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Contents

Preface

All religions have come to clarify the duty of man with God as the creator of existence and society, and with other human beings as well as himself and the world of nature and creation or existence.

Man's relationship with the four things God, society, self and the universe has been one of the necessities of every religion throughout human history, and in this regard, religious teachings in the form of belief in monotheism and resurrection on the one hand and on the other hand, the guidance of human towards monotheistic teachings which has been sent through divine revelation, as well as through prophets and messengers, so that man can achieve moral and spiritual excellence and a happy life which is the main goal of monotheistic life, and human happiness is also in the shadow of moral and spiritual life.

Religions have made a lot of efforts in simplifying life and exploiting this world to reach the hereafter and eternal life, so that man thinks from the passage of this world to the hereafter and eternal life, and this world with all its beauties is considered merely a passage to reach the hereafter and eternal life.

Loving others and moral virtues, it is one of the most important things in this passage to remove man from ego, selfishness, and self-centeredness and give him a high level in the peak of monotheism.

Celestial religions have paid the most attention in the field of religious ontology, theology and eschatology, and in the collection of religious education, such topics are known as the principles of

religion. In the main texts of religions, the image presented of the origin of creation has a remarkable similarity.

Academic and comparative discussions about Religions are always needed to keep a multi-polar society like India alive, and the editorial board of the International Journal of religious thoughts invites researchers of all religions and academics to participate and write articles to add with their view's richness of this Journal.

Therefore, due to the importance of the subject, the International Journal of Religious Thoughts has tried to show its interest to these vital and civilizing matter by dedicating this issue to it in a series of religious discussions. It is hoped that discussing such issues in this Journal and expressing the views of thinkers and experts in this field can play a vital role in removing dust from the skirt of this sacred institution.

Hujjat-ul-Islam Dr. Reza Shakeri

Chief Representative

Al Mustafa International University, in India

Editorial

Another Issue of 'International Journal of Religious Thoughts' is with you. This issue deals with the most important subjects in our life. Basically, this journal tries to provide religious solutions for issues (ethical, cultural, social and family issues) that people face in their daily life. Our researchers from all religions have examined these issues from different angles and are trying to discuss these issues from the perspective of different religions. Due to the importance of these subjects in the world, we dedicated the current issue to these topics. With every succeeding Issue, the response that we are getting in the form of letters, mails and contributions from the learned authors has been encouraging for us. It is an indication in itself as regards the popularity of 'Religious Thoughts' that it has achieved. Our main goals in publishing this journal have been to inform the educated class about the common points of religions regarding the beliefs, morality, mysticism, spirituality, peace and security, so that we can reach an ideal, progressive, and stress-free society. Another point that may be of interest to our worthy readers is that 'Religious Thoughts' has now been allotted ISSN number and we are trying to get the ISI standard (Scopus Title Evaluation) for this journal soon. It is a milestone in our journey, which started with the realization of the need to publish a Journal that presents discussions on Inter-Faith and various positive aspects of religion to Indian and Iranian readers. The publication is a sincere attempt by Al-Mustafa Islamic Research Society to highlight those different paths and processes of thought exist in the world. We believe that initiating the process of dialogue and expression of different views

and thoughts always adds to sustenance of mutual understanding. In a world, where difference of opinion offers leads to misunderstanding and conflicts, we wish to use the tools of dialogue and interaction for better understanding and human relations. We intend to and have tried to take a deeper look at various existing religions and to develop a spirit of togetherness. Study of culture and religion shows that, peace oriented, convergent and scholarly approaches are welcomed by the right-thinking people in India and Iran both. While thanking the scholars and experts on the subject, we earnestly hope that they will continue to patronize us in this momentous task through their constructive criticism and suggestions.

Dr. Syed Fayaz Husain

Editor-in-Chief IJRT

IMĀM 'ALI ON SOCIO-POLITICAL ETHICS TO SERVE HUMANITY

Prof. Latif Hussain Shah Kazmi[1]

ABSTRACT:

Imām'Ali, the first Imam of the series of Twelve Imāms *(Ithnāashri)* and the fourth Caliph of Islam, possesses the unique qualities of head and heart in dealing with the creation of Allah, more especially the human beings, without any discrimination. As a dignified Saviour of humanity, his vision, mission, approach and methodology dealing with human beings require no explanation and exploration, but all is pragmatically self-explanatory. After the Prophet of Islām, Imām' Ali's teachings became a fine example of perfect leadership for good governance, tolerance and other virtues of the socio-political life of believers. For Imām' Ali, exemplary leadership in the Islāmic framework is based on the qualities like tolerance, kindness, humbleness, open-mindedness, steadfastness, honesty, equality, generosity, love and goodwill, doing justice to all and self-control as well. All such essential qualities can enrich a ruler's personality to maintain a general legal system applicable to managing all the affairs of man's personal and socio-political life. In fact, in Imām' Ali's life, one finds all these ideals, and others realized to the extent humanly possible.

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[1] - Professor & Ex-Chairman, Department of Philosophy,Aligarh Muslim University,

In this short version of research paper, we shall examine Imām'Ali's ethical philosophy concerning socio-political governance to infer the salient features of dignified humankind in the light of his art and thought foundedon Islam as a religion based on love and adoration to Allah and service to humanity.

KEY WORDS: Qur'ān, Prophet Muhammad**,** Imām 'Ali, *Shūrā*, Ethical Philosophy, Service to Humanity, Socio-Political Governance, Moral Principles, *Sultan.*

A. INTRODUCTION: IMĀM 'ALI AND HIS VISION AND MISSION FOR A GOOD LEADERSHIP:

Imām 'Ali, the spring of knowledge possesses remarkable spiritual, psychological, socio-political and ethico-legal qualities to understand the creation of Allah, His Message and Mission. His entire life was devoted to the Will of Allah and prophetic vision and mission of translating the Words of Allah (the Qur'ān) into actions on various aspects of life. He was convinced that Islam as religion *(Din)* anchored on love and adoration to Allah and service to humanity based on justice and spiritual sensitivity.

Imām 'Ali's most famous *Nahj al-Balāghah.*is written in Arabic. It mostly deals with the conception of God, dimensions of Faith, the rights of God, man and non-human beings, virtues and vices, rights and duties of non-Muslims, women, weaker sections, rules of government and rights and duties of a ruler or leaderor administrator and subjects, the Spiritual kingdom, Soul andthe Secrets of Human kingdom, execution of the lawful and abstinence

from the unlawful, gratefulness, patience, honesty, pride, anger, Humility etc.

After the Prophet of Islām, Imām ʿAli's teachings became the fine example of perfect leadership for good governance, tolerance and other virtues of socio-political life of believers. In fact, for Imām ʿAli, a fine leadership, in Islāmic framework, based on the qualities like tolerance, kindness, humbleness, open-mindedness, steadfastness, honesty, equality, generosity, love and goodwill, doing justice to all and self-control as well, have wide scope which are essential qualities for a ruler to maintain general legal system applicable to the management of all the affairs of man's personal and socio-political life. In fact, in Imām ʿAli's life one clearly finds all these and other such realized to the extent humanly possible.

A major portion of the *Nahj al-Balāghah*powerfully deals with the virtue of good administration on the above-mentioned principles, its various aspects and modes of achievement. We shall refer a few examples to the present context and see how Imām ʿAli translated the Words of God and traditions of the Prophet(S) into action and left significant instances of preaching and practicing such great values of human life leading to good governance. He was not only a spiritual guide for the people but also worked for their all-round development based on spiritual-material balance. His principles of good leadership in various fields of human life were anchored on the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet ofIslām.

In the *Nahj al-Balāghah,* Imām ʿAli has explained the principles of good leadership essential for fair governance and other aspects of

political ethics. Thus, in present paper we shall concentrate our attention on the *Nahj al-Balāghah*of Imām 'Ali regarding tracing out some main ethical principles of a socio-political system with good leadership.

Imām 'Ali, after imbibing the great governing qualities of the Prophet, lays down some essential conditions for the good leadership and governance for a Muslim *Amir, Sultan* or ruler. According to him, proper running of an Islāmic State, a Muslim Ruler needs to execute good Governance, which is not factually possible without adhering to these fundamental ethical commandments in Islamic framework. Every ruler or *Amir* has to care for the rights of his subjects and must justly and faithfully know his duties without which he cannot get salvation in the world-hereafter. In this regard, the Imam has laid down some significant ethical principles for serving people.

B. Imām 'Ali's Socio-Political Ethics to Serve Humanity

Imām Ali lays down the following main ten main ethical commandments or moral principles of a socio-political system to serve humanity in a more appropriate way. Let us briefly discuss them:

1. MAINTAINING JUSTICE AND EQUAL TREATMENT:

The most striking feature of Islāmic religion are grounded in peace, justice and equality. It ordains us to be sincere and friendly to all human beings and has very carefully elaborated upon human rights and duties since its very inception.

The *first Principle* states that in any occurrence, the ruler should consider that justice be maintained and no one is allowed to take law and order in his hands and destabilize the norms by doing injustice. Imām 'Ali's prime aim of the state is to establish justice and maintain politico-religious rules for human rights and general welfare of humanity.

Imām 'Ali points out that it is the prime duty and responsibility of the concerned learned authority to treat people justly according to their merits, needs, and other socio- political conditions. Again in his famous letter to Malik al-Ashtar, the then appointed Governor of Egypt, the Imām advises him to show good behaviour and tolerance to his people for according to the Holy Qur'ān justice is very near to pity and righteousness.[21] Thus, Imām 'Ali instructs:

> You should know that the most conductive for the good idea of the ruler towards his subject is that he should extend good behaviour to them, listen to their hardships and avoid putting them to unbearable troubles. You should, therefore, in this way follow a course by which you will have good ideas towards your subjects because such good ideas would relieve

you of great worries.[1]

2. CARING FOR NEEDY AND DESERVING PEOPLE:

The *second principle* of serving humanity is a good leadership in governance states that a ruler should consider fulfilling the needs of needy or deserving people as the best form of worship. As the Prophet (S) said that all human beings are Adam's offspring and Adam was born of clay; nobody should transgress and harass people and realize that all human beings are the family of Allāh, who is the Creator and Sustainer of all.[2]Imām 'Ali, therefore, stresses that a true ruler must see that nobody should suffer for his basic needs. Thus, it is an important condition of good governance for a Muslim ruler that he should always be watchful of the needs of the needy. He categorically underlines that taking care and meeting out of the needs of the subjects is the highest kind of worship of a God-fearing ruler. Therefore, the *Amir* or ruler should not delay fulfilling needs of the needy for his personal comforts or

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[1]Imām 'Ali, *Nahj al-Balāghah,* (Eng. Tr., (1401 A.H.'1981 A.D.) Ansariyan Pub. Qum, Iran, Letter No. 53, p. 459.

[2]See The full version of Sermon at Farewell *(Khutbah Haj al-Widah)* in *Siyasi WasiqajatazAhad –i-Nabvi ta ba Khalifat-i-Rashidah* (Urdu tr. By Mawlana Abu Yahya Imām Khan Nowshahravi (Majlis Taraqi Adab, Lahore), pp. 220-226 *(full Khutbah)* ;also *Nasai, Kitabal-Iman*,no.46;Ahmadibn-Hanbal,*al-Musnad,* No.5,197 and see also Abu Abdullah Mohammad bin Ismail Bukhari, *Bukhari Sharif* (Urdu tr. Maulana Abdul Hakim Khan Akhtar Shahjahanpuri (Checked and arranged by Syed Hamid Latif Chishti), ('Atiqad Publishing House Delhi, 1413/1993, (Vol. 3rd), *ahadith* Nos.2023, Bab1143, p.744;2230, Bab, 1232, p.832 and see also 2236-2243, pp.834-838, (hereafter: *Bukhari Sharif,* Delhi, 1993). See further for 'human beings are the family of Allah', Bayhaqi, *Kitabal-Sunan, Shuabal-Iman*, Nos. 4243, 7446 & 7447.

any other vested interest.[1]Imām ʿAli himself took great care of the needy ones.

Some loyal friends, with goodwill, advised the Imām to adopt greater flexibility in his policies for the sake of higher interests. Imām ʿAli did not accede to all such suggestions and advices and forcefully replied to them:

> Do you ask me to seek support through injustice [to my subjects and to sacrifice justice for the sake of political advantage]? By God! I will not do it as long as the world lasts and one star follows another in the sky [i.e. I will not do it as long as the order of the universe exists]. Even if it were my own property, I would distribute it with justice, and why not when it is the property of God and when I am His trustee?[2]

3.   SIMPLICITY IN LIFESTYLE: CAREFULNESS FOR FOOD AND DRESS:

The *third principle* of good leadership for better governance is about dress and food which are the symbols of simplicity and high standard of serving humanity. For serving people in their essential affairs, Imām ʿAli states that a ruler must try to follow the examples set by the Prophet of Islām. The ruler should not habituate his self for wearing expensive dresses and eating fine food. It is related that when Imām ʿAli was installed as a Caliph, he bought from the market for three *Dirham* a robe which had sleeves extending lower than the hands and was in length lower than the

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[1] Imām ʿAli, *Nahj al-Balāghah, op.cit.*, Letter No. 53, pp. 457-59.
[2]Imām ʿAli, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, (Qum edition), Sermon, 124, p.222.

knees. He cut the robe with a knife. People asked him why he had done that. He replied that the cutting had made it clean and hospitable. It had become befitting and respectful for the followers of a faithful ruler.[1]

Imām ʿAli himself also pointed out that according to Islāmic socio-political perspective, the *Imām*, *Amir* or the ruler is the protector and trustee of the rights of the people and responsible to them. If one is asked as to which of them exists for the other, it is the ruler who exists for the people and not vice versa. SaʿadīShīrāzī has a similar idea in his mind when he says: "It's not the sheep who are to serve the shepherd, But it is the shepherd who is for their service."[2]

4. PASSING JUDGMENT WITH WISDOM AND PATIENCE:

The *fourth* important principle of good leadership is related to passing of the religious edicts. A ruler should be lenient and should avoid being unnecessarily cruel while passing judgments. He should be polite in his conversation while dealing with public matters. If anyone objects, he should be listening to him attentively. The ruler should not feel ashamed in talking to weak and poor.[3] He should also not punish the close relatives or friends instead of the culprit. However, in present day world punishing one for the sins of the other is a common occurrence especially while dealing

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[1]Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, *Zakhirat-ul-Muluk,* (Niyaz Ali Khan Tajir Kutub Matbai, Afghani,Amritsar, 1321 H),pp.105-108.

[2] *Cf.Al-Tawhid* "The Glimpses of *Nahjal-Balāghah*, Part IV-Government and Justice" by *Murtadha Mutahhari* (*Trans. from Persian by Ali Quli Qara'i),* via internet.

[3] *Ibid.,* Letter 31, p.428.

with the problems of terrorism and lawlessness.

Imām ʿAli in the above context mentions that all persons are equal in the eyes of Allāh and before His Ordained Law and for a true Muslim ruler high and low ranks do   not count. Thus, the Imam says:

> No individual, however eminent and high his station in religion, is not above needing cooperation of the people in discharging his obligations and the responsibilities placed upon him by God. Again, no man, however humble and insignificant in the eyes of others, is not too low to be ignored for the purpose of his cooperation and providing assistance.[1]

5.   QUICK IN MAKING LEGAL DECISION:

Pinpointing on the *fifth* important commandment of serving humanity through a good leadership for proper governance, Imām ʿAli emphases that a ruler should not show leniency or be lazy in carrying out God's commands for gaining the good will of the people or any other personal interest or fame. He should not oppose God and *Sharīʾah*to please people. For proper functioning of the government, Imām ʿAli instructs **Malik al-Ashtar**, the then appointed governor of Egypt, "Avoid haste in matters before their time, slowness at their proper time, insistence on them when the propriety of action is not known or weakens when it becomes clear. Assign every matter its proper place and do every job at the

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[1] Imām ʿAli, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, (Qum edition), Sermon: 214, p.364.

appropriate time."[1]

Thus, Imām 'Ali holds that the *Amir* must understand that an important characteristic of governance is that half the subjects are always unhappy with the *Amir* or ruler. It is not possible to please both the accuser as well as the accused. Under any circumstances, the ruler should please God while discharging his duties according to the Law (*Sharī'ah*) and should not be discouraged by the displeasure of his subjects. It is not possible for a fair and just ruler to please all his subjects. If God is pleased with him, He can please all his subjects as He has the power to do so. Thus, Prophet of Islām has said that whosoever pleases God regardless of the displeasure of the people for their unjust demands, God is pleased with him and He pleases all other people. Therefore, for the Imām a just and honest ruler should execute the Law of God and please Him only.[2]

6. ESTRANGEMENT OF WEALTH, POWER AND NAME AND FAME:

While serving humanity, the *sixth condition* of good governance enjoins upon a ruler not to run after wealth and power or name and fame. He must accept the fact that his being a ruler is only by the grace of God. With the wealth and power bestowed upon a ruler by the Almighty, he can earn for himself salvation in the hereafter or bring upon himself the eternal curse. In other words, Imām 'Ali points out that the ruler should realize and understand that 'power', if it is properly exercised, leads to *Sa'ādah'* (eternal

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[1]*Ibid.,* Letter, 53, p. 618, (Tehran, 1980 ed.).
[2]*Ibid.,* Letter 31, pp.424-26 (Qum edition).

Blessings) and if it is misused, it will lead to eternal destruction.[1] Many a rulers in this world have become proud of the temporary wealth and have spoiled their faith by unrestrained material desires. Thus, the power of today is with the ruler but he should not make the wealth of this transitory world a seed of eternal bondage. He should serve the path of justice and be content with his efforts for reformation. Thus, a ruler should try his best not to deprive himself of this habit of administering justice and serving people in their critical matters.   In this regard, Imām 'Ali also instructs one of his governors saying:

> Beware of comparing yourself to Allāh in His greatness or likening yourself to Him in His power, for Allāh humiliates every claimant of power and disgraces everyone who is haughty…I ask Allāh through the extent of His mercy and the greatness of His power of giving a good inclination that He may prompt me and you to advance a clear plea before Him and His creatures in a manner that may attract His pleasure along with handsome praise among the people, good effect in the country, an increase in prosperity and a heightening of honour and that He may allow me and you to die a death of virtue and martyrdom. Surely, we have to return to Him.[2]

The Imām emphasizes that it the grace of Allāh that He has given power and ability to a *sultan* or *Amir* to serve His creation so the he

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[1]*Ibid.,*p. 429.
[2]Imām'Ali, *Nahj al-Balāghah,*(Tehran, 1980 ed.),Letter, 53, pp.618-19.

should always thank Him and should not work for power or name and fame. Moreover, they must know that only rightfulness would attract them while wrongness would detract them.[1]

7. *SHŪRĀ*(CONSULTATION):

There is an important principle of good leadership for fine governance to which Imām ʿAli stresses and that is *Shūrā* (consultation). The ruler or Saviou rshould always try to visit *or seek advices from the company of the learned, experienced and mentally sharp religious scholars (ʿUlema) and faithful righteous persons as committee members.*

Imām ʿAli emphasizes the significance of consultation *(Shūrā)* and advises that the ruler should consult a counselor who has deep religious, political and ethical knowledge and experience. He should be approached, invited or consulted in various public matters. Such an act of consultation will enhance the progressive measures of the government and provide strong confidence to the ruler in solving of the crucial political matters.

Imām ʿAli advises that a just, honest and faithful ruler should seek the association of religious scholars and loyal advisors in governing matters. According to him, even though at present the number of these scholars is very rare, yet if fortunately, the ruler finds some ones he should immediately seek their association for advices and should keep himself away from the company of ignorant, unjust, dishonest and cunning persons who pose as scholars and pious men but for their worldly desires. Throughout

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[1]Imām ʿAli, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, (Qum edition), Sermon: 128, p.228.

the ages, we find that the majority of the so-called religious scholars or mystics practiced sycophancy as they had been favouring and praising every tyrant ruler for their own selfish interests and timely worldly gains.

8. KINDNESS AND CAREFULNESS TO ALL SUBJECTS *(RA'IYYAH)*

The Prophet of Islām has categorically stated: "Show mercy to those on earth so that He who is in heaven will have mercy on you."[1] To him, "The best of the people is the one who is the most beneficial for the people."[227] He possessed the unique qualities of doing-good (*ihsan*) to all people and nations and emerged as a Perfect Ideal of moral life.[328] Thus, in the light of the Qur'ānic teachings and Prophetic traditions the rulers are, in fact, the people's trustees, not their lords. Imām 'Ali got inspiration from the traditions of the Prophet and preached and practiced the virtues of kindness, tolerance and polite behaviour with peoples of all faiths and beliefs and instructed the responsible public authorities to do the same.

Imām 'Ali gives a message to those political leaders to behave justly and exercise their kind and tolerant behaviour while dealing with the public affairs and also warns them that in any case fundamental human rights should not be violated. In this regard, in his letter to the governors, administrators and the collectors of

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[1]See Bukhari, *al-Jami al-Sahih, Kitab al-Tawhid,* No.2.

[2]*Jami'al-Sagheer:* 661/2 (cf. *Muntakhab Ahadith,* [A Collection of Selected Qur'ānic *ayat* and Prophet's Teachings], English trans., Dr. F. U. Farooqi Qasmi (New Delhi: Islamic Book Service,2002),p.478.

[3] Nasr, S. H. & Leaman O., (edts.), *History of Islamic Philosophy* (II), (Routledge, London, 1960), pp. 847-8.

revenue, the Imam says:

> "Behave yourself justly with the people and act with endurance with regard to their needs, because you are the treasurers of the people, representatives of the community, and the ambassadors of the Imāms. Do not cut away any one from his needs and do not prevent him (securing) his requirements. For collection of revenue from the people do not sell their winter or summer clothes, nor cattle with which they work nor slaves. Do not whip any one for the sake of money. Do not touch the property of any person whether the Muslim or a protected unbeliever…"[1]

Further, in the process of good governance based on qualitative leadership, Imām ʿAli also disliked and rebuked those persons (whether authorized or otherwise) who failed to defend their co-religionists or non-Muslims against oppression and injustice. In the same manner when he appointed Muhammad son of Caliph Abu Bakr as the Governor of Egypt, he instructed him to be equitable to the non-Muslims, to do justice to an oppressed person, to be severe upon the oppressor and to be indulgent towards the people as for as possible and to be kind to them. It is also necessary that in the matter of truth the far and the near should be equal in his eyes.[2]

9. SELECTIONS OF LOYAL GOVERNING BODIES:

Imām ʿAli's fine commandments regarding good leadership direct

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[1] Imām Ali, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, (Qum, ed., 1981), (Letter: 51, p. 454).
[2] *Ibid.*, (Letter No. 27, pp. 414-6).

a ruler not to be unmindful of the betrayal of trust by his subjects or servants in appointing honest and just officers. He should keep a strict vigil on the activities of his public officers so that they do not become cruel and break the trust of their subjects. Imām ʿAli advices his commander that if any subject suspects him of high-handedness or any other confused matter, explain to him in clear terms your position and remove his suspicion and this would be a fine exercise of your soul. It would create a sense of respect, responsibility and trust for you in your subjects and the good governance will bear fruit.[1] Therefore, the Imām mentions that the ruler should not appoint wolfish, tyrants, dishonest and greedy persons as the officers over the oppressed people. Moreover, when someone's tyranny and betrayal is exposed, he should be made accountable and due punishment be given to him so that others may get a lesson. The *Sultan* should not take minor mistakes of public servants easy but time and again give them instructions for good governance.   He should also not hesitate in punishing the guilty ones and at the same time appreciate the works of those who follow the right principles in serving humankind.[2]

10. QUALIFIED AND HONEST OFFICERS:

Another important principle of good leadership for proper governance stipulated by Imām ʿAli speaks about the intelligent, psychologically sound and devoted ruler. For both the spiritualists and political leaders, wisdom and sagacity are indispensable qualities. On the basis of these qualities a ruler can know the reality

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[1]*Ibid.*, (Tehran ed., 1980), Letter, 53, pp. 616.
[2]Imām ʿAli, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, (Qum edition), Letter, 53, pp.462-63.

and various dimensions of a critical case. If there is an open occurrence, the ruler should decide it according to law of *Sharī'ah*. If it is a complicated and a difficult issue, then he should ascertain the truth through his wisdom but under the light of the Qur'ān and traditions.[1]   In fact, the reason or wisdom and understanding of a ruler help him to go into deep and find out the causes and consequences of the problem. Thus, Imām ʿAli holds that knowledge, sagacity, prudence and wisdom are the pre-requisite qualities for a true and successful leader or ruler in the process of his good governance.[2]Imām ʿAli, in a letter sent as a circular to army commanders, instructing them that they should use their wisdom and treat their subjects in keeping with the imperatives and contingencies of human psychology and consider them as their own relatives. The Imām says:

> It is an obligation that an official should not behave differently with the people (*ra'iyyah*) on account of a distinction he receives or material advantage that he may achieve. Instead these favours from Allāh should bring him nearer to God's creatures and increase his compassion towards his brethren.[3]

In this way, Imām ʿAli tried to select intelligent, honest, bold, morally and psychologically sound governors, commanders, army officers and other public servants during his short tenure. It all was so because he showed an amazing sensitivity to justice and

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[1]*Ibid.*, Letter, 31, pp.424-28.
[2]*Ibid.*, Letter (Instruction), 53, pp.464-67.
[3]*Ibid.*, Letter, 50, p.453.

compassion towards the people of Allāh and a great respect for them and their rights, which, as reflected in his sayings, letters etc, is an exemplary and unique attitude towards good governance and sound political leadership.

Describing some important aspects of good leadership and balanced governance, we find Imām 'Ali's another letter in the *Nahjal-Balāghah*consisting of instructions to the collectors of *zakat*, and is entitled: 'To the officials assigned to the job of collecting zakat'. We are placing this letter here to show to what extent Imām 'Ali was meticulous   in matters pertaining to public affairs especially to justice and rights of the people, being attentive not only to main points but also to minute details. Here are the Imām's instructions for public servants or rulers:

> Move on with the fear of God, who is One and has no partner. Do not intimidate any Muslim. Do not trespass upon **his land so as to displease him**. Do not take from him more than Allāh'sshare in his property. When you approach a tribe, at first come down at their watering place, stay there instead of entering their houses. Approach them with calm dignity and salute them when you stand amongst them, grudge not a proper greeting to them. Then say to them "O servants of God, the *Walī*(and) *Khalīfah*of God has sent me to you to collect from you Allāh'sshare in your property. Is there anything of His share in your property? If there is, return it to His *Walī*." If someone says 'No', then do not repeat the demand. If someone answers in the

affirmative, then go with him without frightening, threatening, or compelling him. Take whatever gold and silver he gives you. If he has cattle or camels, do not approach them save with his permission, because the major part belongs to him. When you arrive (into the cattle enclosure), do not enter upon them in a bossy and rude manner.[1]

D. CONCLUDING REMARKS:

The principles/commandments of serving humanity through a good leadership for honest governance enumerated by Imām ʿAli are significant ones and are not difficult of achieving as well. These are very basic commandments for leading a pious and simple life which is the primary requirement of a fair and just ruler. It is a pity that our rulers who claim to be Muslims have strayed far away from these norms of simple and good life and have adopted an ostentatious and lavish life-style which lacks spiritual and humane values. It is only after a ruler rises above the worldly material considerations and leads a simple life that he can attend to the needs of his subjects and dispense justice in the light of the divine guidance. Muslims have been pinning for centuries for the birth of such leaders   and rulers. We have had umpteen leaders and rulers but unfortunately none has come up to such self-less standards and we continue to wait for a true "Deliverer". However, we will not get one unless we make our "Leaders" follow the edicts so beautifully laid down by Imām ʿAli who after imbibing the lessons

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[1] Imām ʿAli, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, (Qum edition), Letters 25, see also 26, 27 and 46, pp.412-16 and 451.

and experiences from the life of the Prophet of Islām left remarkable principles of good governance for all of us.

In fact, the *Nahj al-Balāghah* of Imām 'Ali, has conveyed many more pearls of wisdom for various aspects of human life and especially for political ethics and the rules of good government. Factually, Imām 'Ali, in his numerous sayings, letters and sermons, outlines intrinsic value-oriented good life, sound leadership and better governance to serve human beings. For him, a fair, just and divinely oriented socio-political system can rightfully pave the ways for betterment of humanity. Therefore, a true ruler must possess the above mentioned or laid down qualities of leadership to run good organization or agency or government.

We do hope that our young scholars and leaders may be motivated to reshape their lives and works in the light of these divinely inspired personalities, like Imām 'Ali, and appropriate practical stipulations for leading an honest and simple political life for the emancipation of our suffering people found in every walk of life. In the twenty-first century, we must revisit these great spiritual leaders like the Prophet of Islām and Imām 'Ali to solve our crucial socio-political and ethico-religious problems. Let us all jointly strive for our better socio-political order well-equipped with ethico-religious framework and contribute to the ailing society and also make best efforts in bringing out good leadership for honest governance in the light of Imām 'Ali's ethical teachings and practices. Let us unitedly work for the welfare of humanity as did our beloved Prophet and Imam Ali (peace be upon them).

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Institution of Family in Hinduism and Islam

A Comparative study of its universalising nature In India

[1]**Dr. Mohd Ashraf Dar**

Abstract:

India is known for unity in diversity and remained abode of multitude of faiths since long. The communal violence between two major faiths of India, Hinduism and Islam was not absent and the history of India since medieval times is inked with the bloodshed caused due to such conflicts. During the freedom struggle, perhaps the topmost contribution of the freedom leadership was binding together the duo and bridge the gap due to conflicting belief system. But the dark episode of partition shattered the efforts and perhaps the gap became never to bridge gulf. Within India, Muslims are the major minority and even after independence, the inter communal conflicts have been reported. Recently the mob lynching over beef suspicion was nothing but the revival of the age-old conflict between the two communities over cow. Since Medieval times, cow has remained a bone of contention between the two, while one considers it merely a commodity while the other sacred to be worshipped. But the question is whether both these religions authorise such conflicts or they have something that can rather bridge the gulf. This paper is an effort to understand the

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role of religion in making peace between the two rather than airing the fire of hatred which ultimately leads to loss of precious human lives. For this purpose, one theme from both the religions has been selected for analysis, **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** (*the entire world constitutes but a family*)from Hinduism and **Al Khalq Ayaalulah**(*All the creation is the family of God*) from Islam.

Key Words: *Maha upanishada, Hadith, family, God, Hinduism, Islam, humanity.*

Introduction:

Existence of life on the earth is the result of interaction and interdependence between millions of organisms with their physical environment. Among the thousands of organisms thriving on earth, man has got the most developed intellect to manipulate and exploit its surrounding environment for its needs and desires. Most of the major religions of the world ascribe man with a sense of responsibility to preserve harmony in such a fragile ecosystem. Religion has always guided man to maintain harmony and live a peaceful life to achieve the ultimate goal of emancipation, *nirvana* or *moksha.* At personal and social level, religion seems to be peaceful but when it enters the political domain, it is made a source of violence and bloodshed. In the recent past, man has witnessed massive bloodshed either on the name of religion or religion being one of the driving agents. In fact, religion is sometimes hijacked by man in order to achieve his political and materialistic instincts as religion is and has always remained a powerful agent for mass mobilization. Contemporary world is passing through such a lethal era in which terrorism in its varied forms has become the most

dangerous threat to universal peace and human life. Looking keenly into the religious guidelines about existence, one may encounter the noble concept of universal brotherhood and a universal concept of family. It urges man to behave, tolerate and help his fellow beings in the same manner as he cares and helps his/her family members and himself/herself. Though these concepts are there since the dawn of religion, but still these concepts are either ignored or they are understood as well as practiced in a narrow sense. In this paper, this concept will be discussed in case of Hinduism and Islam. These two religions are among the major religions of the world. While Hinduism is predominant in India, Nepal and Bhutan, Islam is global. In the recent past from the last decades of 20th century, Hinduism has become more radicalized which has resulted into the Babri Mosque demolition in 1992, crimes against minorities in Gujrat in 2002 (Katie Smith: 2007) and most recent mob lynching under the banner of Cow. The issue of Cow slaughter has remained bone of contention between the two communities since the establishment of Muslim rule in India (Krishnan, 1985). Demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 was seen as a political venture to gain the support of Hindus, the major religious community in India by right wing political party, Bhartiya Janta Party (henceforth BJP) now the ruling party in both state of Uttar Pradesh as well as in centre (BBC, 25/09/02). The basis for the conflict were not even historical. In Hinduism, Lord Ram is one of the ten incarnations of the Vishnu and the place where Babri Masjid was built under the command of Mughal Emperor Babur by Mir Baqi, one of his generals in 1528 CE

is considered to be his actual place of birth. The tussle to regain the place for the construction of a temple dedicated to Lord Ram by razing to ground the existing structure of the Mosque ended in 2020 when Supreme Court of India gave judgment in favour of the temple. Further, the mob lynching of Muslims mostly the weaker section on blame of carrying beef became a sort of religious identity where assassinators were glorified to be the true guardian of the religion. Islam on the other hand after the 9/11 incident has been labelled as the most extremist religion preaching terrorism. The global attribution of terrorism to Islam has further widened the already existing gulf between two communities in India. Recently the rise of Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL) which is also known as Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in troubled Syria added fuel to the already simmering hatred and suspicion against the Muslims especially when some recruits of the organizations came to light from southern India. In both the cases, religion is only nominal while the intentions are apparently political or material in nature. If Religion can be mishandled to unleash violence against innocents, is there a possibility, if the right understanding of the religion is propagated, will it led to peace and brotherhood and may result in establishment of a truly national family if not a global family. My statement is based on the existence of such concepts in both these religions that have been just nominated in the supra paragraph.

a. *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam:*

It is a Sanskrit phrase found in the Chapter 6, Verse 72 of *Mahopanishada*(Maha Upanishada)[1], one of the minor *upanishads* of Hindu religion in two forms one with Atharvaveda while other with Samaveda. Keeping its importance in view in India like diverse country, it was engraved on the entrance of the parliament of

India to ensure that the Union of India is like a family to augment the established

vision of "Unity in diversity". [2]The literal meaning of this phrase is that the 'whole earth is one family'. In Hinduism, the family life is often considered to be one of the milestones a Hindu should pass to complete the prescribed *varnashrama dharma* or four important stages to attain *moksha*. Family life known as *Grahastha* in the *Dharmashastras* forges a deep responsibility towards all the family members. It emphasizes the 'service without reward'. Being one of the four important stages in the life itself depicts its importance. While the *Mahopanishada* revolves round the core theme of unity of being, this verse introduces the concept of universal compassion and brotherhood by adding the term family to the existing

[1] Jeffrey Moses (2002), *Oneness*, Random House Publishing, ISBN 0-345457633, page 12.

[2] S Shah and V Ramamoorthy (2014), *Soulful Corporations*, Springer Science, ISBN 978-8132212744, page 449. [4] Wali-ud-Din Mohammad bin Abdullah Khateeb Tabrizi, *Mishkat al Masabih*, Chapter 3, *Love and Compassion towards the creation*, Hadith No. 1392. Tr. (Urdu) Al Hadis: English Transalation and Commentary of MishkatUl Masabih, Al Haj Maulana Fazlul Karmin, Islamic Book Service New Delhi, ISBN-10: 8172310005

universalization. Study of whole verse of which *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* is the last portion depicts the evil of division in humanity on the basis of ethnicity and nationality. It reads '*ayambandhurayamnetigananalaghuchetasamudaracharitanamtuvasudhai vakutumbakam*' which means '*only small men or narrow-minded discriminate saying: One is a relative; the other is a stranger. For those who live magnanimously the entire world constitutes but a family*'. It strongly denounces the nefarious attitude towards other on the basis of regionalism, religion and economic status.

b.   Al KhalqAyaalulah (الخلق عيال الله):

In the books of Hadith (*sayings of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم*), we find this concept in *Mishkaatal Masabih (مشكوة المصابيح)* where it is reported on the authority of Bukhari that Anas bin Malik reported, Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلمsaid, "*All creatures are like a family of God: and He loves most those who are kindest to His family.*" [4] This hadith describes the kind and compassionate treatment with the creation at three levels. First how a Muslim should treat his fellow Muslims. Second what should be his attitude towards the people of other faiths and finally his attitude towards the other creatures? In the present study, we are more concerned with the second theme. Almighty Allah states in Quran *"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another."[1]* An analysis of the said Hadith and this verse of Glorious Quran clearly mention that the attitude and behavior of a Muslim should be extremely

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[1] Glorious Quran, Chapter No. 49, Al-Hujrat (*The Chambers*), Aayat.13

humble and kind towards the followers of other faiths unless they don't become hostile towards you.

c.   Analysis:

In the light of the above stated themes of universal family in Hinduism and Islam, we need to perceive the contemporary world where these concepts seem to be extinct. There is hostility and hatred among the followers of different faiths that too ironically on the name of religion. Though in the present study, we are discussing this theme in the Hinduism and Islam, India is the ideal country to observe the state of affairs in this context. India has a majority of Hindus with a considerable population of Muslims as well. Though the clash between the followers of different faiths is not a new thing, but the intensity seems to have crossed all the existing records. What actually propels such incidents and ideologies needs perhaps the most attention. When we have the glorious concepts of universal brotherhood and family in the religion, then why we are becoming victims of Religious violence and hostility? Regarding this Glorious

Quran cautions us that '*And of the people is he whose speech pleases you in worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the fiercest of opponents.And when he goes away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption therein and destroy crops and animals. And Allah does not like corruption.*' [1] Corruption in religion leads to the devastation as we can see in the contemporary world.

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[1] Glorious Quran, Chapter 2, Al-Baqarah (The Cow), Aayat No. 204-205. Tr. (Urdu) *Tafheem ul Quran*, Syed Abul A'la Moudoodi, Markazi Maktaba Islami Publishers, D- 307, Dawat Nagar, Abul Fazl Enclave, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi.

Among the three main domains of human life, Ethical, social and political, religion serves positively in the first two domains. It is the third domain which becomes the catalyst to bring in corruption and in turn destroys the preceding domains. The history of Hinduism is a witness that during the later Vedic period (600 BCE onwards), when the political domain overpowered the ethical and social domain and bloodshed became rampant, most of the religious people abandoned the material world and adopted *asceticism*. Non attachment *aparigraha* became the leading principle of many religions like Jainism. Almost all the religions advice man to abstain from craving and greed as these are the main causes for the corruption that in turn shakes the whole edifice of humanity.

In the contemporary age of interdependence, cooperation at regional and international level is essential for promoting peace and stability in the world. Nations cooperate with each other in their national interests. This cooperation leads to a global village of peace and prosperity. Unfortunately, while on one hand, nations are coming closer to one another through trade, commerce and information technology, religious extremism in various parts of the world is proving disastrous by creating nefarious environment among the nations and more unfortunately among the people. Religious extremism paves way for hatred and ruthless violence against the followers of other faiths. In most recent past of India, around 9th to 11th century CE, we see rise of Bhakti cult which bridged the gap between the religions and created an environment for universalization of religion at least in Indian subcontinent and the most interesting thing is that the people of every religion pay

them equal homage. Its glimpse can be seen in the fact that most of the content of Guru Granth Sahib is the poetry of Baba Farid, a Sufi saint held in extreme respect by Sikhs.

Swami Vivekananda, one of the great Indian philosophers and the founder of Ramakrishana Mission, participated in the World's Parliament of Religions at Chicago on 11 September, 1839 and expounded this concept of Universalized family in these words:

"As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to thee."[1]

Conclusion:

From this brief discussion, it becomes apparent that in both Hinduism and Islam, the whole humanity has been considered as a family. Mutual love, care, harmony and coordination is their main content but still religion is proving to be a tool for division, violence and hatred among the followers of these religions. There seems only one reason and that is misunderstanding the basic tenets of a religion. In order to practically achieve the universal family-hood, it is necessary to propagate these tenets in our society to counteract the poison of hatred being spread across the globe on the name of religion. A Muslim must remember the rights of his fellow beings assigned to him by Quran and Hadith (حقوق العباد) in addition to

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[1]Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Vol. 5, p. 242, Online Version, Ramakrishna Math, Archived on 15 October 2017, Retrieved on 21 January 2019. http://www.ramakrishnamath.in/completeworks/?p=21

the rights towards Allah (حقوق الله) as fulfilling only the rights towards Allah is not sufficient for him to achieve his goal of emancipation. Regarding the rights of the slaves of Allah (including all the humans irrespective of their religion), Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلمdeclared a Muslim full of virtues the poorest of poor on the day of judgment who even had slapped, cheated or plundered any of his fellow beings whether a Muslim or not.[1] Likewise, a Hindu should not forget the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, where the whole world has been described a family to achieve his aim of salvation. If these concepts are practically applied as religious obligations in the contemporary society, it is not possible for the patrons of fanaticism and extremism to air the flames of religious hatred, nefarious feelings and bloodshed. We have turned world into a global village with our scientific understanding, and with the true religious understanding, we can turn it into a true global family.

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[1]Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjaj Nishapuri, Sahih Muslim, Hadith No. 2581 "Abu Hurairah RA narrates Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم asked his companions, "Do you know who is insolvent? The Companions replied that one amongst us devoid of money and wealth. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم said, Indeed the loser in my Ummah is who will come on the day of judgement with lot of Salah prayers, fasting, and Alms, (in another narration, they will bring good deeds as mountain of Uhad, a mountain in the North of Madina having a height of 1077 m). Then one person will come and sue this person before Allah and say, this man scolded me another person would come and say, this man cheated me, another person would come and say, this man plundered my wealth another person would come and say, this man hit me, another person would come and say, this man killed me.So the one who behaved badly, his righteous deeds will be given to the one who was scolded, cheated, who was killed, and who was hit. If his righteous deeds are not ample, then he will be laden with the sins of victims of his oppression. Ultimately such a person will be thrown in the hell.

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Relic Tradition in Kashmir
Buddhist and Islamic Perspective

Rayees Ahmad Bhat and Shahid Qadoos Lone ∗

Abstract:

Religio-Cultural syncretism has led to evolution of composite culotures in the world. The continuity of the traditions of one religion in the clad of the other religion long after the decline of the earlier is not alien to Oriental religious history. This paper is a brief description of such a tradition, that apparently seems Buddhist in origin but is practiced by the Mulsims in Kashmir. The relic tradition, is not utterly Buddhist in nature, there is Islamic validity for the relic veneration as well. Thus, the aim of the paper is to compare the tradition in both faiths to understand its status in context to Kashmir.

Key Words: Relic, Buddhism, Islam, Tawassul, Tabbaruk

Introduction:

Kashmir, the northernmost erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir is one of the Muslim majority regions of Indian Union. In contrast to early arrival of Islam in India, especially western coast of South India, Islam arrived quite late to Kashmir, in 12th-13th century CE. Introduction of Islam to Kashmir is chiefly attributed to the zealous missionary activities of Kubrawiya Sufis from Persia, especially Mir Syed Ali Hamadani.[1] As Kashmir was the hub of Saivism at that

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time, many traditions came into being as a result of the syncretism of the two faiths.[1] Prior to Saivism, Kashmir has historically remained fertile orchard of Buddhism.[2] The popping up of traditions after conversion of Kashmiris to Islam mat thus be understood from the perspective of three supra cited faiths. Among these faiths, the concrete concept of relic tradition is limited to Buddhism and Islam where as in Hinduism, the relics got transformed into the pantheism and were thus perceived as the inalienable part of the Hindu pantheon.

In Buddhism, a relic refers to an object that is associated with the Buddha or other enlightened beings, such as important disciples or bodhisattvas. Relics are considered to be imbued with spiritual power, and they are venerated and used in various religious practices, such as meditation, prayer, and pilgrimage. Relics in Buddhism can take many forms, including the physical remains of the Buddha, such as his bones, teeth, and hair; objects that he used, such as his alms bowl or robe; and objects that are associated with his teachings, such as manuscripts or images. Relics can also include objects that are associated with other enlightened beings, such as the hair or bones of important disciples, or objects that are believed to have been touched by the Buddha or other enlightened beings, such as rocks or trees.

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[1] Sufi, G.M.D. (2015). *Kashir: being a history of Kashmir: from the earliest times to our own*. Gulshan Books Kashmir, Srinagar, 2015. pp. 75–95.

[1] Johnson, Todd M; Grim, Brian J (2013). *The World's Religions in Figures: An Introduction to International Religious Demography*. John Wiley & Sons. p. 400.

[2] Funayama, T., 1994, "*Remarks on Religious Predominance in Kashmir: Hindu or Buddhist*", in Y. lkari (ed.), A Study of the Nilamata, Kyoto.

"Textual evidence explains the moment when the Buddha is reminded of his mortality as his body suffers an illness. The Mahāparinirvāna Sūtta1 in the DīghaNikāya of the Sutta Piṭaka was composed long after the death of the Buddha and presents the event of the Buddha's death. People mourned greatly as the Buddha was ritually cremated. Since the body of the Buddha was like no other, its cremation produced no residue, but jewel like relics. Several clans then laid claims to a share of the relics of the Buddha. Ultimately, eight stupas were built on relics, one was built of the urn used in portioning the relics and one was made from the embers of the funeral pyre. And thus, the body of the founder and main figure of Buddhism attained its ultimate form. The Buddha then continued to exist in an altered form as relics."[1]

The concept of relics in Buddhism is closely related to the concept of merit. According to Buddhist belief, venerating relics can generate merit, which is a kind of spiritual currency that can be used to improve one's own spiritual well-being or to help others. Merit can also be transferred to the dead, which is why relics are often associated with funerary practices and memorials. In addition to their spiritual significance, relics also have historical and cultural value. They are often associated with important events in the history of Buddhism, such as the Buddha's *parinirvana* or the spread of Buddhism to new regions. Relics are also important artifacts in Buddhist art and architecture, and they are often depicted in

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[1] Pal, Joeeta, (2018) *How Central were Relics to Buddhism? Exploring Archaeological Evidence from Kanheri,* Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Vol. 79. p. 791.

paintings, sculptures, and other forms of art. The significance of the relics in Buddhism may be categorized into the following:

1.   The history and significance of specific relics, such as the tooth relic of the Buddha or the relics associated with important Buddhist figures such as Padmasambhava or Milarepa.
2.   The role of relics in Buddhist art and architecture, including their use in temples, stupas, and other religious structures.
3.   The relationship between relics and pilgrimage, including the importance of relics in pilgrimage sites and the role of relics in motivating pilgrims to undertake the journey.
4.   The cultural and social significance of relics, including their use in funerary practices, memorials, and other aspects of Buddhist life.
5.   The role of relics in contemporary Buddhist practice, including the ways in which relics are venerated and used in meditation, prayer, and other spiritual practices.

On the other hand, the tradition of relic in Islam is full of debate, while the traditional Muslims considering the sanctity of the relics strictly as an attribution to the Sufi saints and the great scholars, the reformists often tag it as the innovation in Islam that sometimes trespass the basic line of the monotheism or *Tauheed*. In Islam, a relic refers to an object that has historical, cultural, or spiritual significance to Muslims. These objects are usually associated with the Prophet Muhammad, his family, his companions and the later Sufis. They are believed to be imbued with spiritual power. Relics play an important role in Islamic history and culture, and they are often venerated and used in various religious practices. Relics in

Islam can take many forms, including physical objects such as clothing, hair, and personal possessions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH, his blessed family, companions and the later Sufis. In this context, Adam C. Bursi has traced the transfer of the relic tradition to Muslims from Christians in general which may be contested in case of Kashmir though:

"Archaeological evidence points to Muslim visitation of the Kathisma Church – located south of Jerusalem and centered upon a stone where the Virgin Mary was believed to have sat – where a miḥrāb has been uncovered, as well as a glass pilgrimage vessel likely used for collecting water hallowed by its contact with the sacred stone.3 In his Kitāb al-Diyārāt, al-Shābushtī (d. ca. 388/998) describes a similar practice at a monastery near the Sea of Galilee visited by both Christians and Muslims: the monastery contained a stone upon which Jesus sat, and from which "everyone who enters the place breaks off a piece, in order to seek blessing from it."4 This and other evidence suggests that early Muslims visited and venerated several such Christian spaces, in many cases collecting material manifestations of these locations' sacredness."[1]

Though, relics can also include items associated with important events in Islamic history, such as the Black Stone in the Kaaba in Mecca, or the pieces of the Prophet's cloak that were distributed among his followers after his death. In addition, Islamic relics can also include important religious artifacts such as Qurans, prayer

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[1]Bursi, A. C. (2022). Fluid Boundaries: Christian Sacred Space and Islamic Relics in an Early Ḥadīth, Medieval Encounters, 27(6), p. 480. doi: https://doi.org/10.1163/15700674-12340108

beads, and other objects associated with Islamic practices and rituals. Relics in Islam are significant because of their association with the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, who are revered figures in Islamic history and spirituality. Muslims believe that these objects are imbued with barakah, a spiritual power that can be transmitted to those who come into contact with them. For this reason, relics are often venerated and used in various religious practices, including pilgrimage, prayer, and other forms of worship.

The concept of relics in Islam is also closely related to the concept of tawassul, or the idea of using intermediaries to connect with God. Muslims often use relics as a means of tawassul, seeking blessings and spiritual benefits by coming into contact with objects associated with the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. According to *Al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah*:

"Tabarruk (seeking barakah or blessings) from the relics of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was something that was done at the time of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), with things such as water left over from his wudoo', his garment, his food and drink, his hair, and anything else from him. As for seeking barakah from anything that had touched his body, such as wudoo' water, sweat, hair and so on, this is something that was well-known and regarded as permissible by the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) and those who followed them in truth, because of the goodness and barakah that

there is in that, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) approved of them doing that." [1]

The significance of the relics in Islam may be understood as follows:

1.   The role of relics in Islamic art and architecture, including their use in mosques, tombs, and other religious structures.
2.   The relationship between relics and pilgrimage, including the importance of relics in pilgrimage sites and the role of relics in motivating pilgrims to undertake the journey.
3.   The cultural and social significance of relics, including their use in funerary practices, memorials, and other aspects of Muslim life.

Discussion:

Relics play an important role in Buddhism, as they are physical reminders of the Buddha and his teachings. In this essay, we will explore the significance of relics in Buddhism, their types, and their history. In Buddhism, they are considered to be the physical remains or objects associated with the Buddha or enlightened beings. These objects are believed to have a special power and are venerated by Buddhists as sacred objects. The veneration of relics is an ancient tradition in Buddhism and is believed to have begun shortly after the Buddha's death in 483 BCE. The most famous relics in Buddhism are the Buddha's bodily remains, which are believed to have been divided into eight parts and distributed to various

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[1] Rina Avner, *"The Kathisma: A Christian and Muslim Pilgrimage Site,"* ARAM 18–19 (2006–2007): 541–57 at 546–547, 550.

locations in India and other parts of Asia. These bodily remains, known as sarira, are highly venerated and are believed to possess special powers that can help people on their path to enlightenment. In addition to bodily remains, other objects associated with the Buddha, such as his begging bowl, robe, and footprints, are also considered relics. These objects are believed to have a special power and are often enshrined in stupas or other sacred structures.[1]

There are several types of relics in Buddhism, including sarira, dhatus, and paribhogika. Sarira are the bodily remains of the Buddha or other enlightened beings, while dhatus are relics that are believed to contain the essence or energy of the Buddha. Paribhogika relics are objects that were used or owned by the Buddha or other enlightened beings, such as his begging bowl or robe. The veneration of relics in Buddhism has a long and rich history. In ancient India, relics were enshrined in stupas, which are dome-shaped structures that serve as a focal point for Buddhist practice and devotion. Over time, the tradition of enshrining relics in stupas spread throughout Asia, and many of these structures still exist today. The veneration of relics also played a significant role in the spread of Buddhism throughout Asia. As the religion spread, relics were often used as a way to establish new Buddhist communities and to gain the support of rulers and other influential people. Today, relics continue to be an important part of Buddhist practice and devotion. Many Buddhist temples and monasteries

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[1] Davids, T.W.R. (1901). "*Asoka and the Buddha-Relics*". Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland: 397–410.

around the world enshrine relics, and pilgrims travel from far and wide to visit these sacred sites.

The tradition of relics in Sufi Islam has a long and rich history, dating back to the early days of Islam. The veneration of relics is rooted in the belief that physical objects associated with holy persons possess a sacred power that can be transferred to their devotees. This essay will provide an overview of the tradition of relics in Sufi Islam, with a focus on its history, significance, and practices. Throughout the essay, I will cite relevant sources to support my claims. The practice of venerating relics is not unique to Sufi Islam, but it has a particular significance within this branch of Islam. Sufism is a mystical branch of Islam that emphasizes the personal, experiential knowledge of God, and the attainment of a state of spiritual purity and enlightenment. The veneration of relics is seen as a means of achieving spiritual connection and closeness to God. The tradition of relics in Sufi Islam dates back to the early days of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad himself is said to have left behind various relics, including his hair, clothing, and personal belongings. These relics were considered to possess a spiritual power, and were venerated by early Muslims. In the centuries that followed, the veneration of relics became an important part of Sufi practice. Sufi saints, or awliya, were believed to possess a special spiritual power, and their relics were seen as a means of accessing this power. Relics associated with Sufi saints include their clothing, personal belongings, and even their tombs.

One example of the importance of relics in Sufi Islam can be seen in the life of the famous Sufi saint, Rumi. Rumi is perhaps the best-

known Sufi poet, and his works continue to be widely read and studied today. Rumi's tomb, located in Konya, Turkey, is a popular pilgrimage site for Sufis and others. Visitors to Rumi's tomb often bring offerings and make prayers, seeking spiritual connection and blessings. The veneration of Rumi's relics is a key part of the Sufi tradition, and has helped to spread his teachings throughout the world. Another important aspect of the tradition of relics in Sufi Islam is the belief in baraka, or spiritual blessings. Sufi saints are believed to possess a special spiritual power, and their relics are seen as a means of accessing this power. The presence of a Sufi saint's relics is believed to bring baraka, which can be transmitted to the devotee through physical contact with the relic. One of the most important relics in Sufi Islam is the kiswah, or covering, of the Kaaba in Mecca. The kiswah is a black cloth that covers the Kaaba, the most sacred site in Islam. The kiswah is replaced annually, and the old cloth is cut into small pieces and distributed as relics to Muslim leaders and Sufi saints. The veneration of the kiswah is a key part of the Sufi tradition, and is seen as a means of accessing the baraka associated with the Kaaba.

Kashmir is known for relics and their veneration related to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) [Reported hair of the beard in the Dargah Hazratbal, Srinagar and the Khiram Shrine in Anantnag District].[1] There is no doubt in the veneration of the relics by the Muslims in Kashmir. This veneration seems relation to religio-cultural antiquity of Kashmir as well as the introduction of Islam in

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[1] In 2016, as reported by <u>Kashmir Life</u>, many relics belonging to Prophet (PBUH) and his blessed family were found locked in a wooden box in Srinagar.

Kashmir. During 7th century CE, Kashmir was politically on zenith under the Karkotas who are believed to have encroached into the mainland India even upto Odisha, as per Rajatarangini. The coming of Islam to Kashmir was much late than the Southern and Northern India. The late arrival of Islam in 13th century CE, almost 6 centuries after the dawn of Islam, makes it logical to accept that in the meantime many traditions might have mingled with Islam during its long travel from Arabia to Persia and Central Asia. In addition to that, the existence of an antique Buddhist tradition of relic veneration might have boosted the process of accepting the tradition after conversion to Islam. The tradition is not without controversy. The tradition has been dubbed as an innovation by the reform movements in Kashmir like *Jamat e Islami, Devband* and most severely by *Ahli Hadith.* The tradition is still in vogue and has been in a manner adopted by the fundamental *Hanafis* known as *Barelvis.* In general, the Hanafi School, the major school of jurisprudence followed in Kashmir, has little issues with the relic tradition until it trespasses the line of *pantheism.*

Conclusion:

Veneration of the Relics is a key feature in almost all the religions, whether Semitic or not. The veneration of relics is a deeply ingrained part of Kashmiri Muslim culture and is seen as a way to connect with the divine and to seek spiritual sustenance and support [tawassul]. While the practice has faced some controversy and opposition from certain Islamic scholars, it remains a cherished tradition among the faithful in Kashmir. Reformation movements have declared it innovation and even a non-Muslim tradition that

Kashmiris have acquired from the ancestors who were apparently Buddhists or Hindus. In the religious history of the major faiths of the world, the adoption of local traditions is not an alien thing. The religious history of Kashmir follows the pattern of an evolutionary process. With a legendary origin from the womb of Satisar, Kashmir witnessed the blossoms of the Buddhism, melody of the Saivism and finally the blessing of the Islam. In the evolutionary process, the syncretism between these faiths was inevitable that led to the development of certain traditions that apparently seem neither Islamic nor non-Islamic.

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Necessity of family life in the age of anxiety: An Islamic perspective

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Abstract:

The fundamental and foremost institution which sustains our society together being its nucleus with our individual self, according to Islamic ethical belief system, is the family and it has been among the most important links in human organization throughout history. It signifies the establishment of values and relations which in turn bring into existence a new generation. Being a constant instrument of continuity, it prepares the succeeding generations to serve the human civilization better and discharge its social obligations with devotion and enthusiasm. In its successful endurance, lies the secret of the meaningful survival of the human race. It begins with the affinity between two families or spouses not only with rights and duties but also with fear of God. Since people in the Western societies are highly individualistic, the essential ingredient of sacrifice for each other/one another is missing in the West which not only frustrates an individual, but also erodes the foundation of the family, where as in Islam, it is ordered by rights and responsibilities which encourages the spiritual and social development of individuals and the community at the same time. As such, this paper not only attempts to explain the moral concepts underlying the social system prevalent in the West which are not

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only against the will of nature and human nature but are burdened with fatal portents to human civilization which is much evident to everyone, eastern and Western as well. Also, it will explore the ethics pertaining to emotional and social relationship including husband –wife and vice versa, parent –children and vice versa and its relevance in contemporary times especially to Mechanical man and why people aspire today for family irrespective of so called modern artificial family institutions.

Keywords: Extended family, Strong Covenant, Repose, Human Survival, Surrogacy, Euthanasia

According to social psychologists, any study of social change involves both persons and groups. As the basic constituent of any society, the person is essential but ambiguous, for one can turn inward in a self-centered manner; hence it is important to add that any resolution of the social problem requires that the individual be endowed with moral values. Further, these are not simply functioning of external circumstances; indeed, the ideological effort to construct in these terms a "new socialist man" proceeded to destroy the inner person. Hence, there is need for an inner reconstruction that includes one's emotional life as well as intellect and will, and which must be reflected further in the values which guide one's options and the culture which emerges as the complex of values and virtues of one's people.[1] The moral and political

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[1] Hasan Horkuc, *Said Nursi's Ideal for human Society: Moral and Social Reform in Risale-i Nur*, Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Institute for Middle-Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham, Durham, 2004, p.246

confusion of our age must, according to Niebuhr's diagnosis, be partly due to a misunderstanding of human nature, writes Veldhuis in his book *Realism Versus Utopianism*, "Because people do not know themselves, they come to cherish unwarranted expectations or to acquiesce too soon in existing situations. By overlooking some aspect of humanity, they tend either to overrate or to underestimate man and his possibilities. Both tendencies are equally dangerous."[1] According to some sociologists, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, humanity was in great crisis. Man's alienation from his fellow man and from nature was more apparent than before. He became selfish and dependent on approval, and started feeling insecure, dissatisfied, bored and anxious. More importantly, his disbelief in the Hereafter made him more distracted. The modem age has therefore rightly been called the age of anxiety or of individuality."[2] Islamic teachings expand outwards with the family as the unit of society, not the individual. A family is the first social community in the life of any person or group of persons. It is from this that an individual attach and understands the values of culture, assimilates the first social roles and acquires the experience of social behavior. In it lie the secrets of survival and endurance.

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[1] Ruurd Veldhuis, *Realism Versus Utopianism: Reinhold Niebuhr's Christian Realism and the Relavence of Utopian Thought for Social Ethics*, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1975, p.24.

[2]20 See, Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 2013, pp.119-209.

Family "a group consisting of parents and their children living together as a unit or a group of people related by blood or marriage,"[1] is the fundamental and foremost institution which sustains our society together being its nucleus with our individual self, according to Islamic ethical belief system and it has been among the most important links in human organization throughout history. Indeed, it is unequalled in importance by any other modern social unit.[2] It signifies the establishment of values and relations which in turn bring into existence a new generation. Being a constant instrument of continuity, it prepares the succeeding generations to serve the human civilization better and discharge its social obligations with devotion and enthusiasm. In its successful endurance, lies the secret of the meaningful survival of the human race. It begins with the affinity between two families or prospective spouses not only with rights and duties but also with fear of God.[3] Only the prophets of God understood the real objectives of nature and devised the marriage as the right form of relationship between man and women for sexual and social purpose as well. It was under the influence of their teachings and guidance that marriage became an institution among all nations of the world.[4] Everyman born on earth benefits all his life from preceding generations,

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[1]Catherine Soanes et.al, *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, India: Oxford University Press, 2014, P.359. also see, Hammudah Abdalti, Islam in focus, Aligarh: Crescent Publishing Company, 1975, p.114

[2] G.El-Din Attia, *Towards realization of the higher intents of Islamic Law*, tr.,Nancy Roberts, London:IIIIT, 2007, p124

[3] Qur'an 4:1

[4] Sayyid Abu'l 'Ala Maududi, Purdah and the status of women in Islam, ed., al-Ash'ari, Nrw Delhi: Markaza Maktaba Islami, 2006 p.124

because of that he has been able to survive, develop and shape as a human being solely because of the institution and traditions evolved by them[1]. Marriage is the root from which stems human procreation and spread the notion of kinship, including both descendants and ascendants. This also required the regulation of the in-law relationship, that soon manifested its crucial significance for the formation of extended family, clan, tribes and nations.[2] Marriage is a civil contract and solemn covenant yet the rights and responsibilities consequent upon it are of such importance to the welfare of humanity that a high degree of sanctity is attached to it.[3] It makes an incomplete human being a complete one. It is supposed to take a person out of the hectic lifestyle that one is in and place him in an organized environment giving them a path to follow in life and a shoulder to lean on. Marriage arranges one's life and provides spiritual, physical, emotional and psychological companionship. This companionship generates and sustains love, kindness, compassion, mutual confidence, solace and comfort. It lays a spiritual and legal foundation for raising a family.The teaching of Islam covers all fields of human activity, spiritual and material, individual and social, educational and cultural, economic and political, national and international. Islam's uniqueness lies in the spiritualizing the whole matrix of life. Every activity, whether related to things like prayer and fasting, or to economic transactions, sexual relationships, diplomatic dealings or scientific

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[1] Qur'an 25:74

[2] Zainab alwani, Muslim Women and Global Challenges, Delhi: IOS, 2012, p.19)

[3] Moulana Muhammad Ali, *Divorce in Islam*, England: The working Muslim mission and the literary Trust, n.d., p.1

experimentation's is religious if it is undertaken with God consciousness and accords with the values and principles revealed by God.[1] Marriage, as prescribed by Allah, is the lawful union of a man and woman based on mutual consent. Throughout history Islamic law has remained central to Muslim identity and practice, for it constitutes the ideal social blueprint for the believer who asks, "What should I do?" It is important to note that elaborating the law was the work of religious scholars (*Ulama*), rather than judges, courts, or governments. The law's comprehensive coverage, including regulations ranging from religious rituals to marriage, divorce, and inheritance to setting standards for penal and international law, provided a common code of behavior and connection for all Muslim societies.[2] Lest the relation between the sexes be confined to a mere physical connection, Islamic law alerts us to the fact that among the objectives of this relationship is for each of the partners to find repose in the other, and for there to be affection and compassion between them. In order to achieve this intent, Islamic law has issued rulings concerning living together as a couple in kindness and harmony, rules of etiquette governing sexual intercourse, as well as other rulings which provide the possibility of a family atmosphere filled with warmth, tenderness and refined human sentiment.[3] Islamic law contains details rulings pertaining to emotional and social relationship, including the

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[1] Khurshid Ahmad, family life in Islam, Leicester: The Islamic Foundation1980, p.9

[2] John L. Esposito, *What everyone needs to know about Islam,* New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p.139

[3] Attia, op.cit., p.126

husband's right over his wife and vice-versa, parent's right over the children and vice-versa with many rights to others. There are three essential elements in every normal marriage, 'the gratification of the sexual impulse, the relation between husband and wife and procreation of children.[1] Let's discuss them one by one:

 First, the importance of sex life and its general influence on men's conduct was not fully recognized until very recently. Islam's insistence on sexual purity and the preventive measures it devised to ensure healthy sex life reveals a deep insight into sex psychology and shows its awareness of sex as a vital factor in strengthening or destroying a civilization.[2] Among the most wonderful mysteries of our nature is that of sex. The unregenerate male is apt, in the pride of his physical strength, to forget the all-important part the female plays in his very existence, and in all the social relationships that arise in our collective human lives. The mother that bore us must ever have our reverence. The wife, through whom we enter parentage, must have our reverence. Sex, which governs much of our physical life, and has so much influence on our emotional and higher nature, deserves not our fear, or our contempt, or our amused indulgence, but our reverence in the highest sense of the term.[3] It is because of that marriage in Islam is regarded first and foremost as a righteous act, an act of responsible devotion. Islam builds the family on solid grounds that are capable of providing reasonable continuity, true sincerity and mature intimacy and

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[1] M.M. Siddiqui, Women in Islam, New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 2004, P.32

[2] Ibid., see preface

[3] A.Y,'Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and commentary*, Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Holy Quran Printing complex, 1405 A.H, p.205, n.506

views marriage as a strong bond- a challenging commitment in the fullest sense of the word. It is a commitment to life itself, to society and to the meaningful survival of the human race, for mutual fulfillment and self-realization, love and peace, compassion and serenity, comfort and hope.[1] Adultery is not only shameful in itself and inconsistent with any self-respect or respect for others, but it opens the road to many evils. It destroys the basis of the family: it works against the interest of children born or to be born; it may cause murders and feuds and loss of reputation and property, and also loosen permanently the bonds of society.n.2215 It has become common in permissive contemporary societies for both parents and children to doubt whether the children actually belong to the parents, as a result of which relations between them grow tepid while the family as a whole is weakened and fragmented. The dramatic increase in the rates of divorce over the past several decades has changed the fabric of Western societies: it is associated with breaking away from traditional meanings of family and marriage, of gender relations, and of religion. Most of all, divorce is associated, for good and for bad, with modernity. There is of divorce is attributed to diverse facets of modern life: decline in belief, breakdown in family values, unadulterated individualism and pursuit of self-interest, rising expectations about marriage, rising life expectancy, increasing economic independence of women and the empowering effect of feminism. The link between modernity and soaring divorce rates has led many to question the future viability of marriage as a social institution.

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[1] Qur'an 30:21

Secondly, with reference to husband-wife relationship, neither the Islamic law, or the divinely laws, nor the positive laws-notwithstanding the libertine ideas which have infiltrated them at times-have been content to leave relations between the sexes to natural impulses alone as in the case with dumb beasts and animals rather, such laws have been keen to confine relations between the sexes within a single, organized framework-marriage.[1] Lest the relation between the sexes be confined to a mere physical connection, Islamic law alerts us to the fact that among the *maqasid* of this relationship is for each of the partners to find repose in the other, and for there to be affection and compassion between them.[2] The Qur'an addresses not only good relations but all those times when the atmosphere is strained between spouses. In case of family jars four steps are mentioned, to be taken in that order:

1)   Perhaps verbal advice or admonition may be sufficient;

2)   If not, sex relations may be suspended;

3)   If this is not sufficient, some light physical corrections may be administered…;

4)   If all this fails, a fairly council is recommended.[3]

Temper, nagging, sarcasm, speaking ill at each other in others people's presence, reverting to past faults which should be forgiven and forgotten, all this is forbidden. And the reason given is characteristic of Islam.[4] It should be kept in mind that, in the

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[1] Attia, op.cit., p.125

[2] Ibid., p.25

[3] A.Y.'Ali, n.547

[4] Ibid., 548

Qur'anic teaching, the husband and wife stand in complimentary relation to each other, and never in the relation of the ruler and ruled. If any, Qur'an permits to terminate the relation of marriage, if it becomes absolutely impossible for the husband and the wife to continue that relation but under strict moral grounds. Also, the procedure in case of serious disagreement and conflict between the husband and wife is to appoint two arbiters, one from each family, knowing the mentalities, the faults and the merits of both, should avail every possible opportunity for reconciliation, while giving due consideration to the weaknesses and aberration of human nature. At the last resort, Islam allows divorce as a necessary evil but without humiliating her with unethical ways to divorce. Islam is commonly portrayed as condoning wife abuse especially wife beating, which is attributed to the Qur'anic verse 4:34 that seems to legitimize it, when stretched out of context. The prophet was very clear in opposing any kind of physical measures. When life becomes unbearable for the spouses and before physical cruelty amounts to criminal acts. It is better for them and their children to separate or to get divorced on god terms. The interest and well-being of all parties especially the children should be preserved.[1]Given Islam's higher purposes and principles of compassion and love within marriage, the author explains that using the root *da raba* of the verb to mean hitting, smacking or any form of abuse is to take the verse out of its purpose and misapply it. Neither physical abuse, nor foul language, nor verbal abuses are

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[1] Abu Hamid Abu Sulayman, Marital Discord: Recapturing Human Dignity through the Higher Objectives of Islamic Law, London:IIIT, 2003, p.27

accepted practices of Islam.[1] Almost, one third of the commandments of the Qur'an dealt with family laws.[2]

Thirdly, as the proverb, "Child *is the father of man,"*All the prophets of whom we have any detailed knowledge, except one, had wives and children. The exception is of prophet Jesus, but his life was incomplete; his ministry barely lasted for three years; his mission was limited; and he was not called upon to deal with the many-sided problems that arise in a highly organized society or state. The wisdom behind lies in the continuity of the mission and sincere work but not possible without a progeny who could carry the line.[3] Preservation of family lineage through the truthful attribution of offspring to their origins will serve to lead people's offspring to conduct themselves with kindness and gratitude towards their parents and forebears, just as it will lead parents to treat their offspring with compassion and tenderness in response to an innate disposition. Also to prevent disputes which may arise, either from the jealousies to which human beings are prone or from doubts that may assail parents or children concerning their blood ties to one another.[4] The wisdom behind it is that the parents will stop to defend and take care for their offspring in such a way as to ensure

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[1] Ibid., see Foreword

[2] For further details about the ethics of disagreement, see, *Sahih al-Bukhari, Kitab al-Nikah, Bab Ma Yakrah Min Zarb al-Nissa Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Riza', Bab Wasiyah al-Nissa, Tirmidhi, Kitab al-Talaq wa al-La'an, Bab Ma Ja' Fi Midrat al-Nisa, Ibn Majah, Kitab al-Nikah, Bab Haq al-Mar'ah 'Ala al-zauj, Abu Daud, Kitab al-Adab, Bab Fi Islah Zat al-Bayn, Nasa'ee, Kitab al-Talaq, Bab Ma Ja' Fi al-Khul'a, Muwatta, Kitab al-Nikah, Bab Ma La Yajma' Baynahu Min aal-Nissa,*

[3] Qur'an 21:89

[4] Ibid., p.127

their survival and complete well-being by providing them with the proper upbringing and financial support until they retain maturity. Similarly, the parents may be deprived of a sense of devotion and desire to be of assistance and support in the parents old age.[1] Qur'an emphasizes towards the fact that disloyalty towards parents is bound to alienate an individual from God and they responsible for the support and care of their parents in order to make their life comfortable.[2]The care for dying patients is one of the most difficult tasks. But to enable an individual to live and to die with dignity especially in the old age is highly rewarding in Islam, leaving no scope for Euthanasia. As soon as the child opens its eyes to the outside world, it is provided with an atmosphere of love, protection and care within the family. Only the parents can cherish the desire that their child should excel them in all possible ways, for that they use all their sincere efforts to shape them with sharing, caring and sacrificing their time and effort for the proper upliftment of their child. Recently, a mother sold her new born for Rs.42 thousand to pay for her ailing husband in UP's Bareilly district, from the village, Dhakia Khoh, as she had taken loan from a local money lender to pay the expenses incurred on the treatment of her husband.[3] As a result, it in turn pays way for the human progress and survival. Every family wishes for its children to

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[1] the metaphor is that of a bird which lowers her wing out of tenderness to her off-spring. There is a double aptness. 1) when the parent was strong and the child was helpless, parental affection was showered on the child: when the child grows up and is strong, and the parent is helpless, can he do less than bestow similar tender care on the parent. A.Y .Ali, op.cit., p.783, n.2205

[2] Qur'an 17:24

[3] Deccan Herald, *Deccan Herald* (newspaper), India: Mysore, 03-Jan-2018, p.14.

achieve the best in their carriers. but certain eternal values whose roots are to be found in all civilizations must be adhered to. Nowadays, many mothers due to a no. of reasons avoid breastfeeding their children, which results not only in physical weakness of the child but also intellectual and spiritual frailty.[1] Other requirement is to provide the right environment that makes a child curious, imaginative and ethical. The home should be made a centre of Islamic values where future leadership is nurtured. The elders in the family should avoid abusive language, violence and other malpractices that will leave negative impression on the personality development of the child. Also, Parents should deal with all their children with equity and justice. Preferential treatment with any child affects them adversely.[2] In its condemnation of infanticide, Qur'an teaches that the child is a gift from God- a trust placed in the care of the child's elders, and should, therefore, be treated with love, understanding and proper care.[3]Also it commands the safeguarding of the interest of the child, in the most delicate period of his life, in respect of suckling him, which is specially jeopardized in case the parents are unfortunately separated from each other through divorce.[4] Condemning contempt for one's children, forbidding their treatment as a burden, and teaching respect and love for them, is a function which all parents including animals perform basically and naturally under

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[1] Qur'an 2:233

[2] Imam nawawi, Riyad *al-Salihin*, chapter 353, book, prohibiting of giving preference to children over one another in giving gifts, vol.2, pp.1308-09

[3] Fazlur Rahman, p.168

[4] Qur'an 2:233

the urge of the parental instinct, but where in the outlook requires to be refined and enlighten in the interest of human well-being, and in the interest of the moral health of human society.[1] The Arabs were addicted to female infanticide. In a society perpetually at war, a son was a source of strength where as a daughter was a source of weakness. Even now infanticide is not unknown in other countries for economic reasons. This crime against children's lives is here characterized as one of the greatest of sins.[2]This refers to the wonderful mystery of the sex. Children arise out of the union of the sexes. And it is the female sex that brings forth the off-spring, whether male or female. And the father is as necessary as the mother for bringing forth daughters.[3] As put by Allam Iqbal:

Through the existence of women there is color in the picture of creation

From her instrument is the inner burning of life.[4]

Extended family being advocated by Islam is the noblest and the most valuable social institution the world has ever seen, as it last for many generations. In contrast to that by going nuclear or individualistic, Western society has lost all these values and consequences we have before us. Most importantly, there is no generation gap in an extended family which resulted in the continuity between generations without a generation gap with special reference to social norms and values. Also, the individuals

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[1] FR, p.170

[2] A. Y.'Ali, n.2214

[3] A.Y. 'Ali, n.3525

[4] Allama Iqbal, Zarb-e Kalim (The blow struck by Moses), cited in Kulliyat-e Iqbal, Lahore: Shaikh Ghulam 'Ali & Sons, 1973, pp.553-559

in an extended family don't suffer from disorders such as depression and psychological ones[1].

To put the things very brief, there are homeless people in India than the entire population of Mauritius. And the gravity of the problem is that if we gather all of India's homeless people and put them and put them all in a new country, its population would be larger than that of 83 countries. If you talk to these homeless people, and ask them their hometown, almost none of them are from Delhi itself. They have work and money but they are without home. Even in the past, family has been a useful element for economic production and for demographic, political reproduction. Its added value for the whole society concerning forming and developing human energies, cultural forms of expression and social behavioural forms is undisputed. It is the only family where people experienced unconditional love, acknowledgement and emotional security It is our privilege if we don't regard it, our duty to pass on in ever finer shapes the great traditions which have been handed down to us. Institutions like the maternity homes, surrogacy although commercial one banned, the nursery schools and the kindergarten which are increasingly taking over the function of the home, have encouraged a large no. of people to believe that as this process goes onto its perfection; the family will soon become unnecessary as a social institution. Those who harbor such notions should not turn a blind eye to evils which are likely to arise from

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[1]Barbara Huber Rudolf, Family *culture from an inter-religious perspective*, in *marriage, family and society-A dialogue with the Islam,* ed., Helmut Reifeld, Germany: Sankt Augustin, 2006 P.89)

the disappearances of personal and intimately affectionate relation between the spouses, parents, children and relatives. Mechanical instruments involving depersonalization of human relations are a source of danger to the growth of individual. P.40 Finally, by adding responsibilities upon the individual, marriage enhances his status in society and gives him an opportunity for training in bearing the hardships of life. Living with a spouse, a person of different inclinations and backgrounds, trains one in accommodating oneself to new experiences; each party helps the other in the exercise of the virtues of patience and forbearance. The responsibility of rearing children and the need to earn for their living are added meritorious aspect arising from marriage. However, marriage can also represent a test or be afflicted with some harmful situations. The worst of them is failing to seek sustenance from the lawful. If that becomes difficult, the husband may become tempted to reach his hand into the *haram*. Another affliction concern falling short with regard to the rights of women and being patient with their character and their annoyances. In that there is a great danger because the man is the "shepherd" in the household and is to be questioned about those under his care. More so, marriage will be a source of trial if one's family becomes a distraction from the remembrance of Allah such that he spends his days and nights enjoying his family and fails to make time for his heart to ponder the hereafter and to work for it. Let me conclude with the words of Dr. Mrs. Annie Besant, the renowned English leader of the Theosophical Movement, ' it is better for women, happier for women, more respectable for women, to live in

polygamy, united to one man only, with the legitimate child in her arms, and surrounded with respect, than to be seduced, cast out in the street-perhaps an illegitimate child outside the pale of law-unsheltered and uncared for, to become a victim of any passerby, night after night, rendered incapable of motherhood, despised by all.[1]

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Dialogue on Ethics between Buddhism and Islam

Shabir Ahmad Mugloo*

Abstract

Inter-religious dialogue has become an advanced discourse of academic activity of the 21th century to ensure socio-religious stability among people of different faiths. Its contribution to peaceful cosmopolitan civilization and cultural advancement in the promotion of communal harmony and co-existence in shaping the history of mankind is noteworthy and unprecedented. In this paper an attempt has been made to shed light on inter-religious dialogue on ethics between Buddhism and Islam. Both the religions have a universal ethical code for which they are the dominant religions of the world. This study would primarily focus on ethical issues and how Buddhism and Islam could address them. Also, an analysis of Buddhist-Muslim ethical values has been given in this paper. Buddhism has a different approach on ethics as compared to Islam. But both the religions are at par with each other on addressing ethical issues because there is a commonality of ethics between Buddhism and Islam. The present paper is an attempt to examine the nature and role of ethics in shaping the society. It will also discuss the Buddhist and Islamic view of ethics and finally the inter-religious dialogue on ethics followed by conclusion.

Key words: Inter-religious dialogue, Ethics, Buddhism, Islam, Promotion, Peace.

Introduction

The contemporary world presents special challenges and opportunities for interactions among the people of the world. Both globalization and reorganization of special ethnic and local identities create the risk of violent conflict as well as constructive cooperation. The great communities of religious leaders play a special role in these interactions. Islam and Buddhism have interacted for fourteen centuries, and nature of their relations in the contemporary world plays an important role. It will also determine whether the future of humanity will involve a great clash of civilizations or a successful civilization dialogue. The chaos, confusions, conflict, disharmony and fear in the contemporary global world promoted inter-religious dialogue resulting in the inter-cultural and inter-religious peace building process. Inter-faith dialogue opens the doors of ideological contact and communication between the people of different faiths. As interfaith dialogue has continued to expand and attract new voices and interests, new theologies and types of dialogue have resulted. One outcome has been the development of the theology of pluralism, which is a deliberate theological stance recognizing the inherent value, equality and truth of every religious tradition. Another outcome has been the development of comparative theology, in which the approaches of two or more religious traditions to Particular topics are discussed simultaneously, with each tradition explaining itself, according to its own terms, concepts and historical experiences, rather than the lens of another tradition.

Definition of Ethics

Ethics is the science of highest good. It is the science of the supreme ideal of human life.[1] Ethics also known as moral philosophy, is a branch of philosophy that involves systematizing, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong conduct. The term comes from the Greek word 'ethos' which means 'character'[2] Ethics seeks to resolve questions dealing with human morality concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice and crime.

Mackenzie defines ethics as "the study of what is right or good in human conduct" or "the science of the ideal involved in human life".[3] In this definition ethics has been accepted as the study of both right and good. 'Rectus' the Latin word, from which right has been derived means straight or according to law. Good comes from the German 'gut' meaning that which is useful for the supreme good. In this instance, good is that which leads to supreme good. Mostly good is taken to mean an end, not a means to an end. The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy states that the word ethics is ''commonly used interchangeably with 'morality' and sometimes it is used more narrowly to mean the moral principles of a particular tradition, group or individual''.[4] Ethics aims at systematic

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[1] Jadunath Sinha, *A Manual of Ethics*, New Central Book Agency, Kolkata, 2006, p. 1

[2] Idem.

[3] J.S. Mackenzie, *A Manual of Ethics*, University of Tutorial Press, London, 1956, pp. 1-4

[4] Robert Audi, *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Cambridge University press, New York, 1995, p. 49

knowledge. So, ethics is a science. Every science is concerned with a particular sphere of nature. As a science ethics has its own particular sphere, it deals with certain judgments that are related to human conduct. It deals with systematic explanation of rightness or wrongness in the light of the highest good of man.

Ethics is a normative science. It is concerned with what ought to be done rather than what is the case. It differs from positive science. A positive science, natural science or descriptive science is concerned with what is. It deals with facts and explains them by their causes. In positive science there is no question of judging its objects in any way. But ethics does not deal with fact. Rather it deals with value.[1] Therefore, it is clear that ethics is concerned with judgments of values, while positive science deals with judgments of facts. That is why ethics is not a positive science. Normative ethics deals with standards, or norms by which human actions are judged to be right or wrong. Ethics is concerned with the nature, object, faculty, and standard of moral judgments. Moral judgments are accompanied by moral Sentiments, e.g., the feelings of approval and disapproval, remorse and the like. Ethics has to discuss the nature of moral sentiments to moral judgments. Moral judgments are also accompanied by the sense of duty; 'oughtness' or moral obligation.[2] The end or aim of ethics is to define the nature of the highest good of man as a member of society. It investigates the nature of the *Summum Bunum* which is the highest personal good and the highest social good. It is the root of all moral distinctions.

[1]Sinha, Op.cit., p. 2

[2] Ibid., p. 8

These notions of rightness and wrongness of conduct are derived from it. This is the theoretical aim of ethics. Though ethics is not a practical science, it deduces concrete duties and virtues from the notion of the supreme good, which may guide humans in the regulation of their conduct.[1]

Ethics from Buddhist perspective

The world today is in a state of disorder, valuable ethics are being upturned. The forces of materialistic skepticism have turned their dissecting blades on the traditional concepts of what are considered humane qualities. Yet, any person who has a concern for culture and civilization will concern himself with practical ethical issues. When humanity seeks to encounter humanity, Buddhist values may be helpful; they can contribute to an "inter-religious dialogue of life''.

Buddhist ethics are traditionally based on Buddha's enlightenment or other enlightened beings that followed him. Moral concepts in Buddhism are held either in the scriptures or in the traditions of Buddhism.[2] According to traditional Buddhism, the foundation of Buddhist ethics for laypeople is the five precepts: no killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, or intoxicants. To become a Buddhist, or affirming one's faith to Buddhism, a layperson is encouraged to vow to abstain from these negative actions. The

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[1]Ibid., p.12

[2] Damien Keown, *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics*, Macmillan, London, 1992, p. 28

precepts are not formulated as imperatives, but as training rules that laypeople undertake voluntarily to facilitate practice.[1]

In Buddhist thought, the cultivation of *Dana* (generosity) and ethical conduct will themselves refine consciousness to such a level that rebirth in one of the lower heavens is unlikely, even if there is no further Buddhist practice. There is nothing improper or un-Buddhist about limiting ones aims to this level of attainment.[2] The Buddha (BC 623-BC 543) provided some basic guidelines for acceptable behavior that are part of Eightfold path. The initial precept is non-injury or non-violence to all living creatures from the lowest insect to humans. This precept defines a non-violent attitude toward every living thing.[3] The Buddhist view is that moral behavior flows naturally from mastering one's ego and desires and cultivating loving kindness and compassion. Its teaching expressed in the Four Noble Truths as, there is suffering, there is cause of suffering, there is cessation of suffering, and path of liberation, is that the stress and unhappiness of life is by our desires and egoism.

The uniqueness of Buddhist ethics lies in its many outstanding qualities. It is all embracing and comprehensive without being impractical or impossible to follow. It is free from taboos relating to diet, dress, behavior etc. which very often pass ethical principles. It serves the needs of the worldly as well as those of the recluse. It is

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[1]Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices*, Cambridge university press, England, 1990, p.187
[2]Ibid., pp. 195-196
[3] Carl Olson, *The Different Paths of Buddhism: A Narrative-Historical Introduction*, Rutgers University Press 2005, p. 73

useful to the rich and to the poor; to the powerful as well as to the powerless.[1] To confirm to Buddhist ethics one need to have to be a 'Buddhist' and it serves as norm to measure the ethical standard of other teachings. But Buddhist ethics is only the threshold for those who wish to pursue the Buddha's path to enlightenment and end of all ill.[2]

Buddhist ethics differs from other ethical systems when analyzed in detail. In the Noble Eightfold Path,[3] the elements corresponding to morality and ethics are Right speech, Right action or conduct and Right livelihood. In his book philosophy of Buddhism, Manohar Bhardwaj says, "It [Buddhism] no doubt contains an excellent ethical code which is unparallel in its perfection and altruistic attitude. It deals with one way of life for the Monks and another for the Laity. But Buddhism is much more than an ordinary moral teaching. Morality is only the preliminary stage on the path of purity and is a means to an end, but not an end in itself. The base of Buddhism is morality, and wisdom is its apex".[4]

Morality in Buddhism is essentially practical in that it is only a means leading to the final goal of ultimate happiness. On the Buddhist path to emancipation, each individual is considered responsible for his own fortunes and misfortunes. Each individual is expected to work his own deliverance by his understanding and

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[1]Suraj Vshisth, *Ethics in Buddhism*, Cybertech Publications, New Delhi, 2010, p. 246

[2] Idem

[3]Ibid., p. 243

[4]Manohar Bhardwaj, *Philosophy of Buddhism*, Cybertech Publications, New Delhi, 2010, p.67

effort. Buddhist salvation is the result of one's own moral development and can neither be imposed nor granted to one by some external agent. The Buddha's mission was to enlighten men as to the nature of existence and to advise them how best to act for their own happiness and for the benefit of others. Consequently, Buddhist ethics are not founded on any commandments which men are compelled to follow.

Ethics from Islamic perspective

Every religion lays great emphasis on ethical aspects of human conduct in its own unique way. Generally, there is great commonality between different religions as for as moral and ethical questions are concerned. In fact, to mould a moral character is the most fundamental function of religion. All other functions are subsidiary to it. But it is also true that each religion has unique way of doing it and every religion puts differing emphasis on different aspects of human morality. Islam is also unique in this respect. It has its own ethical values and moral concepts, which are universal as well as specific to Islam.

Islamic ethics, defined as "good character", historically took shape gradually from the 7th century and was finally established by the 11th century. The basic sources of disciplinary code in Islam are the Holy *Qur'ān* and the *Ḥaḍith* (traditions). It is therefore obvious for a Muslim not to look anywhere else, especially to the west for good manners or moral standards. He must change his concept of discipline and ethics depending on the guidance revealed in the *Qur'ān* and how the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH)

practiced it.[1]The ethical code as stated in the Holy*Qur'ān* and practiced by the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) covers a man's life from the dining table to the deathbed or One can say from the cradle to the grave. In short no sphere of life is left out from the application of the moral principles of Islam.[2] The ethical code as described in Arabic is 'Adab al-Islam'. F. Gabrule in 'Encyclopedia of Islam' says, "Adab is an Arabic term meaning custom; it denotes a habit; etiquette; a manner of conduct derived from people considered as models".[3]

Given its importance in a healthy society, Islam supports morality and matters that lead to it. The guiding principle for the behavior of Muslim is "virtuous deeds". This term covers all deeds, not only acts of worship. The Guardian and Judge of all deeds is God Himself. The most characteristics of a Muslim are piety and humility. Muslims must be in control of their passions and desires. It cannot be stressed strongly enough that Islam is not a mere belief system nor a "religion" in commonly-understood sense of the Word. Rather it is what in Arabic is called a *Dīn*[4].It does not separate what pertains to "religion", such as acts of worship, from what pertains to human interaction and mundane or "secular" life.

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[1] Haroon S.Kably, *Self Discipline in Islam*, Al-Hasanat Books Pvt. ltd., New Delhi, 2006, p. 82

[2] Idem

[3] F.Gabrieli,*Adab*, H.A.R.Gibb, Encyclopedia of Islam, vol.1,Brill publishers, London,1960, p.175

[4] *Dīn* is a total frame of reference, a complete system and way of life which embraces the entirety of man's existence

Consequently, there is no fragmentation or division within the personality of the Muslim due to the splitting of life into compartments or applying different rules or criteria to different parts of life. The same division system, the same Allah-given laws and standards govern all aspects of life, and all of an individual's actions are considered by Islam as worship in the broad sense of the term if they are done with the sincere intention of pleasing Allah in keeping with His injunctions.[1]

The Glorious Qur'ān says:

> *It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces Towards east or West; but it is righteousness- to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfil the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Allah-fearing[2].*

This verse teaches us that righteousness and piety is based before all else on a true and sincere faith. The key to virtue and good conduct is a strong relation with God, who sees all, at all times and everywhere. He knows the secrets of the hearts and intentions.

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[1] Suzanne Haneef, *Islam and Muslims*, Adam publishers and distributors, Delhi, 1994, p. 97

[2] Al-Qur'ān, 2:177

The Qur'an defines and sets the standards of social and moral values for Muslims which are as:

> *"Worship only God, be kind, honourable and humble to one's parents, beneither miserly nor wasteful in one's expenditure, do not engage in mercy killings for fear of starvation, do not commit adultery, do not kill unjustly, care for orphaned children, keep ones promises, Be Honest and fair in ones interactions, Do not be arrogant in ones claims or beliefs".[1]*

Islam is a comprehensive way of life, and morality is one of the cornerstones of Islam. Morality is one of the fundamental sources of nation's strength, just as immorality is one of the main causes of a nations decline. Islam has established some universal fundamental rights for humanity as whole, which are to be observed in all circumstances. To uphold these rights, Islam has provided not only legal safeguards, but also a very effective moral system. Thus, whatever leads to the welfare of the individual or the society and does not oppose any maxims of the religion is morally good in Islam, and whatever is harmful is morally bad.

Need for Inter-Religious Dialogue on Ethics

Every religion shares the ethical and moral teachings for reducing human problems. According to John hick, "All religions propose salvation as the actual transformation of human life from self-centeredness to reality centeredness".[2] "Inter-religious

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[1] Ibid., 17: 22- 37

[2] John Hick, *Dialogues in the Philosophy of Religion*, Macmillan, London, 1991, p. 31

dialogue"[1] on ethics is a deep listening to different truth claims and other related ethical religious beliefs and practices. However, it does not mean that one should set side by side the scriptures of each religion to know about the ethical issues of each religion. Instead one strives to put today's global problems of humanity at the center and to listen to each problem with living-kindness and compassion, which are in all religions.

There is a long history of relations between Islam and Buddhism. These two major religions of the world came into contact first in Central Asia and South East Asia. The first encounter between Islam and Buddhism took place in the Middle of the 7th century in East Persia, Transoxiana, Afghanistan and Sind.[2] The historical interaction between Islam and Buddhism is an eloquent testimony to the fact that it is only through understanding, tolerance and mutual respect that fruitful dialogue could be established between religions and cultures. Islam and Buddhism share some common values that could form a strong basis for dialogue between these two religions. Generally speaking, compassion and mercy, love and kindness to living beings, patience and forgiveness, tolerance and generosity are some of the important values emphasized by both Islam and Buddhism. Ar-Rahman_ the Merciful and Ar-Rahim_ the Compassionate are two important attributes of Allah. His love and

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[1]Inter-religious dialogue or inter-faith dialogue refers to cooperative, constructive and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions (i.e., faiths) and spiritual or humanistic beliefs, at both the individual and institutional levels.

[2] Alexander Berzin, *Historical Survey of the Buddhist and Muslim worlds*, Oxford University Press, oxford, 2010, p.11

mercy find its manifestation in entire creation. Allah says in the Holy Qur'ān:

"My Mercy encompasses everything".[1]

Compassion and Mercy are central to Buddhist ethics. Buddhism places much emphasis on *Metta* (loving kindness), *Karuna* (compassion), *Mudhitha* (sympathetic joy), and *Upekka* (equanimity) as means of avoiding resentment. According to the Buddha Love and Compassion will be generated only in a mind which is free from anger and hatred.

The religions of Islam and Buddhism are different from each other in terms of their doctrinal and metaphysical understanding of the cosmos. Yet, both have been existed in a social relationship to each other for centuries. This co-existence has led to adopting an attitude of "Live and let live" towards each other. There also have been instances of violence between these two communities. Upon inquiry one finds that in most cases the inter-religious violence is often caused by non-religious factors such as ethnicity and economics rather than religious or doctrinal differences. Muslims and Buddhists have been instrumental in promoting mutual bonds, the manifestation of which is visible in every area of activity.

In Nov. 2002, a conference under the title "A Dialogue on Peace-An Islamic and Buddhist Perspective" sponsored by SGI-USA, and was held at the SGI-USA East Los Angles community center. In this conference participants expressed their satisfaction at being able to deepen their understanding of each other's religion through a

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[1]Al-Qur'ān. 7:156

question and answer session.[1] In May 2003, a conference was sponsored by UNESCO, The Museum of world religions, Global family for love and peace, and Elijah School for the Study of wisdom in world Religions, in Paris on the theme "The Buddhist-Muslim Dialogue Conference, Global Ethic and Good Governance", in which representatives of the both Islam and Buddhism took part .Ms. Milagros Del Corral, Director, Division of Arts and Cultural enterprise and Deputy to the Assistant Director General for Culture UNESCO, in his welcome address said, "Dialogue as a form of ethics, is a potent means of promoting mutual understanding that rises above mere Tolerance". Mr. Ahmad Jalali, President of General conference of UNESCO describes inter-faith dialogue as an effort in search for truth- a truth that is part of all religious traditions and of necessity moves away from boundaries. He also acknowledged that the Buddhist and Islamic traditions are vital to the world today because each has justice as a central component.[2]

Another international inter-faith conference was held at Ansari Auditorium of Jamia Milia Islamia in New Delhi during 20-21 August 2012. The conference was held jointly by major Indian Muslim organizations, Jamia Milia Islamia's Zakir Hussain institute of Islamic studies, The Delhi based interfaith coalition for peace, The Qatar based world union of Muslim Scholars (WUMS) and the Milli Gazette. It was the first endeavour of its kind to open channels of communication and understanding between various

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[1]   Retrieved from http://www.sgiquarterly.org/news2002jan-1 (accessed on 15th of march 2014)

[2]Retrieved from http://www.gflp.org/Buddhist-Muslim-paris (accessed on 3rd of January 2014)

communities living in the South Asian countries. The conference was inaugurated by eminent intellectual The Vice-President of India, Mohammad Hamid Ansari. In his inaugural speech, he said that interfaith dialogue has emerged as a prominent civil society initiative between nations and groups in the post-cold war world, amidst the ''clash of civilization'' debate and the raging ethnic and religious conflicts in various parts of the globe.[1]

 The theme ''Compassion As Common Ground For Understanding Between Buddhism And Islam'' was held at Thailand's prestigious Mahidol university between 3-4 oct. 2013. It was organized by the Center for Buddhist-Muslim Understanding Bangkok. In his address Dr. Imtiyaz Yusuf, Director center for Buddhist-Muslim Understanding Bangkok, said, "compassion was chosen as the 'unifying theme' in the conference because it goes to the heart of religious, ethical and spiritual traditions required to heal a polarized world and counter the voices of extremism, intolerance and hatred. Compassion encourages religious adherents to assert their common humanity to work together for a better world, and move beyond dogmatic and philosophical differences."[2]

The major obstacle to dialogue between Buddhism and Islam is theological. However, there are other commonalties between Buddhism and Islam that can serve as foundations for constructive

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[1]Naseem Gul Dar, *Dialogue: A Muslim perspective*, Adam Publishers and Distributers, New Delhi, 2013, pp. 243-244

[2]   Retrieved   from http://www.travel-impact-newswire.com/2013/09/first-conference-to-promote-buddhist-muslim-understanding-as-key-to-asean-integration/#axzz33ppnpND6 (accessed on 5th of February 2014)

interfaith dialogue. Specially, both religions have similar perspectives on both proper action and the value of inter-religious dialogue that can contribute to greater inter-religious understanding and respect. It is obvious fact that both religions are tolerant and devoted for the making of peace and justice in the world at large. Both religions have common ethical values that could contribute in the development and prosperity of humanity in the world in general and the countries with adherents of Muslims and Buddhists in particular. Islam being the second world's largest religion has always fostered its ties with other religions especially Christianity and Judaism and other oriental religions like Hinduism and Buddhism, for about fourteen hundred years of history. Buddhism on the other side being World's fourth largest religion with approximately 500 million adherents continues to influence cultures on many continents due to its widely applicable philosophy of ethics and beliefs.

Conclusion

Engaging in inter-religious dialogue is for everyone, whether they are professional ethical Academics or young laypeople. Dialogue on Buddhist and Muslim ethics is generally performed so as to appreciate both the outer and inner strivings of each participant. Ethical values in Buddhism and Islam always support the effective ground rules of inter-religious dialogue on ethics such as sincerity, equality, patience, self-criticism, trust, sympathy, empathy, loving-kindness and open-mindedness. All of these are regarded as mental factors important in both Buddhist and Muslim ethics and as being necessary mental components for a possible successful inter-

religious dialogue on ethics. Buddhist-Muslim dialogue may be sometimes difficult, but it is becoming increasingly necessary as tensions between Muslims and Buddhists worldwide escalate. The world religions have a lot to offer for the successful inter-religious dialogue, which promoted peace, tolerance, justice and co-existence in the world. Buddhist-Muslim dialogue on ethics has got currency in the recent years as lot of national and international conferences were held for the purpose of mutual understanding of these two religions. The conducting of these conferences is meant to highlight the international concern to promote dialogue between Muslims and Buddhists, and to suggest that their contributions ought to be assessed so as future dialogues should built on their achievements. Although these two religions may be divided by complex theological questions, inter-religious dialogue focused around morality, ethics and values can be an extraordinary avenue for inter-cultural change.

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Political Ethics: A Study of ImāmAl-Ghazālī and Mir Sayyid 'Ali Hamadānī

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Rather

Abstract:

Islamic political thought forms a significant part of the intellectual history of Muslims. Muslims had indeed, been the state builders in the practical sense. Muslims were the harbingers of Europeans in many fields, such as military expansion, government arrangements and administrative techniques. The contemporary Islamic Political thought cannot be isolated from its medieval period and fundamental sources of Islamic knowledge (i.e., *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*). It is, therefore, plausible that the future patterns of thought shall have definitely been influenced by the earlier thought pattern. Upon the accession of Abbasids as rulers of the vast empire in 750 C.E, the caliph [*Khalīfah*] acted as the protector of religion and state (*DīnwaDawlah*) and his government as 'God's shadow on Earth [*Ẓill-u Allah (ﷺ) fi'l 'Arḍ*]' under whose sheltering protection every one could find refuge. The rise of Islam during Medieval era strongly altered the power in the Mediterranean region. Early Islamic philosophy emphasized an inexorable link between science and religion and the process of *Ijtihād* to find truth. In effect all philosophy was political as had real implications for governance. While deliberating on the medieval Islamic political thought, it is imperative to discuss the political theorists and philosophers of medieval Islam. They include the stalwarts like ImāmAl-Ghazālī,

Al-Māwardi, Ibn Khaldūn, Al- Fārābi, Al-Kindī (801–873 C.E), Al-Shāristānī (479-548 A.H/1086-1153 C.E), Mīr Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī (714-786 A.H/1314-1384 C.E), JalālAl-Dīn Al-Dawanī (908 A.H/1502 C.E) etc.

This paper is a humble attempt to discuss the contours of Medieval Islamic Political Thought in general and the ethico-political philosophy of Mir Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī and Imāmal-Ghazālī in Particular. This paper will be outlined while considering the master pieces of both the medieval giants, whether it is the *NaṣiḥatAl-Mulūk* of Imāmal-Ghazālī or *DhakhīratAl-Mulūk* of Mir Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī.

Keywords: State, *Sulṭān*, *Khilāfah*, *ʿAdl*, Ethics,

Political Thought of ImāmAl-Ghazālī

Abū ḤāmidMuḥammadibnMuḥammadibnAḥmadAl-Ghazālī, was born at Ghazzālah near Tūs in 450 A.H./1058 C.E. and died in 505 A.H./1111 C.E.[1]He is one of the greatest, distinguished and original philosophers not only in the history of Muslim philosophy but also in the history of human thought. The institutionalization of political philosophy and authority in Islam is by no way as simple as it gives impression at first glimpse. In the legalistic theory of *Khilāfah* elucidated and expounded by the jurists, the ultimate source of power and authority in Islam is Allah (☀) and his Prophet

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[1]- Imam Ghazzali, *Ihya Ulum-ID-Din (Revival of Religious Learnings)*, Tr. into Eng. by Fazl-ul-Karim, Vol. I, Karachi: Darul-Ishaat, 1993, p. 8 (hereafter cited as *Iḥya*)

Muḥammad (S.A.W.). The divinely revealed law (i.e., *Sharī'ah*) works as the command to do good and abstain from the evil.[1]

Al-Ghazālī was a *Shāfa'ī* jurist and his political ideas holds great significance in the 'Islamic Political Thought'. According to Ghazi, "at first sight it seems that there is no substantial post Al-Māwardī development in Ghazālī's political thought. But a deep and thorough study reveals that Ghazālī's contribution to Muslim political thought is very substantial, original and utilitarian".[2] It is generally perceived that Ghazālī's sphere was that of spirituality only and he had nothing to do with mundane affairs like that of politics, economics etc. However, Al-Ghazālī reached to such a prominence as an Islamic scholar with a wielding command over different branches of knowledge that he attained the title of *Ḥujjat al-Islam* (proof of Islam).

As far as the political philosophy of Ghazālī is concerned, it is highly dominated by his ethical and religious precepts. He is of the view that "public interest requires obedience to the ruler who organizes military power". [3]Politics is a necessary part of human life and is closely related to ethics, a science that leads to the good of man. Just like all the classical and medieval political thinkers of Islam Ghazālī also laid great emphasis and gave prime importance

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[1] -Leonard Binder, "Al-Ghazālī", *A History of Muslim Philosophy* (AHMP), Vol. I, Ed., M.M. Sharif, New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 1961, p. 774

[2] -Dr.Mahmood A. Ghazi, *Studies in the Political and Constitutional Thought of Islam,* Pakistan: National book House Lahore, 1992, p. 127

[3] -Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Abu Hamid Ghazzali, *Naṣīḥat Al- Muluk (Counsel for Kings)*, Tr. into Eng. by Tr. F.R.C. Bagley, New York: oxford University Press, 1964, p. LI (hereafter cited as *Naṣīḥat*)

to the establishment of institution of *Khilāfah*. Ghazālī mandates that there are three points which validate the need and importance of *Khilāfah*, and they are:

1)   *Khilāfah* is the holder of state-power and authority that is inevitable for the maintenance of the law and order.

2)   It is the outward reflection of the continuity of social and collective integrity of the *Ummah*.

3)   It is the only lawful form of state and government in Islam, because it derives its authority from *Sharī'ah*.[1]

Man, as a social being cannot live all by himself. He is always in constant need and help of others. He needs this company for two reasons, firstly for the sake of procreation, and secondly that he might be helped in maintaining daily life. Co-habitation is necessary for procreation but it is naturally not possible for a man to confine himself solely to his wife and children. Ghazālī holds that the office of the *Khilāfah* should never be vacant. According to him, if a person possessing required qualifications for the office is not available another person of less competence would be preferred to maintain the institution of *Khilāfah*. To him, *Khilāfah*is the basic source of all powers and authorities exercised by the *Ummah*. He is of the view that in the absence of the *Khalīfah* all the agreements reached with non-Muslims, judgements passed by various courts, contracts and legations stand illegal and invalid because all such

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[1] -Ghazi, *op.cit.*, p. 128

authorities should be derived from the central institution of *Khilāfah*.[1]

However, Ghazālī highlighted that Allah (ﷻ) glorified two groups amongst the sons of Adam (◌) and blessed them with superiority over the rest: the one being the Prophets (عَلَيهِمُ السَّلَام) and second the rulers. He sent Prophets (عَلَيهِمُ السَّلَام) in order to guide His bondsmen, and to safeguard the rights of people and to protect them from the rampage and ire he directed the rulers.[2]Social justice is the central theme of Ghazālī's political thought. He is of the view that before taking to the office of *Khilāfah*, *Khalīfah* should be aware of his duties and status. Ghazālī enumerated certain conditions, which according to him are necessary requirements for the post of *Khalīfah* and these conditions include:

A)   He should be consciously knowing all the secrets concealed in commissioning down man to earth;

B)   He should be aware of his objectives in life, because it will decide his approach towards the welfare and the betterment of his subjects.

C)   The ruler should realise that he has to leave this transitory world and this is not his permanent abode. Death is a culminating reality. The womb of the mother is his beginning and the grave his final resting place. In fact, a man's journey through life via his grave to eternity is like that of a traveller traversing a long arduous

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[1] -*Ibid.*

[2] -Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Abu Hamid Ghazzali, *Naṣīḥat Al- Mulūk (Counsel for Kings)*, Tr. into Eng. by Tr. F.R.C. Bagley, New York: oxford University Press, 1964, p. 45 (hereafter cited as *Naṣīḥat*)

path through a bridge. Symbolically, in final reckoning he has also to cross the '*Pul-iṢirāṭ*' (the Celestial Bridge of reckoning on the day of judgement).

D)   He should undertake this journey to collect the finest '*Zad-i Rah*' (once baggage in transit) and the goods of the finest good for hereafter. Even moment lost cannot be recaptured. He may not take the next breath.

E)   He should do well to all, because what will stand by him are his good deeds achieved by shunning the evil and accumulating the truth. Or else, he will suffer miserably at the time of death and would not be able to face his creator on the day of judgement. The *Imān*(complete faith in Allah ﷻ) is his principle tool whereby he can accomplish his objective. The pleasures of this world are transitory likewise the world itself. On the final day, the ruler would not be able to gain an iota of virtue from all the treasures of his kingdom.[1]

Ghazālī maintains that a *Sulṭān* or a ruler should be kind, generous and mild in his behaviour and attitude. He is of the opinion that if *Sulṭān* is conducive towards the vivification of the religion, people should not be impolite towards him, and they should show some courtesy to him.[2] In support of his argument, Ghazālī quotes *Ḥadīth* of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) which follows:

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[1] -Imam Ghazzali, *Kīmīya-i-Saʻādat (Alchemy of Eternal Bliss)*, Tr. into Eng. by MuḥammadAsimBilal, Lahore: Qazi Publications,2001, pp. 698-699 (here after cited as Ghazali 2001,)

[2] -Imām Abū Ḥāmid MuḥammadAl-Ghazālī,*Iḥyā Al-ʻUlūm Al-Dīn*, Tr. into Urdu by Maulānā Nadīm Wājidī, Vol. IV, Karachi: Darul-Ishaat, ND, p. 164 (hereafter cited as *Iḥya*Urdu)

السلطان ظل الله فى أرضه

The Sulṭān is the shadow of Allah ﷻ on earth.[1]

Ghazālī while elaborating the *Ḥadīth* of prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) argues that in order to acquire the qualities of really being the shadow of Allah (ﷻ) on earth (*Ẓill-u Allah*) with all its implications, it is necessary that *Sulṭān* should deal with the subjects in a finest way and correct all his mistakes.[2]Ghazālī, while elucidating his political ideas maintained that the *Sulṭān* in reality is one who awards justice. He should not practice injustice and wickedness amongst his people. In his political thought, Ghazālī in detail has discussed the qualifications and conditions required for holding the institution of *Khilāfah*.

2.1.1. Qualities of the Khalīfah

Ghazālī while discussing the qualities of the *Khalīfah*lays great emphasis on the concept of justice (*'Adl*). Ghazālī in his "*Counsel for Kings*", quoted many verses from the holy *Qur'ān*, traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) and the narrations of the earlier kings in order to make the *Khulafā'* (rulers) of his times understand the significance of being just and on right path. Allah (ﷻ) says in the holy *Qur'ān*:

وَالسَّمَاء رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ

And the Firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the Balance (of Justice),

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[1] -*Naṣīḥat, op.cit.*, p. 45

[2] -*Ibid.*, p. 44

(*Al-Qur'ān*: 55:7)

In the explanation of this verse Ghazālī says, it means that, treat the sons of Adam (A.S.) (people) kindly and be just with them, as you would wish them to be just with you.[1] Furthermore, Ghazālī discusses tyranny and oppression as forms of injustice and categorized 'injustice' into two kinds. Defining its first kind, he says that it is the injustice done by *Salāṭīn* (pl. *Sulṭān*) to their subjects, strong to weak and rich to poor and another form is the injustice, which a person commits with his own self, namely the curse of sin. Therefore, he advises to avoid this injustice and argues that Allah will keep injustice away from such a person.[2]

Political thought of Mir Sayyid 'Ali Hamadānī

Mīr Sayyid 'Alī Ibn ShihābAl-DinAl-Hamadānī, popularly known as *Shah-i- Hamadan,Amīr-i-Kabīr, Bānī-iMusalmānī darKashmir and'Alī Thanī* was born on 12th of Rajab 714 A.H./ 22nd of October 1314

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[1] -*Ibid.*, p. 59

[2] -*Ibid.*,p. 56

C.E., [1] in Hamadan. His Father Sayyid ShihābAl-Dīn was a *Ḥākim* (Government official) in the province of Hamadan and Fāṭimah a symbol of piety was his mother. In *KhulāṣatAl-Manāqib*, Ja'farBadakhshī (a disciple of Mīr Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī), reports that according to Sayyid Ali Hamadānī, his lineage from both his parents is linked to Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.). From mother's side it reaches Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) after seventeen generations.[2] He quotes the Stanza from the poetical verses of Hamadānī in reverence of his ancestry:

خِيَرَةُ اللهِ مِنَ الْخَلْقِ لِِبِى ثُمَّ اُمِّىَ فَاَنَا اِبْنُ الْخِيَرَيْنِ

فِضَّةٍ قَدْ صَفَيْتُ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ فَاَنَا الْفِضَّةُ اِبْنُ الذَّهَبَيْنَ

مَنْ لَهُ جَدٍ كَجَدِىْ فِى الْوَرىٰ اَوْ كَأُمِّى فَاَنَا اِبْنُ الْقَمَرَيْنِ

Allah (ﷺ) has exalted my father and then my mother and I am the son of these two pious souls. I am furnished silver out of gold and I am the son of precious ones. Who among people has such an exalted ancestor or mother like mine? I am the son of two shining moons.[3]

Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī visited third time Kashmir in 785 A.H/1383 C.E. After a short stay, when he decided to leave Kashmir, Sulṭān QuṭbAl-Dīn requested him to permanently stay there, but

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[1] -S. M. Stern, " 'Alī Ibn Shihāb Al-Dīn Ibn Muḥammad Al-Hamadānī", in *Da'irah' Ma'ārif-i Islamiya*, Ed., Sayyid Mohammad Abdullah (et.al.), Lahore: University of Punjab, 1982, Vol. II, p. 89; G.M.D Sofi, *Kashīr: Being a History of Kashmir*, New Delhi: Light and Life Publishers, 1974, Vol. I, p. 85; Gerhard Bowering, " 'Alī Hamadānī", *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, retrieved from http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ali-b-32, (accessed on 8th May 2015)

[2] -Sofi, *Op. Cit.*, p. 12

[3] -*Ibid.*, p. 13

Hamadānī overturned his request and left one of his disciples Maulānā Muḥammad Qārī (known as Mullā Muḥammad Qārī) in Kashmir. Owing to his deteriorated health, he left Kashmir and breathed his last at Pakhli on sixth of *Dhu'lḤijjah* on his way back to Hamadan. Furthermore, it is to be said, that the coffin of Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī was carried from Pākhlī to Khatlān[1] and on the account of Didamari, he was buried at Khatlān on fifth of *JamādAl-Thānī* 786 A.H.[2]

Mīr Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī never compromised on the matters of religion and was not worried about the displeasure of the rulers while cautioning them on their mere deviances from the religion.[3] On the concept of Islamic state, he mainly stresses on its essential aspects rather than engaging in the discussions on its appellations. The fifth chapter of the *DhakhīratAl-Mulūk*, which specifically deals with the political affairs of the state starts with the verse of the *Qur'ān*, which reads as:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِى الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْىِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

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[1]Khawājā Muḥammad Aʿẓam Didamarī, *Wāqʿāt-i Kashmiri*, M.S.,Research and Publication Division, University of Kashmir, ND, ff. 48-49; Ghulām Sarwar Lāhorī, *Khazīnat Al-Aṣfiyā*, Samarkand, ND, Vol. II, pp. 295-97

[2] -Didamarī, *op. cit.*, f. 49A; Lāhorī has mentioned the month of his burial at Khatlān as *Jamād Al-ʾAwal* instead of *Thanī* see Lāhorī, *op. cit.*, p. 296

[3] -Mīr Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī, *Dhakhīrat Al-Muluk*, Tr. into Urdu by Mohammad Riyaḍ Aḥmad Qādrī, *Moḥsin Al-Saluk*, New Delhi: Islamic Book Foundation, 1991, pp. 24-25

Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition.

(*Al-Qur'ān*: 16:90)

The interpretations of the aforementioned verse of the *Qur'ān* highlights the concern of Mīr Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānīregarding the welfare of the people and his love for the *Ummah* of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.). Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī enumerates three principles of good governance; kindliness, justice and benevolence. His political thought is highly dominated by the doctrine of justice *('Adl)*. Hamadānī highlights the importance of justice in the light of the *Qur'ān*and the traditions of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.).

The religious and ethical philosophies of Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī are closely related with his ideas of political philosophy. Social justice is the central idea of Hamadānī's ideas of state and governance.

Mīr Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī, uniquely opines that a just ruler must be accompanied by a 'Sufi reformer' who would keep a check on the rulers. This is one of the distinguishing features of Hamadānī's political thought as compared to other political theorists of medieval period. He suggests that the Sufi reformer should assist the ruler to keep the society free from injustice and rebellion and should always guide him in implementing the laws of *Sharī'ah*. At the same time, Hamadānīlays stress on the economic autonomy of the *'Ulamā'* so that they may not work under the influence of the ruler and dictate the laws according the wishes and whims of the

rulers. Z. U. Malik rejects this assertion of Hamadānī while suggesting that:

> The union of sainthood and kingship is a difficult proposition to be comprehended or implemented as the attributes of the two institutions are diametrically opposed, and they have functioned for human betterment independently: political process derives its character and strength from power, prestige, and terror; while sainthood is founded on renunciation of earthly desires, piety, devotion and mystical practices which prepare a seeker of divine truth in this life for the life everlasting.[1]

HamadānīfollowingGhazālī adapts Prophetic traditions and the examples from the lives of *Khulafā'-iRāshidūn* to guide the rulers on religious lines for upholding justice and establishing peace. Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī while characterising the just and unjust rulers maintains that:

> The ruler who follows the way of justice and Beneficence, strives for the establishment of divine law (Sharī'ah) and tries to implement the word of Allah (﷽) on the earth, is a vicegerent of Allah (﷽) on earth, the shadow of Allah (﷽) on earth and the deputy of His Majesty on earth. However, one who

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[1] -Z. U. Malik, "A Critique of Political Views of Sayyid Ali Hamedani (1314-1384)", in *Shah-i-Hamedan Mir Sayyid Ali Hamedani*, Ed., S.M. Waseem, Delhi: Kanishka Distributors and Publishers, 2003, p. 20

does not have a benign attitude towards his people and transgresses the limits of the Sharī'ah, is really vicegerent of Dajjāl, enemy of Allah (ﷻ) and the Prophet (S.A.W.) and Caliph of Devil.[1]

The titles used by Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī, for both the just and unjust rulers are somehow different from other political theorists. In Hamadānī's political thought justice is the foundation of good governance. Hamadānī while devising a two-point formula i.e., 'following the *Sharī'ah*' and the 'kind attitude towards the subjects', maintains that it is the base of good and balanced governance. Hamadānī while advising the rulers regarding their affiliations suggest that they should know their friends and foes. He proposes a ruler to seek the company of the righteous persons and pay attention to the words of an *'Ālim* and differentiate between the *'Ulamā'-iḤaq* and *'Ulamā'-iSū'*.[2]

Hamadānī urges a ruler to have a deputy who is prudent, wise and full of wisdom who can give valuable suggestions to the ruler in maintaining the affairs of the state.[3]Hamadānī explicates the temporal and spiritual *Khilāfah* and adds that like a worldly state the human body is a 'mini state' run by a *Khalīfah* and has deputies and counsellors. Furthermore, for a better understanding of the affairs of the 'temporal state' (*Salṭanat-iMa'anwī*), the *modus operandi* of the 'spiritual state' or the 'mini state' (*KhilāfahAl-Insānī*) needs to

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[1]- Mīr Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī, *Dhakhīrat Al-Mulūk*, M.S., Research and Publication Division, Universityof Kashmir, ND, f. 76a(hereafter cited as Hamadānī RPD,)

[2] - Hamadānī MA, *op. cit.*, f. 107a

[3] -*Ibid.*, f. 108a

be comprehended. For that reason, he explains the metaphysical nature of the human body and calls it a little universe, explaining it operation at the subtle or the spiritual level.[1]Hamadānī elaborates this discussion and maintains that the *Khulafā'* and *Salāṭīn* as human beings can:

1)   Either be beneficent or cheap skate towards both, his subjects or his own self;

2)   Beneficent towards his own self and penurious towards his subjects;

3)   Be penurious towards his own self and beneficent towards his subjects

4)   Be beneficent towards both his own self and subjects

Hamadānī maintains that the best among the *Salāṭīn* and the *Khulafā'* is the one who is just to his own self and his citizens and degenerated is the one who is against this reality.[2] According to Hamadānī, these qualities are available in *Anbiyā'* (Prophets) and *Awliyā'* (friends of Allahﷻ). [3]Unlike, other political thinkers of medieval period, Hamadānī does not ask the believers to follow a ruler who simply professes faith and enforces Islamic prayers. According to him, one who resists and stands against the tyrant and unjust rulers is in the way of Allah (ﷻ) and it is not obligatory

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[1] -*Ibid.*, f. 113a

[2] - *Ibid.*

[3] - *Ibid.*, f. 114b

to follow the ruler who forbids "*Amr BilMa'rūfwaNahy 'Ani'lMunkar*" (enjoining good and forbidding evil).[1]

Hamadānī repeatedly warns the rulers to shun the path of tyranny and untoward behaviour towards their subjects and quotes the *Ḥadīth* of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.):

وَعَنْ عَلِيّ كَرَّمَ اللهُ وَجْهَهُ قَالَ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ ﷺ : يُوْتٰى يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِالْإِمَامِ الْجَابِرِ لَيْسَ مَعَهُ نَصِيْرٌ
وَلَا عٰا ذِرٍ، فَيُلْقٰى فِى جَهَنَّمَ فَيَدُوْرُ كَمَا يَدُوْرُ الرُّحٰى ثُمَّ يَرْتَبِطُ فِى قَعْرِهَا۔

> *Ḥaḍrat 'Alī narrates that Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) said on the day of resurrection a tyrant ruler will be called. There will be no one to arbitrate him, without any explanation, no one will come to his rescue, and he will be thrown in the hell fire, which will be his final abode.[2]*

The central theme of Hamadānī's political thought as mentioned is the execution of 'social justice'. Hamadānī repeatedly with the help of allegories and parables tries to counsel the *Salāṭīn* and the rulers to be just and benevolent in their actions towards their subjects. According to him, the worst man in the world is one who is assigned the job to administer the affairs of people and he dispenses his duties in an unjust way.

Hamadānī lived during a period when the gap between church and state was widening in West and religious authorities were being persecuted. It was the time when Europeans were deeply sunken in religious delusions. The new Europe was flourishing where authority of church was excluded in the benefit of ethnic and local

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[1] -*Ibid.*, f. 129

[2] -Hamadānī RPD, *op. cit.*, f. ۶۸b

prejudices. However, Muslims irrespective of their geographical and demographical diversities, considered Islamic world as their homeland and country in which they travelled anywhere and anytime. They were bonded through the divine word and love of Almighty Allah and His Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.).   Unlike West, their religion (Islam) meant everything to them.

> A Shaykh of Balkh and Tirmiz would be respected and venerated in Konya and Damascus and a Spaniard tourist would be considered a judge in India. Everywhere in mosque, school, abbey, monastery and hospital there was a symbol and remembrance of Muslims but there was not gender difference or nationality difference regarded as significant among Muslims.[1]

Sayyid ʿAli Hamadānī , accounts that whatever human beings obtain (whether it may be comfort, ease, relief, safety, salvation or mirth) is a sign of Allah's mercy towards his creation. So, he always directs the rulers to take care of the rights of their subjects and those who are inferior to them in worldly status.[2]

4.2.1. Duties of the Khalīfah

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[1] -Dr. Mohammad Behnamfar and Mohammad Bakhshee-Zadeh, "Tolerance and Forbearance in Mir Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī's Dhakhīrat Al-Muluk", *Journal of Subcontinent Researches*, University of Sistan and Baluchistan, Vol. 4, No. 11, Summer 2012, pp. 22-23

[2] -Hamadānī MA, *op. cit.,* ff. 84b-85a

Sayyid ʻAlī Hamadānī formulates the guidelines for the rulers and the subjects to establish a just and balanced political system. In his *DhakhīratAl-Mulūk*, he lays down the principles for good governance whether it is temporal or spiritual. Hamadānī's primary concern is to establish a state where the ordained divine law is implemented in order to eliminate all the evils and vices from the society and instil piety in all the sections of society. He laid great emphasis on reformation of the moral values of man (*Ḥusn-iKhuluq*). Hamadānī does not discuss separately the qualifications required for the post of *Khalīfah* like Al-Fārābī, Al-Māwardī and Ibn Khaldūn. However, the qualifications devised by Hamadānī can be deduced from the duties he assigns to a ruler towards his subjects both Muslims and non-Muslims (*Ahl al-Dhimmah*). He develops these entire criterion within the mandates of *Sharīʻah.* Hamadānī advocates for the establishment of system where everyone's due share and equal opportunity is guaranteed. He strives for the establishment of a system back on the lines of Prophetic model and his companions strived for. He bets to establish the institution where everyone is equal before law, justice is the prime concern, to help poor and needy is given due importance and establishment of the *Sharīʻah* is given the foremost priority. Sayyid ʻAlī Hamadānī, sets ten conditions for the kingship or *Salṭanat*, which are imperative for the ruler to follow:

1. In the process of decision making the ruler should consider himself as one of the governed and pass his verdicts in a way as he as a subject would expect from a benevolent king. He should treat the Muslims in a way he would like to be treated as a Muslim.

2.   He should gratify the needs of Muslims and consider it as worthiest of all the devotions. In support of his argument, Hamadānī quotes the Prophetic tradition that, "appeasing the heart of a Muslim is equal to the abidance of all the *Jinns* and humans on the earth and this is the precondition for all the rulers to satisfy the needs of all the destitute and needy".[1]

3.   While eating, the ruler should follow the habits of rightly guided caliphs (*Khulafā'-iRāshidūn*). He should abstain from lavishness and wearing elegant robes.

4.   The ruler ought to be very gentle and polite while directing his subjects and should not be annoyed with lengthy discussions and arguments. He should not feel humiliated while talking to underprivileged class.

5.   He should not delay or hesitate in taking decisions in order to please the people and must always act according to the codes of*Sharī'ah*, however unpleasant it may appear to the people. It is not possible for a just ruler to please all his subjects while taking any decision. So, he should take all the decisions only to please Allah and for His pleasure without worrying about any sort of rebellion in his state.

6.   He should be aware of the possible dangers involved in the leadership of the state. He should hear such sufferings patiently. This would earn him reward in the life hereafter. He should understand that kingship is the means that can earn him both felicity and dishonour in this world and Hereafter. He should not

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[1] -Hamadānī RPD, *op. cit.*, f. 77a

make the comfort and luxuries of this world as a means for discomfort in next world.

7.   He should seek the company of pious and the learned people, observe their guidance, and follow their advice. He should keep himself aloof from the ignorant, greedy *'Ulamā* and *Mashā'ikh* or paupers who praise and pray for every unjust, cruel and niggard.

8.   Out of arrogance, he should not create fear and fright among the people. He should follow love, sympathy and kindness while dealing with his subjects especially the underprivileged section of the society. This will endear him to his people.

9.   The ruler should always be vigilant and must be aware of the dealings of his officers/ministers with the people. They should neither be unjust and nor oppress or intimidate the people and if any of his officers found guilty the ruler should give him an exemplary punishment, so as to put a check on the repetition of such an activity by any other official. He should never plot with the guilty and should reprimand the nobles with wisdom and good advice.

10.   The ruler should be wise and erudite. It is imperative on him to check each and everything carefully while deciding any case. He should try to discover the truth of every case and address the case with discernment and sagacity and in accordance with the dictates of the *Sharī'ah*. They should not be simply led away by the statement of the witness. They should not forget the fact that there

are innumerable causes for every happening, and that what often appears superficially has no bearing upon reality.[1]

Elaborating the duties of the *Sulṭān*, Hamadānī, reiterates that he should be prudent and well balanced in every matter related to the state affairs. He should be loving, kind to his subjects and should not unnecessarily reprove them. Hamadānī makes it imperative for the *Sulṭān* or the king to strive for the implementation of the *Sharī'ah* and decide every case with utmost care and insight.

4.2.2. Rights of the Muslims Subjects

By the time Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī wrote *DhakhīratAl-Mulūk*, medieval Islamic world had produced a lot of literature related to nature, form and functions of the state. This literature, as an elaborate discussion on all the key issues of the state and government had a significant impact on the mind-set of the people. For this reason, Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī avoided to repeat the already discussed themes pertaining to Islamic politics and tried to fill the void in this plethora of literature on medieval Islamic political thought. Thus, he mainly emphasised on the duties of *Khalīfah* and rights of the subjects which seemed to him as the most important and serious issue to be addressed from application point of view. While discussing the rights of the citizens, Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī has classified them into two categories, 'rights of Muslims' and 'rights of non-Muslims (*Ahl al-Dhimmah*)'in an Islamic state. Hamadānī formulated twenty rights for Muslim subjects in an Islamic state which follows as:

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[1] -*Ibid.*, ff. 76-78

1)   The ruler should behave humbly and compassionately with all his subjects especially Muslims. Out of proud and arrogance he should not consider himself superior to other Muslims. He should keep it in mind that Allah dislikes arrogant and unjust people. Hamadānī quotes the *Ḥadīth* of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.), "the person will not enter paradise that has arrogance [in his heart even] equivalent to a seed of sesame."[1]

2)   He should not listen to the gossipmongers; this will lead him astray, resulting in mischief and remorse. Hamadānī suggests that those who highlight others failure and shortcomings in front of a person will definitely highlight his (shortcomings) in front of others.

3)   If a Muslim commits any mistake, the ruler should forgive him within three days, if the mistake is not of serious nature. However, if he has done a serious blunder which displays an utter disobedience of *Sharī'ah* in any way, the king can dissolute him and banish him from his favour for the rest of the life.

4)   The king should be benevolent, loving and kind to his subjects. He should be unbiased while dispensing justice. The *Sulṭān* is the shadow of Allah (*Ẓil-u Allah*) on earth as Allah does not make any discrimination and showers His mercy on both believers and non-believers, likewise the ruler should be impartial.

5)   The king should respect women and treat them sympathetically. He should never, in pride of his power, eye women and pry into the private residences without proper permission.

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[1]- *Ibid.*, f. 80a

6)   While dealing with the people, the ruler should interact with everyone according to his status. He should in no way expect a refined behaviour from inferior and mean people and should not expect intellectual maturity and eloquence from Bedouins. He should assign duties to people according to their capacities. He should be aware of the fact that each group of people is bound to behave in accordance with its own culture. The court should be open to everyone to meet the ruler and the ruler should in no way be irritated by this.

7)   The ruler should respect senior citizens especially the righteous and should be kind towards children. Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) has said, "He is not amongst us who did not respect our elders and love our children."[1]

8)   The ruler should fulfil and execute all the promises made to subjects and should consider it unworthy going against his promises.

9)   The ruler should be kind and benevolent towards everyone. He should not use disrespectful words. He should treat the underprivileged people with kindness and generosity.

10)   The ruler should be just and fair while exercising his authority. As he expects his people to be fair and just with him, he should in turn be fair with them. He should behave with Muslims in a way as he expects them to behave with him.

11)   The ruler should consider it as his foremost duty to make reconciliation between two Muslims. He should not make any

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[1] -*Ibid.*, f. 82a

deferment in resolving the disputes among Muslims as it would otherwise lead to strife and feud with severe consequences.

12)   The ruler should not expose the faults of a Muslim rather should conceal them. He should not oppress the poor people on petty offences and should try to forgive the mistakes of the people.

13)   The ruler should not encourage his subjects for evil. If accidently the ruler commits any sin, he should conceal it, because the subjects are quite often following their rulers and if a ruler is virtuous then subjects are encouraged to good and its reward will be reaped by the state. If the king is wicked and corrupt then it is obvious that his subjects will follow the same and, in this case, the state will have to face its severe consequences.

14)   The rulers should solve the problems of the people. If his recommendations/suggestions are needed in any genuine case, he, without any delay, should recommend it whenever and wherever needed. In states, important tasks are carried out on the recommendations of the rulers, he should use this opportunity to bring genuine persons upfront and seize this opportunity to obtain eternal bliss.

15)   The rulers should prefer the poor to the wealthy and affluent people. He should prefer the companionship of the pious, Godly persons and at least once in a day should listen to the counselling and admonishments of the righteous ones. Their association will enlighten his heartand purge it from the darkness, which is otherwise a danger to the faith and causes damnation and everlasting disappointment. Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) said that, when Ḥaḍrat Sulaīmān(عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام)used to come out of his throne

he would directly approach mosque in search of any poor and needy and sit by him saying that a meek is sitting by a meek.[1]

16)   The ruler should be aware of the conditions of every section of the society particularly the downtrodden, distressed, orphans and hungry. Addressing their issues, he should make sure none is left hungry and everyone is provided with basic facilities of life. He should be concerned and fearful of the day of judgement where kingship will be of his no use and the rightful claimants whose affairs were entrusted to him will be asking for their dues from him. Therefore, he should deliver his assigned service to mankind particularly his Muslim subjects with utmost solemnity, care and caution.

17)   The king should keep the highways safe for his subjects from robbers and the thieves. A king should be stern in awarding exemplary punishment to the robbers, so that the passage is safe for the public use. He should renovate all the ruined roads and construct watchtowers for the safety of the by passers and if not possible then should keep the dread roads under surveillance.

18)   The king should focus on rehabilitation and constructive programs like constructing bridges and inns for the convenience of the people.

19)   The king should construct *Masājid*(sing., *Masjid* or mosque) in Muslim localities and appoint *Imām*and *Mu'azzin*(one who calls for prayers) with regular stipends to fulfil their financial requirements. As such, they can perform their duties with full dedication.

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[1]- *Ibid.*, f. 84a

20)   The king should facilitate the act of enjoining good/lawful and prohibiting evil/unlawful (*Amr bilMa'rūfwaNahy 'Ani'lMunkar*). He should consider himself obliged for the execution of this important command of Almighty Allah.

While framing and dictating the set of rights regarding Muslim subjects, it seems that Hamadānī's approach is that of an *'Ālim*/religious scholar and a reformer than a political theorist. He advises both the rulers and the subjects to follow *Sharī'ah* in letter and spirit. Hamadānī holds that these rights are for the Muslims subjects. For Non-Muslims subjects (*Ahl Al-Dhimmah*) there are different rules which Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) has set up for the fire worshipers (Zoroastrians) and the people of the book (*AhlAl-Kitāb*) after the conquest of Iran and Jerusalem. [1]Hamadānī had made it imperative for the *Salāṭīn* to follow the covenant of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) whiledealing with the Non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic state.[2]

4.2.3. Rights of the Non-Muslim Subjects (Ahl Al-Dhimmah)

The discussion on the rights of Non-Muslims (*Ahl Al-Dhimmah*) in an Islamic state makes it imperative to understand that Islamic state is an "ideological state".[3] A nation state and an ideological state are poles apart from each other. The word *Dhimmah*means the 'guaranteed', 'protected' and refers to the people (excluding

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[1] -*Ibid.*, f. 86

[2] -*Ibid.*

[3] -Sayyid Abu'l A'lā Maudūdi, *Rights of Non-Muslims in an Islamic State*, Islamic Publications, 1961, p. 1

Muslims) living in an Islamic state and are guaranteed the rights of being human and the security to their life and property.

1.   The first condition set by Mīr Sayyid ʿAlī Hamadānī for non-Muslims to live in an Islamic state is that the ruler should not allow them to construct new places of worship (temples, churches) near Muslim inhabited areas.

2.   They should not rebuild or renovate any old church or temple which has been destroyed or is in ruins.

3.   Non-Muslims should allow Muslims travellers to enter their religious buildings and stay there for three days as guests.

4.   They should allow Muslim travellers to stay with them at their residences as a guest at least for three days.

5.   They should not act as spies, nor shall harbour any spy or enemy of Islam.

6.   If any relative of non-Muslim wants to accept Islam, they should not forbid him to do so.

7.   They should respect the religious codes and observandums of Islam (*Shiʿār-iIslāmī*).

8.   They should respect Muslims.

9.   If the non-Muslims are sittings in an assembly and a Muslim happens to reach there, they should offer him a place and welcome him in their meeting.

10.   They should not dress like Muslims.

11.   They should not use the Muslim names.

12.   They should ride the horses without saddle and bridle.

13.   They are not allowed to carry swords and arrows in Muslim quarters.

14.　　They should not use rings with precious stones and engraved characters.

15.　　They should not drink or sold wine openly.

16.　　They should not practice their religion openly and promulgate their traditions in public.

17.　　They should not live in the neighbourhood of Muslims.

18.　　They should not carry their dead bodies through the grave yards of Muslims.

19.　　They should not mourn loudly in case of death in their family.

20.　　They should not buy Muslim slaves.[1]

Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī, maintains that the covenant adopted by Ḥaḍrat 'Umar (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) should be followed while dealing with *Ahl Al-Dhimmah*. To him this covenant seems more logical. However, this sphere of his political philosophy has faced severe criticism.

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-*Naṣīḥat*, *op.cit*.,

[1] -S. M. Stern, "'Alī Ibn ShihābAl-Dīn Ibn MuḥammadAl-Hamadānī", in *Da'irah' Ma'ārif-iIslamiya*, Ed., Sayyid Mohammad Abdullah (et.al.), Lahore: University of Punjab, 1982,

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Engaging Jainism
with Contemporary Issues

Dr. Sarim Abbas¹

ABSTRACT:

Jainism is one of the world's oldest religion, which is originated in India. Jainism has been rightly called ethical religion, which is applicable and relevant today as it was in the time of last *Tirthankar*. Jain philosophy and ethics can provide not only the solutions to the life's problems but also provide the solutions to the present modern issue. Jainism, as a philosophy and culture, as a view of reality and a way of life, has made immense contribution to world thought and culture which is of universal and perennial significance and value. Jainism as practical philosophy and viable mode of living offers a significant way out in putting the theory of *Anekanta*. The basic tenets and beneficial practices of Jainism based on *Anekanta* deserve attention of all ratiocinative or cogent minds. *Anekanta, Ahimsaand Aparigraha*, these are the great doctrines of Jainism, has more relevance today than ever before. Humanity stands on the verge of ethical and spiritual crises created by scientific and technological advancements. Jainism has the potentiality to make significant contributions in all spheres of life for the benefit of humanity in particular and for cosmic wellness. We are living in an extremely

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explosive time; the world is in confusion and human beings are driven by the power of egocentric behavior. The present world is faced many urgent problems such as political, economic, social and cultural problems. The whole human life is in a state of turmoil because modern civilization is based on conflicts and violence. To meet the challenges and to solve the modern issues and also to save the humanity from further destruction there is greater need of engaging Jainism with modern issue in present time of crisis in 21st century. Now, it is the time to think together and to work together to engage in Jainism with modern issue to develop harmonious society and creating a non-violent, peaceful and progressive world order. This paper proposes to help us to look into these contemporary thoughts, gain clarity on them and assimilate the value by practicing them, there endeavoring to create a better world tomorrow.

Keywords: Jainism, Anekanta, Ahimsa, Aparigraha, Tirthankar

Engaging Jainism with Contemporary Issues

The way of life proposed in the beginning of social life in India, The Bharat Varsha was the foundation stone of Jainism. It shaped a community which bloomed into 'Welfare of All' cultures. 'Community building' has been thought in different manner in different times. Society is enlarged version of sense of living together. Various thinkers tried to limit society in different sects and called it community. The limit may be religion oriented, power oriented, work oriented but it proved to be fetal to human society. The concept of society when it comes into existence was only one and it was 'All living beings and all non-living things on this earth are part of one society'. 'Jain way of living' is very straight. The only thing required is one should have a belief on Jain code of conduct. This code of conduct has taken a shape in thousands of years by experience, experiment and examination conducted by many prophets, kings, shravaks and layman. No God, No Super power promoted and preached it. It evolved through the process of meditation. If we want peace, we shall have to peep into the way of living proposed by Jain code of conduct. It is very simple to think if we are thirsty, we shall have go to the well not to the furnace. Jain code of conduct is a 'well' filled with clean water. In that water one can see till bottom of it. It is free and anybody can drink its soothing water because nobody is there to supervise it. No God, no representative of God will come and ask for entry pass – you and your soul id the only element to question because it needs control on worldly affairs. Just and proper way of living – Designed in Doctrines of Jainism but I feel doctrines become dogmatic and in

Jain way of conduct nothing is Dogmatic. It us elastics, based on ones thinking (Jaini, 1916 pp.07-16). As for human being is concerned conduct and thought are two equal strong sides of personality. Both are dependent on each other. On the basis of thought, conduct is designed and thoughts become stable, and conduct support the thoughts to be just. Looking to this inters dependence of thought the conduct, the philosophy and religion has been defined together. Knowledge of elements is to establish philosophy takes birth and when he starts shaping the thoughts into act it becomes code of conduct and that is religion. Conduct which is not just samyak will force lives wondering in the dark lanes of good and bad on the other side, thought without just conduct are baseless and harmful and freedom from life cycle can be attained. The foal of man is expressed when there is balance between both. Jain ways of life proposes anekantbased thinking and ahimsa-based conduct.

Jainism as a philosophy and culture, as a view of reality and a way of life, has made immense contribution to world thought and culture which is of universal and perennial significance and value provided it is properly understood and adequately practiced. It is at once ancient in terms of origin and contemporary in terms of relevance. If its basic tenets, doctrines and practices are appropriately reinterpreted as per modern human psyche and its needs and aspirations and expressed in present day idioms and sincerely practiced by individuals, socio-cultural organization and world forums they may provide not only succor and solace to

distracted humanity but also pave way for cosmic peace and universal happiness apart from spiritual enhancement.

The spread of the Jaina faith worldwide has observe the development and progress of a movement known as "Engaged Jainism" or sometimes referred to as "Socially Engaged Jainism". As interpreted and enacted by different Jain practitioners, and organizations both in Indian and Global contexts Engaged Jainism seeks to actively build a more compassionate, caring nonviolent, and sustainable world. For engaged Jain thinkers, like Acaryya Tulsi and Acaryya Mahaprajna, their life-long contribution and social activity touches all the dimensions of social and personal life (Nathamal & Mahapragya 2000 p 55). This growing awareness and commitment to such an "engaged" perspective to modern Jainism does not imply, however, that the ancient teachings of the Tirthamkaras were "disengaged" or alienated from social practices and relationships. The Jain Tirthakaras and Acaryyas have been involved in the societies that nurtured them since the time of the Lord Rsabhadeva. We may call it as the first step of social engaging the Jainism. Engaged Jainism now- a-days is a non-centralized movement that emerged in response to multiple crises in modern world. The leaders and groups that make up the movement all draw upon traditional Jain concepts, values, and principles as they develop their various responses to the crises and challenges of their particular situations. Noteworthy contribution of engaged compassion and nonviolence which helps nourish the humanity and solves various problem of our society. The paper will try to

examine some of these foundational teachings and the ways in which they shape Engaged Jainism.

It has instructed some code of conduct to be followed by Chaturvidha Sangha - Monks (Sadhus), nuns (Sadhvis), laymen (Shravakas) and laywomen (Shravikas) - to lead good life. These to improve the life of people in this modern era. Jainism tells about Saptavyasanas (seven addictions) and teaches to give up these addictions. The Saptavyasanas (seven addictions) are: gambling, century (parastrigamana-attraction towards another woman). Jainism also entails code of conduct called Panchanuvratas (five ascetics - Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, svadara Santosh and non-possession)(Damodaran, 1967 p.128). Jainism allows its followers to celebrate some festivals like Paryushana Parva. These celebrations bring social harmony, amity and preach the lofty Jain mot to 'Live and Let live. Nowadays we are seeing that corruption, theft-robbery, lying-cheating, greedy etc. are increasing day by day. These were all there in olden days also. But by applying ancient religion's rules and customs according to present circumstances it would be possible to establish peace and add value in society. If we think it in modern way also, we could find that these are more relevant. It could be the best foundation for the blessed Society if *secularly* everyone follows these rules and con ventions. Nonviolence and peace should be the fundamental principles of all educational, business, service and production-oriented systems and practices. Protection and Ahimsa must therefore be extended and activities where a minimal level of violence, killing, and sacrifice is anticipated. For this reason, most Jains are vegetarians, fruitarians

and avoid involving in activities and businesses where even harming of insects and flies are done. Therefore, nonviolence (Ahimsa), truthfulness (satya), not stealing (asteya), non-possessiveness (aparigraha) and chastity (brahmacharya) should be the first criterian of one's life. These ethics are governed not only through the without first considering some complementary and related terms like ethics, morals, values. Usually, a value relates to importance ethics and morals prescribe to appropriate behavior in living one's life. No ethical study could be useful unless it provides answers to the problems with which our lives are beset. In fact, the history of Jain ethics is a fine example or what the Jains hold to be the nature of unchanged reality through ages (Dwivedi 1975 p.25).

Ahimsa, anekanta and *aparigraha,* the three great doctrines of Jainism, have more relevance today than ever before. Humanity stands on the verge of ethical and spiritual crises created by scientific and technological advancements. With its principles, Jainism gives us a way of life which offers spiritual solace, as it is has done for a large number of laymen and saints. *Ahimsa* teaches us to stay away from any form of violence and choose love and coexistence; *anekanta* teaches us to respect the point of view of others and inculcate equanimity; and *aparigraha* teaches us to curtail our needs and desires. If we can follow these principles, we can move from a problem-oriented *life to one* of joy and amity. This paper proposes to help us to look into these principles, gain clarity on them, assimilate the values by practicing them, thereby endeavoring to create a better world for tomorrow. Ahimsa appears to be the central theme of Mahavira's teachings. As Padmanabh S. Jaini has

observed, there is a "preoccupation with ahimsa" within Jainism, for no other religious tradition "has carried it (ahimsa) to the extreme of the jainas. For them it is not simply the first among virtues but the virtue… (Sethia 2004 p.15)" Although in most other religious traditions violence is usually associated with causing harm to other living beings, Jaini has noted that, "for jain as however, it (himsa) refers primarily to injuring oneself- to behavior which inhibits the soul's ability to attain moksa (Jaini 1979 p.167).

The main characteristic feature of Jainism is its claim to its Universality. It preaches Universal love, aiming at the good of every being in the world. It does not merely a code of rules or a set of metaphysical principles but a way of life. All Religions confirm their community mindedness because-Religion which ignores society has no chance of survival. Life is a symbol of sanctity that can be protected through observing jaina basic principles namely injure no creatures, don't command any creature, don't enthrall him, don't own any creature and don't employ one as a servant. The fundamental principle of Jainism is aspiring for self, the same which you aspire for others and which you don't aspire for self, don't aspire for others. Thus, Jainism guides the human society as to how one should lead a purposeful life without teasing other. Parigraha paramanuvratha is a limited acquisition for limited personal use. This is the formula of Mahavira for social reconstruction. It includes the purity in earning sources. Further Jainism wanted avoid inequalities in society by Jainism gave the principle of parimita-parigraha to the house holder. Such a limitation checks the greed (Brackney& Das 2018 pp. 272-275).

Greed for material positions will lead a son to ignore his father and countless evil consequences will follow. Thus, other Jaina principles like non-violence, vegetarianism and anekantavada helps us to lead the establishment of the peace and harmony. This is a dire necessity of the modern society.

When one starts thinking about life-and its happenings as nothing but sheer natural law, acceptance towards life is welcomed by one. Contemplation about the consciousness and its attributes, one's ultimate goal and karma may fall under this category along with many other thoughts. In this context when one comes into touch with Jaina Karma Theory, one feels relieved that this is what one was searching for, till now. The minute way, the karma philosophy has been discussed and elaborated in Jaina Darshan, is commendable.When I tried to engage the same topic with modern issues, I was mesmerized that how wonderfully the Jaina Karma Doctrine can solve one's queries about looking at occurrences of one's life. In modern times when the religious philosophies have open selfishly molded into the favor of humans, where they are bound to bow their heads in front of in this paper, I have tried to throw a light on Jaina Karma Theory, by describing briefly about what is Karma? How does it get bonded with the soul? How the process of shedding the heavy karma particles takes place? And how accumulate karma are related to personal ethics of a human, where does free will stand and how through understanding karma, we can improvise ourselves to make this world a better place for us and for the generations to come (Long 2013 p. 185).

These problems can solve only by emotional and value oriented develop mint of human life. So, it is necessary to have all over development of human being. Modern education is incomplete because it gives only to fill up the brain. We can say that education real is that free a man from all bondage of human life. Spirituality means entrance of inner world. The man being is a social being but his personal existence comes in the way of life. He seen external world but he attaches himself with materialistic world. Man has to detach himself if he wishes to have spirituality. What is the goal of life? Who am I? Man has to consider about them from where he has come? And where he will go? Why we are here in this world. Unless we decide our goal, we can't move on right direction. How can we have faith in "Atman and spirituality? Atman or soul is not visible but we can feel it after goal. He doesn't know the difference of religion and spirituality we believe that external rituals etc are our religion but spirituality is higher than feeling of human being. We can develop detachment fruitless act or Karma, humanity, love to all living beings etc in personal and social life by only spirituality. We can solve all personal and social problems by balance of external and internal world (Hiriyanna 1993 p.155). All attention is giving for rational and physical development in modern education but not for emotional and value-oriented development so development of human being is incomplete. If man is knowing his spiritual power, he will change his personality. If personal life and thought will be change than automatically social life will change. Then and Then human being can get mental peace and happiness in his life through spirituality.

Conclusion

In working out the formulations of the present paper, we shall appropriate have multi-dimensional methodological strategy. Our paper will be historical and analytical. It hoped that the formulations to be obtained in this paper with reference to Jainism- will be a fine contribution towards our understanding of the spirit and mission of these faiths. However, no matter the problems that Jainism faces in the future, it has shown its longevity all the way into the 21st century, and its message of nonviolence and love has heavily influenced modern environmental movements in the United States and beyond. It is this philosophy of loving one another, and treating all beings with respect, that has resonated with many in an increasingly violent and individualistic world. As Jainism reminds us, in the end we are all connected and have a responsibility to look out for the Earth and every individual on it. As Dr. Padmanabh S. Jaini affirms, one Jain monk recited in a temple: "I forgive all beings, may all beings forgive me. I have friendship toward all, malice towards none." (Tucker and Grimm, 1994, p. 147) Some people would hold that any person who follows a way of life based on these principles can be regarded as a Jain. However, religion is not just about good behaviour: Right Conduct in the Jain sense cannot be achieved without Right Knowledge and Right Faith. Right faith is the most difficult. Knowledge can be acquired, conduct can be adapted, but nobody can force true inner belief on you. The Jain in the modern world should try to spend some time in meditation that is quiet undisturbed thought. The modern Jain, however, has something which gives an assurance of

his or her place in the world, in time, in the whole scheme of things. It gives a guide to the way to live, and it can give the greatest benefit of all, inner happiness and peace of mind.

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Principles for Consolidating an Ideal Family: An Islamic Perspective

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Abstract:

Family is a primary unit of a society that is essential to mould, transform and understand the nature of a society. Consisting of a legally married couple and their children and sometimes, "family of origin" and "family of progeny" including other relatives, the family is first school of every human being that shapes one's personality to become a sincere and responsible member of the society. Every mature person (whether believes in any religion or not) would admire the importance of a well-disciplined family. Its importance doubles when it is viewed in religious perspective. Islam takes the subject very seriously and gives due significance to all its elements ranging from parents to children to spouses to kith and kin. Islam also endorses that the foundation of any family is either blood relationship or marriage (al-Quran; 25:54) and at the same time warns a person of dire consequences if s/he breaks any relation. Likewise, Islam provides guidelines for an individual (male or female) not only how to live a righteous and god-fearing

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life but also makes him obliged to be selective while entering into a marital tie(al-Quran, 2:221). In case, if the couple does not observe "peace and tranquillity" (al-Quran, 30:21) in married life due to any unavoidable means, then there are guidelines to end the marital tie (al-Quran, 2:226-232). Otherwise, if the family is disturbed, the person would not be able to serve the ultimate cause for which s/he has been created. Unfortunately, the deviation from the divine/universal principles has distorted and even disturbed the family system affecting completely the social solidarity.

Keeping in view the importance of the institution of family in a society, the current study is an attempt to analyze and explore the principles for consolidating an ideal family in an Islamic perspective. To achieve this end, the paper would examine the basic sources of Islam including the views of some influential jurisprudents on the subject.

Key words: *Ideal Family, Marriage, Family of origin and progeny, Rights and Duties, Righteous society, Islam*

Introduction :

Family: As Defined

Family is considered as the primary and the foremost unit of a social system. It plays a vital role in shaping the socio-cultural ethos of a society. Etymologically the family traces its origin to a Roman word '*famulus*', meaning a servant. Some of the definitions of family are as under:

1.   A family is a social unit made up of father, mother and children.

2.   Family is a group of two adults of opposite sex living in a socially approved sex relationship and their own or adopted children.

3.   A Family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction.

4.   A family is a group defined by a sex relationship sufficiently precise and enduring to provide for the procreation and upbringing of children.

5.   A Family is a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption; consisting of a single household, interacting and inter-communicating with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating a common culture".

6.   A family is a "group of two or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption and residing together; all such persons are considered as members of one family" (The American Bureau of Census).

7.   As a biological unit, a family is composed of a man and a woman having a socially approved sexual relationship and whatever offspring they might have.

8.   As a social unit, a family is defined as a group of persons of both sexes, related by marriage, blood or adoption, performing

roles based on age, sex and relationship and socially distinguished as making up a single household or a sub-household. [1]

9.   The unit of people connected by natural genealogical links (most basically and ideally consisting of a father and mother with their children), or in a means which morally and legally replicates these natural genealogical links, such as through adoption.[2]

Thus, the family is made up of a man and a woman joined in marriage and their children. It is a unique institution that is one and the same time both a private and a visibly public institution.[3] It is an institution that simultaneously envelopes and unfolds the ideal and normative on the one hand and actual behaviours on the other. It works as a conduit and sanctions and provides the potential for continuity as well as change in structures of kinship, marriage and reorganization of living arrangements in accordance with the times.[4] Such notions related to the subject under discussion make it clear that a family is important to shape and preserve the high ethical values in a society. The more a family is

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[1] -These definitions (from 1-8) have been quoted in K. Seenivasan's Ph.D dissertation "A Study on joint family system in the villages of Dindigul District", Submitted to the Department of Applied Research, The Gandhigram Rural Institute, A Deemed University, September 2002. Available at the following links: http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/40692
http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/40692/7/07_chapter%201.pdf

[2] - Dr. Andrew Corbett, *What is a Family?: And why it Matters : Achieving a Workable Definition,* (Australia: Tasmanian Family Institute, 2004), p. vi

[3] -Tulsi Patel (ed.), The Family in India: Structure and Practice, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005), p. 19

[4] - *Ibid.,* p. 31

founded on universal ethical values or principles, the more a society is expected to be the righteous and prosperous social order is inevitable.

Family System at the verge of Destruction

The importance of a sound family system is admired by every human being whether he believes in any religion or not. The physique of a human being is created in such a manner that he not only needs food, shelter and clothing, but to find tranquillity and peace in the opposite gender is also his biological need. However, with advancements in science and technology, humanity has conquered new means of progress and prosperity but has lost the spiritual and moral basis for the basic institutions for social stability; that is "the family". In the contemporary times, the family system is disturbed than ever. In the materialistic race, the affectionate marital relationship is not remained as it would be. The industrial shift has debarred family to play its role as an important institution in the society. The overwork of the parents, created a gap between husband-wife and parent-children relationships. Parents have no time to provide sufficient time in character building of their children and the mature children too are insensitive about their parents. Domestic violence, unsatisfactory relationship between spouses has bad effected on the personalities of children. The real wisdom behind marriages and the nature and importance of family as an institution of the society has been forgotten. Moreover, in the name of "*Freedom*" a human being has sought freedom from everything—from God, from the families, from having babies, from imprisonment in the cult of domesticity;

and in the wake of freedom from unwanted pregnancies, thorough pills and abortion, followed logically and inevitability, freedom to have sex whenever and with whomsoever one wished.[1]The humans are turning wild in satisfying their demands; every shameful and indecent activity is preferred to avoid bearing the responsibilities of others. Surprisingly, the custom of same-sex marriages also shook the foundation of family system. These and alike notions in the name of modernization has shackled the family system and in the absence of an ideal family a person has lost to comprehend adequately and offer a way out to an all-round deep crisis the humanity is caught in. In such grave situations, humanity is searching for a peaceful world order without paying attention to correcting the very foundation of the civilization.

Consolidation of an Ideal Family

In the wake of mental climate of the modern world that dismisses religion out of hand, there is not any universal standard to judge what is good and what is bad for a person or for the society. The human reason has failed to provide such standards that could help in consolidating social solidarity. Such standards are given in religion that provides absolute moral obligations for entire humanity. Every religion had some commonalities with regard to moral obligation to the creator and Created. In this regard Muhammad Asad (1900-1992), one of the famous Jewish converts to Islam, has rightly said:

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[1] -Khurram Murad, "Contemporary Issues: On the Family" in *The Muslim World Book Review*, vol. 5, no. 1 (Autumn, 1984), p. 44

Whatever the particular tenets of this or that religion, however, sublime or primitive its teachings, whether monotheistic, polytheistic, or pantheistic, the innermost core of every religious experience—at all periods of history and in all civilizations—is, first, man's inner conviction that all being and happening in this world is the outcome of a conscious, creative, all-embracing Power—or, to put it more simply, a Divine Will; and, second, the feeling that one is, or at least ought to be, in spiritual accord with that Will. [1]

Therefore, every religion has the claim of having the authority to provide universal principles that outline all spheres of human existence. When the family is analysed under the religious guidance, its socio-cultural importance gets a moral touch thus doubles its significance. It is evident to the student of "Comparative religions" that despite the "inner core of all religions" as mentioned in the above statement is same, their approach to life is different and accordingly they have their own family laws and principles for consolidating an Ideal family. Like these religions, Islam also provides the teachings that not only circumscribe man's relation to God but also lays down a definite scheme of social behaviour to be adopted in result of that relation. The social system in Islam revolves round the concept of "*Unity of God*" (*Tawḥīd*) and "*Unity of Humanity*". At the time of Islamic

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[1] - Muhammad Asad, *The Principles of State and Government in Islam,* (Kaula Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 1999), p. 7

marriage this concept is highlighted from the very beginning of the *MasnoonKhutbah* which reads:

> *O Mankind! Be conscious of your Sustainer, who has created you out of one living entity, and out of it created its mate, and out of the two spread abroad a multitude of men and women. And remain conscious of God, in whose name you demand [your rights] from one another, and of these ties of kinship. Verily, God is ever watchful over you.*[1]

Making a human being to realize this fact, Islam gives due importance to the institution of family and makes arrangements by giving laws and moral obligations for its consolidation. A proper analysis of the Islamic sacred text evinces that for the establishment of a righteous society, Islam follows "bottom to top" approach — from individual to collective level.

Towards a Righteous Family

Unlike the families of other animals of the world, the family system of human beings is more systematic, purposeful, and well organized. There are certain rules prescribed by Islam that distinguish human beings from rest of the animals. These rulings are interlinked and consistent and are meant to lead humanity to achieve spiritual heights along with the temporal necessities. Since an individual form the integral part of the family, therefore, Islam makes him/her prime addressee to achieve the higher goals as the *Qur'ān* speaks: "*save yourselves and your families from a fire…*"[2]The

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[1] - *Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nisa,* 4:01

[2] - *Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Taḥrīm,* 66:06

Qur'ān addresses an individual about his nature, real purpose of life, ways to seek the right path with explaining by some examples and different stories. Before entering into any bond, the person is entitled to adopt some desirable qualities which include:

1. Realization of oneness of the Creator without associating anything to him;[1]
2. Sincere obedience to parents; [2]
3. Good attitude towards relatives, poor and needy;[3]
4. Politeness in his talk;[4]
5. Truthfulness;[5]
6. Humble and peaceful approach to arrogant;[6]
7. Control over anger and a sense of forgiveness;[7]
8. Refraining from committing any shameful act;[8]
9. bid what is right and forbid what is wrong;[9]
10. Lowering of gaze and protection private parts. [10]

Once these qualities are developed in a man or woman the formation for a healthy and righteous family would become easier.

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[1] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:83; *Sūrah Āli Imrān,* 3:64; *Sūrah al-Nisā',* 4:36; *Sūrah al-Kahaf,* 18:38,110
[2] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:83
[3] -*Ibid*
[4] -*Ibid*
[5] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Aḥzāb,* 33:23-24
[6] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Furqān,* 25:63
[7] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah Āli Imrān,* 3:134
[8] -*Ibid.,* 3:135
[9] -*Ibid.,* 3:104, 105
[10] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nūr,* 24:30-31

In seeking these qualities, among others, the Quran motivates an individual by saying:

> *Whoever works righteousness, whether male or female, while he (or she) is a true believer verily, to him will give a good life, and We shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do[1]… such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice will be done to them even to the size of a naqīr (speck on the back of a date-stone).[2]*

In addition, some of the desired qualities of a man and woman have been put together in the following verse of the Quran:

> *Surely, Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women, devout men and devout women, truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient women, humble men and humble women, and the men who give Sadaqah (charity) and the women who give Sadaqah, and the men who fast and the women who fast, and the men who guard their private parts (against evil acts) and the women who guard (theirs), and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember (Him) – for them, Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward.[3]*

Formation of a Family

Islamic teachings are comprehensive and take into account the biological needs of an individual as well. Every person is inclined towards his/her opposite gender. Islam forbids every means and

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[1] --Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Naḥl, 16:97

[2] -Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nisā', 4:124

[3] -Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Aḥzāb, 33:35

endorses the formation ofrelationship between man and woman through legal marriage. The teachings of Islam where guides a man or a woman in individual life, also recommends certain precautions while entering into a marital alliance. The *Qur'ān* presents the importance of marriage as: *And it is among His signs that He has created for you wives from among yourselves, so that you may find tranquillity in them, and He has created love and kindness between you.*[1] In explanation of the verse, it is argued that "Allah (ﷻ) has not restrictedthe relationship between spouses to a legal andreligious relationship, but has filled their hearts with love andcompassion."[2]It is because of this love and affection, the family members are compelled to protect each other. However, before going to tie in this affectionate relationship, an individual has been guided not to choose his/her spouse with closed eyes rather should be selective in this matter. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is reported to have said: "*Didn't I tell you about what is best for man? A virtuous wife: While he sees her, he feels happy, while he is absent, she protects his honour and while he asks her to do something she complies*".[3]Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) exhorts marriage with pious women by saying: "*A woman is to be married for four reasons: for her money, for her beauty, for her descent, and for her religion. Marry the one, who is pious. God Bless you*".[4]On the other

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[1] - *Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Rūm*, 30:21

[2] - Mufti Muhammad Shafi, *Ma'ārif al-Qur'ān*, eng. tr. (Karachi: Dār al-'Ulūm, 2008), p. 733

[3] -Abdul Jalil Hammad, *Family in Islam*, (ISESCO, 1997), p. 14

[4] -*Ibid.*, p. 15

hand, the following have been prohibited to be selected as one's spouse:

1.   The polytheist;[1]

2.   Marriage to mothers, including all maternal grandmothers, paternal grandmothers, foster mothers and mothers-in-law;[2]

3.   Marriage to daughters, including the daughters of sons and daughters and daughters of wives;[3]

4.   Marriage to the sisters from three directions—from the (same) mother and father or from (just) the father, or (just) the mother (uterine sisters);[4]

5.   Marriage to paternal aunts, the sisters of the father from three directions are forbidden, also the sisters of grandfathers through the father or mother, whether the grandfather is immediate or distant and whether he inherits or not[5]

6.   Marriage to maternal aunts, the sisters of the mother from three directions are forbidden, also sisters of grandmothers and whosoever is higher in the line of descent, because every grandmother of a mother, and likewise every sister of a grandmother is considered a maternal aunt to whom marriage is prohibited;[6]

7.   Marriage to nieces (daughters of brother and sister);[7]

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[1] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:221

[2] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nisā,* 4:23-24, as quoted in Taqī al-Dīn al-Nabhānī, *Social system in Islam,* (London: al-Khilāfah Publications, 1999), pp. 131-133

[3] -*Ibid.*

[4] -*Ibid.*

[5] -*Ibid.*

[6] - *Ibid.*

[7] -*Ibid.*

8.   Marriage to two sisters at a same time.[1]

These are some regulations that are to be kept in mind during wedlock. These regulations have many psychological, social, and medical benefits as well.

Institution of Marriage

Marriage is not only an important event in one's life but also causes a family to exist. Islam recommends a Muslim to consider the divine laws when it comes to the marriage proposal, selection of the spouses, marriage ceremony and the paying of dower etc. Allah has created human beings with strong and significant need of marriage so that they might have loving inclination towards one another.[2] It is a legal way by which a man and a woman come closer to get tranquillity and peace. They have been termed as garments to each other as per another Quranic ruling.[3] Like garments, the spouses secure each other's chastity, give comfort, provide grace, beauty, peace and stability in the life of a couple and shows complete interdependence in life. [4] Islam provides certain prerequisites for a legitimate marriage. These include:

1.   Offer (*Ijab*) and acceptance (*Qubul*)
2.   Competent parties
3.   No legal disability—there should be absence of all those elements that makes a marriage illegitimate.

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[1] -*Ibid.*

[2] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-A'raaf,* 7:189

[3] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:187

[4] -See for details Prof. Abdul Rahman I. Doi, *The Cardinal Principles of Islam,* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers & Distributors, 2007), pp. 187ff.

In addition, Muslim scholars have prescribed certain condition for a solid marital tie that include:

1.   **Permission of Parents or Guardian:** In support of this argument they present a narration from the Prophet (SAAS) on the authority of Abu Musa Ashari[RA] that reads: *There is no valid Nikah without the permission of a Wali (Guardian).*[1]

2.   **Presence of Two sane and trustworthy Witnesses:** It has been reported from the Prophet (SAAS) on the authority of HadratAisha[RA], the mother of believers, that *There is no valid Nikah without the permission of a Wali and without the presence of two trustworthy witnesses.*[2]

3.   **Identification of the Spouses:** It should be properly identified who is marrying to whom and it is not sufficient to say that "I have given my daughter in marriage" when the person is having many daughters.

4.   **Willingness of the Spouses:** Both the spouses must be willing to enter in the marital tie, that implies their proper consent.[3]

Rights and Duties of Spouses:

Besides closing the gates of all sorts of illegal means of marriage, Islam provides valid and significant conditions for a valid *Nikah*, that is the basis of an ideal family as well as the happiest social order at large. Islam also prescribes essential duties on the spouses to be carried out. First of all, the Quran speaks, *Men (Husbands) shall*

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[1] -Sunan Abi Dawood, Hadith no. 1836.

[2] -Sahih al-Jami' al-Sagheer, Hadith no. 7007

[3]- Hafiz Imran Ayoob Lahori, *Nikah ki Kitab,* (Lahore: Fiqh al-Hadith Publications, 2006), p. 54

take full care of women (their wives) with the bounties which God has bestowed moreabundantly on the former than on the latter,and with what they may spend out of theirpossessions. And the righteous women are the truly devout ones, who guard the intimacy whichGod has [ordained to be] guarded.[1]The husband and wife are entitled to fulfil all the legal demand of each other. The wife must be obedient to her husband and guard her chastity in his absence. The prophetic tradition reads:

> When a woman offers (compulsory) prayer five-times a day, observes fasting during the month of Ramadan, guards her chastity, and obeys her husband,she will enter into Jannah from any door she wishes[2]

In addition, the Quran also recommends that the wives must always be submissive to their husbands and modest in character. [3]The husband in turn has the same rights over his wife. The Quran speaks, "*And they (women) have rights (over their husbands) similar (to those of their husbands) over them in reasonable terms".*[4] The husbandis considered supervisors and guardians of family and held more responsibilities than his wife (though in aggregate they held equal position in the family). The famous Prophetic tradition that encourages the active role of Husbands in a family read:

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[1] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nisa*, 3-34

[2] -Sunan Ibn Majjah, Ḥadīth no. 1855

[3] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nisa'*, 4: 34

[4] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:228

The best of you is the best to his family, and I am the best to my family.[1]

According to the Quranic and prophetic traditions a Husband owes the responsibility:

1. to treat his wife with kindness, honour, and patience;

2. to keep her honourably and cause her no harm and grief;

3. (in case it is difficult to keep her due to some unavoidable circumstances then)to free her from the marital bond honourably and to cause her no harm or grief;[2]

4. To be cautious about her Maintenance including the provision of lodging, clothing, food, and general care;

5. To must ensure her adequate means for privacy, comfort, and independence.[3]

6. To make himself more attractive to her wife as he likes her to beautify herself for him.[4]

These are some examples how Islam guides people to consolidate the family structure for the purpose:

1. to preserve the elementary family unit;

2. to minimize the risk of spouse lessness that is serious threat to public morality as well as the future of the offspring;

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[1] -Sunan al-Darmi, Ḥadīth no. 2306

[2] -Hamudah Abd al-'Ati, *The Family Structure in Islam*, (The American Trust Publication, 1977) p. 148

[3] -*Ibid.*, pp. 149-169

[4] -*Ibid.*, p. 170

3.   to restore the kinship ties and community solidarity without breaking up the marital ones because the wife is entitled not only to claim the obligatory support of her kinsmen but also to borrow for her needs on her husband's behalf.[1]

Elements of a Family and Their Rights

On the basis definitions of family, mentioned in the beginning of the present study, the elements of a family include:

1.   Parents (Family of Origin)
2.   Spouses (Family of Progeny; Husband and Wife)
3.   Children
4.   Other Relatives (in case of joint families)
5.   Slaves

Every member of the family is bound to obey moral obligations prescribed in shariah for a happy and peaceful life. The spouses owe their rights towards their parents, their children, and other persons who share their same house. The ethical principles like respect, obedience, kindness, forgiveness, helping, sharing and caring, among others must be the part of one's behaviour according to Islamic Shariah.

Rights of the Children

It is true that the adult of today was the child of yesterday and the child of today is the adult for tomorrow. The children are allurement of the life[2] and Muslims are taught to ask Allah (ﷻ),

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[1] -*Ibid.*, p. 163

[2] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Kahaf,* 18:46

"*Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous*". [1]It is the duty of parents to teach their children good manners and etiquettes and introduce them what Islam is all about and the reality of the universe. Some of the rights of children on Parents include:

1.   Select a best mother/father before entering into marital alliance;

2.   Maintain good health of the child. (a mother is permitted to abandon obligatory fast of Ramadan if fasting causes harm to baby);

3.   Give him/her a best name, feeding, clothing, health care and Sacrifice (*'aqīqah*) in his/her name;[2]

4.   Be affectionate towards children;[3]

5.   To facilitate their respectable life and guarantee them the resources that can make them live well.[4]

Parents: As an Important Element of the Society

Parents hold the very important place in a family. Once the couple (after a legal wedlock) are gifted with the offspring's they spend

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[1] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Furqān,* 25:74

[2] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:233

[3] -The Prophet (ﷺ) says: He is not one of us who does not have mercy for children and respect for our seniors. (Al-Tirmidhī). At another place the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "He who does not show mercy (towards his children), no mercy would be shown to him". (Al-Bukhārī)

[4] -Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "The best penny a man spends is that on his children, on his camel for the sake of Allah, and on his friends for the sake of Allah."

everything to provide comfort to their children. Children are asked to be kind, obedient and sincere to their parents. The Quran speaks:

> *And [God says:) 'We have enjoined upon man goodness towards his parents: his mother bore him by bearing strain upon strain, and his utter dependence on her lasted two years: (hence, O man,) be grateful towards Me and towards thy parents, (and remember that] with Me is all journeys' end. [Revere thy parents;] yet should they endeavour to make thee ascribe divinity, side by side with Me, to something which thy mind cannot accept (as divine], obey them not; but (even then) bear them company in this world's life with kindness, and follow the path of those who turn towards Me. In the end, unto Me you all must return; and thereupon I shall make you (truly] understand all that you were doing (in life).* [1]

We should be obedient to our believing as well as non-believing parents. They also deserve help, attention, and support in all circumstances. We should be on their beck and call and the only restriction is that parents ought not to be obeyed if they ask about something that goes against the Will of Allah. Kindness to parents is so high regarded that the Quran mentions it simultaneously with divinity. For example, in *Surah Bani Isra'il* it reads thus:

> *For thy Sustainer has ordained that you shall worship none but Him. And do good unto [thy] parents; Should one of them, or both, attain to old age in thy care, never say "Ugh" to them or scold them, but [always] speak unto them with reverent speech, and spread over them humbly the wings of*

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[1] -Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah Luqman, 31:14-15

thy tenderness, and say: "O my Sustainer! Bestow Thy grace
upon them, even as they cherished and reared me when I was a
child!"[1]

Besides, there are many prophetic narrations that also signify the high status of parents in the family. For example, one of the most loved deeds by Allah is "to be good and dutiful to one's parents".[2]In another tradition living with parents and giving them a good company has been giving preference over Jihad.[3] To be obedient to one's parents is the primary principle that would help an individual to be kind and affectionate to other members of the community as well. [4]

Stability of Family System in Islam

The family system in Islam is very important and the family matters, rulings of marriage, rights of parents, children and other relatives are frequently discussed in the Islamic injunctions. To put an end to all shameful acts in the society and prevent human beings from being violent and wild in satisfying his/her desires Islam turns to consolidate a family system.[5]   Islam has encouraged marriage and puts end to obscenity and shamelessness by severe punishments against adultery. The guardian of the unmarried are

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[1] -*Al-Qur'ān, Bani Isra'il,* 17:23

[2] -Sahih al-Bukhari, Ḥadīth no. 5625; Sahih al-Muslim Ḥadīth no. 137

[3] -Sahih al-Bukhari, Ḥadīth no. 2842; Sahih al-Muslim Ḥadīth no. 2549

[4] -Prof. Abdur Raheem Kidwai, "How to Treat Fellow Human Beings: The Quranic Directives" in Dr Nazeer A. Ab. Majeed (ed.), *Social and Spiritual Teachings of the Quran in Contemporary Perspective*, (New Delhi: Excel India Publishers, 2016), p. 13

[5] -For some detail see Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Purdah and the Status of Woman in Islam*, Eng. tr. (Lahore: Islamic Publications pvt. Ltd., n.d.), pp. 84-122, 132-178

enjoined by the *Qur'ān* to marry them off. [1]Moreover, those who marry with the good attention and to follow the *Sunnah*, are promised to receive sufficient means from the Creator.[2]After entering into marital alliance, the spouses are obliged to perform certain duties. Both are considered apparel to one another [3]and "wives have the same rights as the husbands have on them".[4] But being active partners, men are entitled a degree over them,[5] and protectors and guardians over them.[6]The spouses develop an affectionate relationship with providing comfort and tranquillity to each other. In addition, the couple are entitled to bring up the offspring by (a) making use of all available means of civilization for the proper development of the child, and (b) bringing up the child in a manner and with a view to enabling it to carry on the functions and the affairs of the existing civilization.[7] The children are obliged to be obedient to their parents and never show any kind of disrespect to them. [8]

Conclusion

Islam is thus having a claim of providing guiding principles that would help in consolidating an ideal society in the contemporary period when family system is mostly disturbed. The family

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[1] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nūr,* 24:32

[2] -*Ibid*

[3] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:187

[4] -As quoted in *Purdah, op.cit.,* p. 144

[5] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:228

[6] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah al-Nisā',* 4:34

[7] -Mawdudi, *Purdah, op.cit.,* p. 91

[8] -*Al-Qur'ān, Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl,* 17:23

members are so engaged in earning the worldly gains that they hardly are able to spend time to introspect their moral obligations towards one another. The absence of such moral obligations in a family has affected the society at large. The application of Islamic principles is essential in consolidating an Ideal family system. For this purpose, the primary requisite is God-Consciousness that everything belongs to Allah and a human being is accountable before Him alone. This consciousness makes him/her submissive to His laws and the believer happily takes into account what is commanded and refrains from all those activities that are prohibited. One shuns all illegal ways that hinder in establishing a righteous society. Marriage that is a legal way of meeting a man and a woman in a society has also been certain limitations including prohibition of same-gender marriage and a list of women are also mentioned to whom marriage is not valid. The limitations on marriage are not only to prevent the community from having spouse-less generation but also to produce peace and tranquillity between the spouses and their relation with family of origin (parents) and family of progeny (spouse and children). The moral obligations laid down in the sacred text of Islam made a person obliged to fulfil all the rights he/she owes to his/her family members in particular and other fellow beings at large. The Islamic *Shariah* not only strengthens the relation with the Creator but it makes special arrangements to the consolidation of social solidarity. Therefore, a thorough examination of Islamic text and Juristic opinions concerning the subject makes it clear that the application of Islamic principles (that are universal in nature) are

integral for the consolidation of an ideal family that would help in transforming the contemporary chaos and confusion into a peaceful and harmonious social ethos.

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