying).

"Repetition teaches the donkey," (Arabic saying).

"A scholar who does not produce is like a cloud that does not rain," (Arabic saying).

"Truth is the daughter of research," (Arabic saying).

"... there can be no education without books," (Arabic saying).

"What is learnt in youth is carried in stone," (Arabic saying).

"The letter written with musk should be sealed with ambergris," (Arabic saying).

"The wise rule the minds of nobles, and preachers rule the minds of the crowds," (Arabic saying).

"Acquire knowledge and teach it to the people," (Prophet Muhammed).

"He who leaves his home in search of knowledge walks in the palm of God," (Prophet Muhammed).

"Pondering for an hour is better then divine service for a year," (Prophet Muhammed).

"Search knowledge though it be in China," (Prophet Muhammed).

"The superiority of a learned man over the pious worshiper is like the superiority of the full moon-lit night over the rest of the stars," (Prophet Muhammed).

"To seek knowledge is the duty of every Muslim male and every female," (Prophet Muhammed).

"To seek knowledge for an hour at night is better than keeping awake (the entire night for prayers)," (Prophet Muhammed).

"Whoso acquires a learning other than that wherein the pleasure of Allah is sought, does not learn it but for gaining therewith the frailties of the world. He will not find on the Resurrection day the fragments of Paradise, meaning its air," (Prophet Muhammed).

"Wisdom increases the honor of the noble and exalt a servant as high as to raise him to the level of his master," (Prophet Muhammed).

"A word of wisdom which man learns is better for him than the world and all that is in it," (Prophet Muhammed).

"My Lord, increase my knowledge," (Quran).

"These are the signs of the 'Book of Wisdom','" (Quran).

"The similitude of those who ever charged with the (obligations of the) Mosaic Law, but who subsequently failed in those (obligations) is that of a donkey which carries huge tones of (books) without understanding what these contain," (Quran).
"Read in the name of our Lord who created, who taught to write with the pen, who taught man what he knew not," (Quran).

"If he (the teacher) is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind" Khalil Gibran, The Prophet.


"One people's misfortunes ar another people's instruction," Lebanese proverb.

"Praise be to Him who made men content with their intelligence," Lebanese proverb.

"If your learning comes from books, you are more often wrong than right," Lebanese proverb.

"A library constituted a gallery by itself," al-Maqdisi.

"It is better to know things than not to know things," Moroccan proverb.

"Just the sight of the book takes away the sadness of the heart," Moroccan proverb.

"The most valuable place in the world is the saddle on the horse; the best conversation companion in our time are books," Abu al-Tayib Mutannabi.

"We cannot look at the map of the world without seeing our own place on it," Jamal Abdel Nasser.


"The books in the nation are the flame of the light, the measurement of thought, the criterion of renaissance, and the fine flower of its originality and glory," Jamil Saliba (Abdel Amalek).

"Bookshops seem to have been the only successors to the old Arabian fairs," Ahmed Shalaby.

The book explores how Islamic civilization began to unravel under colonial rule, as its institutions, laws, and economies were often replaced by inadequate modern equivalents. Allawi also examines the backlash expressed through the increasing religiosity of Muslim societies and the spectacular rise of political Islam and its terrorist offshoots. Assessing the status of each of the building blocks of Islamic civilization, the author concludes that Islamic civilization cannot survive without the vital spirituality that underpinned it in the past. He identifies a key set of principles for moving Studies in islamic civilization. no Renaissance in Europe. For almost a thousand years Islam was arguably one of the. This book does a highly effective job of capturing the pioneering breakthroughs in the arts and sciences â€“ including religious freedom â€“ that took place under Islam a thousand years ago. I strongly urge Westerners to read it, so they can give law-abiding Muslims their just due for these remarkable contributions to modern civilization. By the same token, I urge all Muslims to read it, with an eye toward making similar contributions in the future. Studies in islamic civilization.
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