

SATAN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL*

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Satan

This old sport of the elements, this base-born earth,
Which spelled death for the yearnings of the Heavenly host,
Is being sent to its destruction by the One
Who willed it into being and gave it a name.
For my part, I made the West dream of monarchy
And broke the spell of mosque and church and idol-house.
I taught the poor to reconcile themselves to fate,
And gave the rich the mania for capitalism.
Who can put out the all-consuming fire of it,
Whose conflagrations are fanned by Satanic zeal?
Who can fell to the ground that old, deep-rooted tree,
Which flourishes because it is watered by us?

The First Adviser

What doubt is there that the Satanic order, which
Confirms slaves in their slavishness, is truly strong?
To prostrate themselves are these wretches destined from
The first: it is not theirs to stand erect and pray.
Desires are not, in the first instance, born in them:
And if they do, they die before they are mature.
It is a miracle of our unremitting labours that

* "Iblīs Kī Majlis-i Shūrā," *Armaghān-i Hijaz* (Kulliyāt-i Iqbal—Urdu [Lahore : Sh. Ghalam & Sons, 1977], pp. 647-57. 95

The *Ṣūfi* and the *mullā* are bondmen of kings.
Fit opium for the Eastern mind is slavery:
Apologetics and qawālī are no less.
What does it matter if the ḥajj fuss is still there?
The Muslim's unsheathed sword has gone completely blunt.
Of whose despair is this new ruling evidence
That no more may the Muslim now wage holy war?

The Second Adviser

Good or bad is this cry about the people's rule?
You do not seem to know of the world's latest threats.

The First Adviser

I know of them, but my sagacity tells me
We need not fear this plain disguise of rulership.
It was we who lent monarchy its democratic garb
When we found that man had become a little self-aware.
This rulership job is not what you think it is:
It does not need to be performed by kings and chiefs.
Be it a national assembly or a royal court,
The ruler is the one who covets other people's fruits.
Have you not seen the democratic system of the West?
—Fair-countenanced, but more black-souled than Jenghiz Khan.

The Third Adviser

Why worry if the kingly spirit is alive?
But what cure have we for the mischief of that Jew,
That Moses sans theophany, that Christ without a cross,
Who is no prophet, but who has a book to call his own?

I do not know what is there in this pagan's glance which
burns

All veils and which has brought forward the Day of
Reckoning

For all the peoples of the East and of the West?
What worse corruption of mind could there be than this
'That slaves have cut away the ropes of their lords' tents?

The Fourth Adviser

Look at the counterblast to that in Rome's assembly halls.
We made the Romans dream the dream of Caesar once
again,

Who is it who is clinging to the Mediterranean's waves,
Now growing like a pine-tree and now sobbing rebeck-like?

The Third Adviser

I am not sure of the foresight of this man, who
Exposed the politics of Europe in this way.

The Fifth Adviser (Addressing Satan)

O you, whose ardent spirit is the motive force that runs
The world, you have at will unveiled things that lay veiled,
Your heat enkindles mere clay into warm vitality,
Your teaching made a wise man of the Fool of Paradise.
He whom these simple-minded humans call their Lord
Does not know human nature better than you do.
Those whose life's task was worship, praise and going
round and round
Will always keep their heads bowed down in envy of your pride.

Although the West's magicians are all your disciples, yet
I have now lost all faith in their sagacity.
That Jewish mischief-maker, Mazdak's soul reborn,
Will badly tear to shreds all fabrics that are there.
A desert crow the equal of the eagle and the hawk!
O how soon do the times change their complexion, O how
soon !

What we so foolishly took for a mere handful of dust
Has spread and covered all the spaces of the sky.
So frightful is this menace of the future that today
The mountains, meadows, streams are all atremble,
facing it.

My Lord, the world that is dependent on your stewardship
Is going to become one awful topsy-turvydom.

Satan (Addressing His Advisers)

(1)

The whole world of the elements is under my control,
The earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the fold-upon-fold skies.
When I warm to the right degree the Western peoples' blood,
Then there will be great fun for East and West to watch.
One incantation of mine can turn raving mad
Both politicians and caretakers of the church.
If some fool thinks that Western culture's winecups are mere glass,
Let him try and destroy them for good by just breaking them.
The needle of a Mazdakian logic cannot mend
A madman's garment's collar torn by nature's hand.

How can these wretched communist tramps frighten me,
These feather-brained, wild-looking ne'r-do-wells?
The only threat I fear is from the *ummah* of Islam,
For in its ashes there still are some embers of desire.
There are in it a handful still of persons who
Perform their morning-time ablutions with
Tears of devotion and solicitude.
Whoever has insight into the ages' inwardness
Knows that Islam, not communism, is the future's threat.

(2)

I know this ummah does not any more abide
By the Qur'ān and that its creed is capitalism.
I also know that in the dark night of the East
The Ḥaram's holy ones have no White Palm to show.
But I fear that the modern world's demands
My bring to light the Prophet's law again.
I seek protection from this awesome sacred law,
A law which safeguards women's chastity,
Which challenges men's manhood and which breeds true men.
It is a sentence of death for all kinds of slavery.
It is the same for everyone, beggar or king.
It cleanses wealth of all kinds of impurity,
And makes the rich custodians of all that they possess.
What greater revolution could there be in thought and deed
Than laying down that all land is God's property, not kings'.
It is best that this law remains concealed from people's view.

How fortunate the Muslims themselves have lost faith in it!
Let them remain involved in theological disputes
And exegetic controversies over the Qur'ān.

(3)

Let not the night of these God-knowers be lit up
Whose thunderous hosanna, "God is great," can shake the world.
Is Mary's son dead or will he live till the end of time?
Are Allah's attributes distinct from His essence or part of it?
Who is the Promised One? Is he Jesus of Nazareth
Or some renewer with the attributes of Christ?
Are the words of the Qur'an uncreated and eternal, or
Created and time-bound? And which of these twodoctrines will
Ensure salvation for a Muslim's soul?
Are not these idols fashioned by theology
Enough to keep the Muslims busy in this age?
Keep them busy with these:and far from action's field
So that they lose all their chessmen on life's chessboard.
It will be good if they remain slaves until Judgment Day,
And leave this unabiding world for others to exploit.
Their poetry and mysticism are most fit for them,
For they conceal from them the spectacle of life.
I dread the waking up of this *ummah* whose faith
Consists in exploration of the universe.
Keep it engaged in recitations, prayers and counting beads:
Confirm it in its quietist, monastic frame of mind,