Islam
and the
Modern Age

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Editorial

Created in the best of the moulds, we, the human beings, are favorably disposed to natural progression, remarkable growth and incredible advancement. During our lifetime, we undergo a series of stages marked by gradual changes, constant transformation and paradigm shift. Always in a state of flux, the world also experiences notable changes in every sphere. Even the words evolve and develop with their semantic shifts and changes in shades of meaning and import. Interestingly, some words adapt to functional shift and progress while some falter and fade away.

Exactly like dynamic human lives, languages, social norms and structure of societies never settle to have stationary and permanent forms. These traits testify that we have an unceasing urge to indulge in search after search, exploring something new at every turn, thus making the life worth living. 'Sitaron se agey jahaa naur bhi hai' (There are new worlds beyond the stars), says Allama Iqbal, while stirring us to fill ourselves with a strong desire to undertake journeys to unravel the strange and fantastic worlds. Iqbal reinforces his belief and philosophy with another line oozing unyielding optimism, 'Jahaan aur bhi hain abhi be numood') There are yet more new worlds, lying unexplored).

It is exhilarating to note that we are readily prepared to set off for adventurous journey for the sake of innovation, research and enriching experiences. 'I cannot rest from travel: I will drink life to the lees' says Alfred Tennyson in his poem 'Ulysses'. We do respond to the calls and changes taking place in the world. We creatively participate in the plans of Nature with our inherent buoyancy and optimism, and take the changes, even the sudden and extraordinary crises, as new opportunities. True, sometimes the changes emerge as unprecedented crises, monsters and mutants, posing serious challenges. Then we show our mettle by rising to the challenges with our characteristic willingness 'to be up and doing', as W. H. Longfellow says,'still achieving and still pursuing.'

It is common knowledge that change is the order of nature, for change is the best antidote to stagnation and unproductivity. It is, therefore, a wise choice for us to yearn for evolution, revolution, changes and growth. All visionary thinkers motivate us to be at cutting edge, with bold cravings to demolish the existing boundaries and create new parameters of evolution and progress.

'Sukoon mahaal hai qudrat ke karkhaney mein/ Sabaat eik taghayyur ko hai zamaney mein' (It is impossible for things in Nature to remain in stagnation / Nothing but change is enduring in the world), says Iqbal.

When we look at the world closely we realize that several things have been given a visible facelift by virtue of extraordinary growth in various fields like education, science and technology. And man-made barriers have been pulled down, creating new and desirable national and international cultures. This trend has also paved the way for the growth of corporate attitude in lifestyle, education and thoughts. It has also given much needed boost to the feelings of brotherhood and multinational society.

Our youth, the most significant asset of our country, have now come to believe that old and stereotypical habits and patterns of life need to be shed for remarkable evolution and adaption to the new conditions, fresh sets of systems, mores and cultures. They sound to be well aware of fact that the entire world resonates with noteworthy transformation and paradigm shift. So, they are all set to ignite the embers with their belief in, 'digar gun hai jahan, taaron ki gardish tez hai Saqi / dil-e her zarra mein ghaugha-e rusta khez hai Saqi. (The world is now visibly changed, the stars move so fast o Saqi / The clarion call of Doomsday rages in the heart of every atom o Saqi), as Iqbal says.

Evolution, change and growth involve qualities like dynamism, optimism and variety. The things static, unchanging and unvarying are bound to lose their significance and utility. Some of them even rot. 'Variety is', of course, 'the spice of life'. Even the earth that produces vegetable life experiences changes. 'Old order' says Alfred Tennyson, 'changes yielding place to new.' One can hear Tennyson's echoes in Iqbal's famous line, 'Jahan-e nau ho raha hai paida, wo alam-e peer mar raha hai' (A new world is taking birth while the old one is breathing its last). Iqbal wants us to go far beyond the existing frontier. He goads us for initiating changes and transformation when he says, 'Puraney hain

ye sitaarey falak bhi farsooda / Jahan wo chahiye mujhko ki ho abhi nau-khez' (Old are the stars and so is the sky / I crave a new world with fresh and youthful wind).

Upwardly mobile with its motley groups of people, diverse cultures, religious, political and social beliefs and persuasions, the world is now thriving with its meritorious qualities like progressive villages, flourishing cities and kingdoms, democratic values and so on. It has been changing for better, facilitating amelioration of human conditions, enrichment of the society and fortification of its fabric and institutions.

Our evolution and growth bears testimony to the fact that the ever-advancing and swift-changing world feeds mainly on feelings of care, broad sympathy, generosity of spirit and wisdom. And no one will dispute that feelings of care generate profound love and affection, leading to compassionate and emotionally supportive homes, societies and institutions. Love and affection stimulates cheerful disposition, dignified bearing and liberal attitude. Similarly, generosity of spirit and wisdom boosts our natural urge to stand in solidarity with those who uphold values in which humanity recognizes itself. Thus we persist with determined efforts, confronting extraordinary conditions and emerging victorious.

In the process of our evolution, transformation and growth, we also feel that restraint and self-control, ideals of sacrifice and renunciation of ills lead us to the path of construction of cohesive and integrated life. It is congenial relationship and tender feelings of love that work wonder behind our energy, enthusiasm and exuberance. 'A friend should bear his friends' infirmities' says Cassius to Brutus in William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar.*

Life takes various hues, strands and threads to survive. Importantly enough, all of us have our individual strands and threads. And all the threads and strands have their indispensable role in weaving exquisitely beautiful patterns and shapes on the social fabric. Old patterns and shapes fade away with the passage of time and new shapes and patterns come alive with fresh touch and warmth of feelings. Like shapes and patterns woven gorgeously in one single fabric, two human beings, whether or not known to each other, share a tenacious relationship.

It seems apt to refer here to 'Border Guards', a poem by Shiv K Kumar, wherein two soldiers of two supposedly hostile countries are

stationed at their borders as so-called enemies. But when they think of each other with some generosity of spirit, love and kindness, their feelings refuse to be commanded by any antagonism. Dictated by human emotions, they feel a strange bond of love. When we follow the dictates of our natural urge, we stop being commanded by artificial circumstances. 'Education is not preparation for life' says John Dewy, 'education is life itself.' The poets and thinkers like Iqbal do not want us to rest. Iqbal warns, 'Anaadil baagh ke ghaafil na baithey ashiyaanon mein' (The garden nightingales should not sit daydreaming in their nests'.

<div align="right">A. Naseeb Khan</div>

PROF. MOHAMMAD AYUB NADWI

Syed Ali Hamadani and His Methods to Spread Islam in Kashmir

Kashmir is well known in the world in the political arena as it is the point of conflict between India and Pakistan and is also divided between the two countries in South Asia. There is a Muslim majority in Indian Kashmir, and the introduction of Islam to the region has a history. The credit for spreading Islam there in Kashmir goes to the sincere preachers and honest scholars for their valuable contributions. One of the most famous and influential among them in the hearts of the people in Kashmir is Sayyid Ali Hamadani, may God have mercy on him.

Syed Ali Hamadani, popularly known as Amir-e- Kabir or Shah-e-Hamadan, was a great Sufi of Kashmir. He was a preacher whose utmost love, sincerity and wisdom changed the current of Muslim history in Kashmir. He was like a sun that enlightened hundreds of stars, his disciples who spread the light in different parts of Kashmir.

Syed Ali Hamadani came from Iran to Kashmir in 1384 AD. It was a turning point in the history of Islam in Kashmir. He was a visionary who influenced all sections of the Kashmiri society. He guided people of Kashmir in their religious and cultural affairs. His spiritual guidance and economical upliftment helped them grow further. He brought a gradual revolution in the lives of people in Kashmir. He influenced the kings as he also had his great impact on the minds of common people.

Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani reached Kashmir in 744 AH with seven hundred of his disciples. He was born in Rajab 714 AH (Oct, 12, 1314 AD)[1]. What compelled him to travel from Hamadan to Kashmir has a story. There are different reasons which are mentioned here for his visit.

Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani was an extensive traveler[2]. He spent almost 22 years in his visits to different parts of the world. He belonged to a rich family of Hamadan as he was born in a ruling family.

His father Saiyid Shihabuddin is said to have been a ha'kim (governor) of Hamadan[3]. He had a respectable position in worldly affairs. At the same time, he belonged to a noble family of Husseini Saiyids[4]. He was in the progeny of the fourth Caliph of Islam, Ali (RA).

Kashmir had been very famous for its scholarly contributions. It was a centre of knowledge at that time and ruled by Hindu rulers. Amir-e-Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani dreamt to visit Kashmir to spread the message of Islam. He aspired to be a preacher and wanted to do Dawah work for the sake of Allah. He saw a dream where the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) asked him to go to Kashmir and call the people there to the true path of Islam.

Another story says that a threat from the King Taimur who devastated the Muslim states compelled him to travel to Kashmir which was a faraway place from Taimur.

The fact is that his departure from Hamadan to Kashmir was not an abrupt one. It was rather a planned travel. Two of his disciples, Mir Syed Tajuddin Samnani and Mir Syed Husain Samanani, had already visited and had been staying there for a good period of time. He had been regularly intimated about the political as well as the religious conditions prevailing there. A Muslim ruler Sultan Shihabuddin (760-775 AH) had been the king who was famous for his justice among his people and respect for the Ulama, the scholars. It was conveyed to Amir-e-Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani and he decided to stay in Kashmir for a good period of time to guide Muslims to the right path and to convince non-Muslims that the true path to Salvation is the path of Islam.

As it is a known fact that Islam came to the Indian subcontinent as early as the first century of Hijra. It was when Muslim Arab traders reached Malabar, the Southern Coastal Area of India. Later it was Mohammed Bin Qasim at the end of first century of Hijri calendar who led Muslim forces to Sindh. Then it was in 1000 AD when Mahmood Ghazavi invaded Northern India with his army. But in case of Kashmir it was only the 8th century of Hijra (14th century AD) when Muslims reached there in good numbers.

The first Muslim who happened to come to Kashmir was a person called Suamim Bin Shams from Sham (Syria) in 713 AD[5]. Then some Muslims joined the Kashmir army during the rule of king Harsha in 1089-1101 AD. There was a meager number of Muslims in Kashmir.

It was only in the fourteenth century when the preaching of Islam was started there. It so happened that the local rulers were busy in fighting the prince Renchen of Ladakh who took control over Kashmir. He was a Buddhist and respected the scholars and appreciated their scholarly discussions. But in his heart, he was not satisfied with Buddhism. He was in search of truth and was looking for a comprehensive and complete religion that gives guidance in all spheres of life. Out of his sheer inquisition for truth, it is said that he decided to follow the religion of any pious fellow he sees next morning. It was by chance a Muslim fellow (*fakir*) whom he saw was praying in the open. He inquired about the religion the Fakir followed and was influenced with simplicity and comprehensibility of Islam. He changed his name to Sadruddin and many others followed the king[6].

There are many Sufi scholars who visited Kashmir. But the most successful missionary of Islam who came and spread the message in Kashmir was Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani. Islam, however, came to Kashmir before Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani. There were many Muslims in Kashmir who converted to Islam but were not purified from *shirk* (worshipping other than Allah). Their belief in oneness of God was not strong. Many Muslims still visited Hindu temples and worshipped idols. Even the rulers still believed in Hindu beliefs. They still bowed their heads before idols. Their dresses were un-Islamic. Brahmins were still consulted in religious affairs[7]. It was Amir-e-Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani who purified the rulers as well as the common men. He spread the truth. He sent his disciples to all over the region, who spread the message of Islam in all the corners of Kashmir. The mission of Amir-e-Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani in Kashmir was further continued by his son Mir Mohammad Hamadani. He also has influenced the later local Sufis of Kashmir like Rishi Sufis.

Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani brought drastic changes in the lives of the people in Kashmir. He upgraded their life standard. He taught Kashmiris the Islamic value system. Since Islam came to Kashmir from Arabia through Persia, combined cultural values were brought by them. Previously Kashmir was a centre for Buddhist culture or it was a Hindu society, but after the advent of Muslims from Persia, Islam brought cultural changes in the society. Amir-e-Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani brought many artists or entrepreneurs from Persia. This way,

Kashmir was transformed from Hindu influence to Persian. Now the Persian influence was apparent in the lives of Kashmiris. It was due to this Persian influence on the socio-cultural life of the people of Kashmir that the famous poet of the East Allama Mohammad Iqbal gave reference to Kashmir in his poetry as Iran-i-Sagheer.

After his arrival in Kashmir from Iran, Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani influenced the literary arena of Kashmir as well. Before his arrival, the only literary genres available in Kashmiri culture were *vaakh, watsun and shrukh*. The literary genres that came from Persia after his arrival were *ghazal, qasida, marsia, masnawi, naat, manqabat and rubai*.

The mission of Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani has influenced not only Muslim Sufis and masses, but he has also had his impact on non-Muslim ascetics. Many non-Muslim scholars and *sanyasis* of Kashmir were convinced of his supremacy through his scholarly debates and spiritual powers. Lal Ded, the famous Hindu Mystic and Sufi who wandered naked as she had seen no real man in her life, finally ran away after looking at Amir-e- Kabir, Syed Ali Hamadani and taking him the only man she saw in her life. She ultimately covered her and became a Muslim on his hands. It is that kind of spiritual power that compelled Allama Iqbal to say this verse:

یك نكاہ او كشاید صد كرہ

To Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani' Sufism does not mean زھد (undesirability of worldly things) only, but it was more than that. Many Sufis kept themselves away from the rulers. But Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani knew that if the ruler is guided and put on right track, the masses will automatically be guided rightly. Therefore we find him surrounded by the elite class as well as the common people. Many rulers and princes took his guidance in day-to-day affairs of their state. He always asked them to do justice among their people. He ordered them to do welfare works for the society. Fear of Allah was the essence of his mission while guiding rulers and the ruled.

The rulers of Kashmir sincerely accepted his advice in the state affairs and followed his guidance in the religious affairs. We would mention some of the suggestions of Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani that were accepted by the rulers. Sultan Shihabuddin of Kashmir made a ceasefire

agreement with the King of India on his advice. The Sultan started wearing Royal Turkish dress instead of Hindu dress. Sultan had married two real sisters which is prohibited in Islam. He divorced one of them on the advice of Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani[8]. On his suggestion, the Sultan established a Madrasa where Islamic sciences were taught. Sultan also established a library where many Persian books were kept for public including books collected by Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani.

One of the most prominent contributions that Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani made was his introduction of handicraft works. On his journey to Kashmir, Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani was accompanied by a group of seven hundred people who were entrepreneurs and professionals in different walks of life. They were never a burden on the Kashmiri society. This way many artisans from Iran and Hamadan brought their arts to Kashmir and enriched the local economy. Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani himself used to sew caps and it was his source of income and he never looked for what were there in others hands. Thus the Hindu civilization and culture were replaced by Arab-Iranian civilization and culture. Arabic and Persian languages prevailed over Sanskrit.

Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani's mission in Kashmir was based on wisdom and good advice. He sincerely followed the divine guidance that Allah gave in His holy book.

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ (125)(النحل.

While sending Moaz Bin Jabal to Yemen, the Prophet (pbuh) asked him how he would make judgment among people. Moaz said that he would decide on the basis of the book of Allah. He said: If it is not found in the book of Allah. He said: then in the Sunnat of the prophet. He asked if he did not find in the sunnat of the prophet. Moaz said that he would use his reason and try his best. Then the prophet put his hand on his chest and said: Thank Allah who blessed the messenger of the Messenger of Allah for what the prophet agreed.

عَنْ مُعَاذٍ ؛ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ حِينَ بَعَثَهُ إِلَى الْيَمَنِ ، فَقَالَ : كَيْفَ تَصْنَعُ إِنْ عَرَضَ لَكَ قَضَاءٌ؟ قَالَ : أَقْضِي بِمَا فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ ، قَالَ : فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ ؟ قَالَ

فَسُنَّةُ رَسُولِ اللهِ ، قَالَ : فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي سُنَّةِ رَسُولِ اللهِ ؟ قَالَ : أَجْتَهِدُ رَأْيِي : لاَ آلُو ، قَالَ : فَضَرَبَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَدْرِي ، ثُمَّ قَالَ : الْحَمْدُ لِلهِ الَّذِي وَفَّقَ رَسُولَ رَسُولِ اللهِ لِمَا يُرْضِي رَسُولَ اللهِ .)أبو داود ، والترمذي.(

This way Moaz was appreciated by the prophet (pbuh). Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani also followed Moaz's example.

While visiting Kashmir anybody can see his strong influence in the whole Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmiri Muslims sing loudly *Awrade Fatehia* before and after Fajr prayer and also after Juma prayer. Many Muslims of Brailwi school of thought take them as their Maslak-fellow while Ahle-Hadith group calls them Ahle-Bidat. But this is not the real case.

Kashmir had been under Brahmin culture long before the advent of Islam. Taking the benefit of this practice Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani gave Kashmiris these *awraad* which are purely based on Qur'anic verses and Hadith of the prophet Muhammed (pbuh). That practice enabled Kashmiris to remember many *duas* (prayers). However Sheikh Nooruddin advised Kashmiris not to sing these awra'd loudly as Amir-e- Kabir has given them considering their early stage of Islam.

During *Khutba* at Juma Prayer, Kashmiris put their hands as if they are in prayer. Probably this practice is also followed on Amir-e- Kabir's advice. Kashmiri hardly stopped talking during Juma Khutba. Amir-e- Kabir, perhaps, intended to stop them from moving and talking and, he, therefore, might have asked them to put hands that way as if they are in prayer. This has helped them to keep quite during *Khutba*.

It may not be noticed by many that Amir-e- Kabir Syed Ali Hamadani was a Shafayi in his *Maslak* (School of Fiqh). But he was so sincere to the Islamic Da'wa that he did not preach Shafaite Maslak, as is the practice of today scholars. They, instead, asked all their disciples to shift over to Hanafi school of thought as that school had already arrived in Kashmir. Not going in any confrontation with other *Maslaks*, he invited people to the true path of Islam rather than to any particular *Maslak*. It was his *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *Hikma* (wisdom) that put him on such path. Had he been a chauvinist for his *Maslak*, there would have been no trace of Muslims in Kashmir. Here we find a big lesson for today preachers.

NOTES

1. Nuzhatul Khawatir, vol. 2, p. 87.
2. Sufism in Kashmir by Abdul Qaiyum Rafiqi, p. 32.
3. Ibid., p. 31.
4. Syed Mir Ali Hamadani (Urdu) Dr Syeda Ashraf Zafar, p. 17.
5. Syed Mir Ali Hamadani (Urdu) Dr Syeda Ashraf Zafar, p. 124.
6. Sufism in Kashmir, Abdul Qayum Rafiqi, p. 9.
7. Islam in Kashmir, Mohammad Ashraf Wani, p. 58.
8. Islam in Kashmir, Mohammad Ashraf Wani, p. 59.

DR. KHWAJA IFTIKHAR AHMED

Interfaith Dialogue for Social Harmony: Scope & Challenges

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into Nations and tribes, that you may know each other (Not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most Righteous of you" (Al-Quran: Chapter: 49 Verse: 13)

Religion plays quite a significant role in transforming the human mind, body soul and spirit. In fact, since the advent of human civilization, religion remains an integral and inherent part of human life. It is playing a constructive role in building the foundation of civil society on universal human values. The general concept of morality and accountability originating from the teachings and practices of religion inculcates in a natural course of behaviour. The values of human good in every human soul and the unanimity on human values propounded by all religions further provide the strongest of bond between people of different religious faiths and communities. According to Islamic teachings, Almighty Allah, The sole Creator of this Universe has sent His Prophets and Messengers in all races, nations and regions to guide human beings towards the path of righteousness and piety.

"For We assuredly sent amongst every people a Messenger" (Al-Quran: Chapter: 16 Verse: 36)

Islam says that God's universal providence would be denied if Prophets were raised for one nation only and if the other nations had no Prophets. The Qur'an states that Allah is the Lord and Sustainer of all worlds. He did not discriminate among nations when sending His revelation, so Muslims must not distinguish between any of his Messengers.

Islam is the consummation of all religions. By accepting the Prophets and scriptures of all nations, Islam affirms God's Unity and universal

providence, as well as the universitality of religious experience. Muslims are the followers of all Prophets and Messengers sent by Almighty Allah for the guidance of humankind.

Religion offers to its followers a living model in the form of The Prophet or Messenger to follow and practice his teachings, practices and the living style. Secondly, all religions have their Holy Scriptures, which are no less than the ocean of knowledge enlightening the mind, thoughts, beliefs and actions of human race inhabited on this planet earth. Besides, an all time presence of God fearing people among human groups in all ages also act as an eternally provided source and system to educate and preach masses the values of goodness. The propagation of the concept of universal goodness, as conceived by all religions that; "good actions lead to good practices and good practices always lead to the establishment of a model human society" also immensely contribute in establishing a value based society.

There is no denying the fact that there is more than one Faith, believed, followed and practised by people in various parts of the world. They have contradictory beliefs negating each other's faith. Some Faiths have their following in every nook and corner of the world whereas others are confined to limited nationalities, regions and entities.

Globalization, communication explosion, unlimited media reach and laptops have made everything relevant for everybody. Global citizenship, one world and one people are emerging as future priorities of human society. In that context, accessibility to information is generating new dimensions of social contact and human engagement.

Acculturation and enculturation also provide a broader base to multi-faceted human development. New avenues and platforms for individual and group engagements at all levels of society are also evolving and emerging. Bilateralism and multilateralism have now settled as the guiding principles for monitoring, understanding and analyzing the human behaviour.

Tolerance for other Faiths, opinions and ideological dispensations and finding common ground among them has to be the core programme for bringing about social harmony among people of different denominations. Islam, like other Faiths too offers the way forward to forge unity and harmony among people belonging to different Faiths.

"To be your way, And to me mine "(Al-Quran: Chapter: 109 Verse: 02)

It further goes to emphasize that not only freedom to believe in the Faith of one's own choice kept for everybody but no room or space is left or provided for the forcible conversion of non Muslims to Islam. Still Islam continues to be the fastest growing religion in the world. Islam in the most unequivocal terms rejects the use of force, compulsion, allurement or coercion as the means of conversion. Religion is a matter of one's own conviction and therefore, it is left to one's conscience. The following verse is the guiding principle to achieve dignity for all opinions.

 "Let there be no compulsion in Religion, Truth stands out clear from error" (Al-Quran: Chapter: 02 Verse: 256)

"amity is better than enmity, conciliation is better than confrontation, dialogue is better than deadlock, harmony is better than discord, love is better than hatred, Peace is better than war, tolerance is better than impatience, Understanding is better than conflict, unity is better than division or dissidence and Sacrifice is better than demand."

However, social interactions and exchanges do lead to both understanding and conflict among people, societies, communities and nations. Either fortunately or unfortunately, these are 'desirable' human propositions and therefore, there always remain a recurring need to engage society in interactive manuals, modules, practices and traditions since these are the best available tools to maintain and sustain harmony and peace in any society. Festivals and other celebrations always bring people together.

In human life, there are many occasions, which provide individuals, groups and families the opportunities to formally and informally meet, enjoy and celebrate with each other. And perhaps many more are available for the best of minds in governance and other fields of life to exchange ideas, thoughts, views and experiences with each other to get to the acts of common good. At family, neighbourhood, community, organizational, societal or state level, all of us in a natural course of behaviour meet or confront with each other for various reasons, reservations, concerns and compulsions.

Man basically, is a social animal and thus, it enjoys a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional character. He is the part of a group and therefore, belongs to a country, culture, caste, colour, region, race or

religion. He is happier in situations that offer togetherness and feels frustrated in isolation and alienation. All these factors individually or otherwise govern his conduct mostly, providing logic to have unity and harmony in society but sometimes, also the ground to conflict and clash with each other.

Let us also remember that all individuals are born with unique and distinct personal features and attributes and therefore, they think, act, behave and conduct differently. In some areas among them is seen the like-mindedness whereas in others there is a difference of opinion. In fact, understanding and conflict are two sides of human behaviour. We have to deal with both.

With this background, let us now examine the role of interfaith dialogue in achieving social harmony in Indian society. Let us not forget that there are many disparities in each society, which divides it into groups and sub groups. Religious affinity is one major divider and we need to accept it. In our context, we are a country with maximum diversity. Most of the times this is our strength but sometimes, it comes as the greatest challenge to our existence and national unity.

Communalism, religious fanaticism, ideology obsession and closed mindset individually and jointly have the potential to threaten the democratic and secular foundation of our civil society and the state. Unfortunately, there are forces in all sections of society, which subscribe to the theory of hatred, enmity and conflict. These are their constituencies which offer them money, muscle and political power to which they use to serve their stakes and in creating the social disorder in society. Religious conflicts suit them the most because passions can most easily be aroused on these issues. Communal riots are the direct offshoots of that and innumerable innocent lives have already been lost in them.

Extremism in all its forms and manifestations is bad and can never be justified on any ground or pretext. Terrorism unfortunately is a new addition to human conflict and terrorism emanating from religion is the worst form of it. Killing innocent men, women and children and killing himself through suicidal act is the most inhuman crime that can be committed by a member of a civil society.

In that context, let us analyze that besides religion or interfaith dialogue to what extent the other players having role in bringing about

communal harmony and national integration in our society have succeeded or failed in realizing the desirable interfaith harmony. This perhaps is necessary to find justification for the interfaith dialogue as a means or tool to achieve social cohesion in Indian society.

We need to accept some bitter facts. Political polarisation on caste, region and religious basis, outstanding economic disparities and continuing social divide are the greatest challenge before Indian state.

Politics is directly related to governance and policymaking. Society and the development of a nation as one single and cohesive unit is undoubtedly, its priority. In spite of the best constitution, strong network of institutions, free media, democratic and secular outlook and care and concern for all policy and programming has not yet yielded the desirable results. Corruption is eating us right and left.

Caste based violence, Nexalites & Maoist violence, terrorist acts in various parts of the country, rising political power of communal and fascist forces and the demand for more smaller states are some of the burning issues before the Indian state and its civil society. Therefore, the people of India are justified in demanding a new policy line to divert the human mind towards building the bridges of amity, peace, brotherhood and fraternity among all sections and segments of our society.

As a nation, we now have target of making India an economic power enjoying for itself the status of a developed nation. We are also seeking permanent membership in United Nations Security Council with veto power and justifiably so. But along with all this, we need to focus on capitalizing our cultural richness and diversity. Lot of positive energy is required to educate the people of this country that individual, group and community interests can be best served by serving the national interest. State and its machinery have to go out of the way to reach the deprived, the weak and the neglected to bring everybody into the mainstream development. This is the role that State has to play and institutions, both at the government and society level have to perform and fulfil.

There is no doubt that Religion, religious and spiritual leaders/masters and Interfaith Organizations have a definite role in resolving religious conflict and bringing different factions of people together by working on commonalities. Inter Faith Harmony Foundation of India, a forum for interfaith and inter civilization dialogue, floated on behalf of Indian

Muslims has developed a module of commonalities that provide good ground to bring about social harmony among communities professing and practising different religions and that is as follows;

COMMONALITIES IN RELIGIONS

1. Institution of Creation (Creation and The Creator)
2. Institution of Guide / Role Model (Prophet / Messenger/Avatar)
3. Institution of Scripture (Holy Book /Universal Message of Goodness)
4. Institution of Worship (Formal Place to offer Prayers)
5. Institution of Prayers (Established Religious Practices/Rituals/Traditions)
6. Institution of Pilgrimage (Visit to Holy Shrines, Places and Centres)
7. Institution of Good and Evil (DOS' and DONTS')
8. Institution of Accountability (Answerability of personal and Social Conduct)
9. Institution of Punishment and Reward (Concept of Hell and Heaven)
10. Institution of Life and Death (Birth / Mortality / Re-birth)
11. Institution of Charity (Moral/Material support to Poor and Needy)
12. Institution of Morality (Universal Human Values)
13. Institution of Eternal Justice (Universal Trap of Sin and Crime)

In the present scenario when conflicts among religions, communities and cultures are highlighted to serve the vested interest, the need of the hour is to propagate, preach and popularize the aforesaid commonalities in religions. This may help the believers of different Faiths to develop respect for each other and live in harmony. We in the Foundation do not focus on assimilation of fundamentals of religion but emphasize on meeting points and grounds.

 "All the beautiful "flowers" of laudable virtues are grown in the gardens of religion, as are the most illustrious fruits of the tree of creation, such as Prophets, Saints and Scholars of high achievement"

All religions offer the norms of morality and they provide good ground for bringing people together. There is no Faith which says fight

with each other, kill each other, do mischief on land and be dishonest to others, tell lies, neglect truth or be indifferent to the miseries of neighbour, mankind and nature. All call for one mantra and that is, "Love for all and hatred for none"

Interfaith dialogue has some problems and challenges and therefore, it has to adopt the following mechanism;

- Dialogue has to be held with commonalities and meeting points.
- Conflicting or sensitive issues are initially kept aside from the public domain and media reach.
- Politics, politicians, political parties and the State is kept out of interfaith dialogue.
- Autonomous bodies of the state like National / State Minorities Commissions, National Integration Council and the Foundation for the Promotion of Communal Harmony can better engage in encouraging the interfaith harmony drive.
- NGOS' and Social activists are actively engaged in interfaith initiatives in order to turn them as the future ambassadors of peace, goodwill and common good.
- Bhaichara committees are set up at the village, Tehsil, district and states level. National Integration Council and Foundation for the Promotion of Communal Harmony can take lead and help in raising the required infrastructure.
- Literature on universal human values is prepared, distributed, propagated and popularized to build universal bond of fraternity among everyone.
- Such facilities and centres are built in various parts of the country, which focus on developing wholesome, coherent and secular characters.

To actually achieve social harmony through interfaith dialogue it is necessary to act and conduct in the following manner and this comes as an appeal to the conscience of all Indian citizens.

APPEAL

"For God sake stop using and targeting religious entities of the perpetrators of violence, religious or otherwise. Let us resolve once for all that

we call a terrorist a terrorist, not a Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu Muslim, Jain, Jew or Zoroastrian terrorist. Terrorists and criminals are anti social and anti national elements and have no place in civil society. They deserve condemnation for the acts of terror and heinous crimes they commit against humanity in the most equivocal terms and are punished in the most befitting manner".

FINAL WORD

"Let all religions be accepted as they are and respected equally; Let there be no room for compulsion and coercion in matters of Faith; Let there be no space for using material means to convert people belonging to other religions by allurement; Let no one threaten the faith or credentials of other religions. In individual capacity one may believe in whatever one wants to and with whatever details but publicly let us maintain no hostility zone".

DR ALI MUHAMMAD BHAT

End of the Beginning:
A Study of Arab Spring

ABSTRACT

The Arab Spring was a series of anti-government demonstrations, rebellions, and armed upheavals that spread across the Middle East in early 2011. It is observed differently by scholars and have diverging views about its nature and occurrences. Some called it Arab Autumn while others as winter. A group of scholars across the globe consider it an internal outrage busted due to oppression faced by general public particularly ban on freedom of speech and expression. However another group of scholars called it conspiracy and general public and some political parties' especially religious organisations are used as scapegoats to achieve one's goal. An attempt is made to analyse the material available in the form of books, research articles and websites and newspapers to reach exact conclusion of what happened that people came on the streets and demand their rights in varying intensity.

Key words: *Politics, Arab Uprising, Democratic values, Conspiracy, Human loss*

The winds of revolt swallowed Arab land form economically weak Tunisia to strategically important countries like Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Yemen and Syria.

The most painstaking claim that a Western power particularly British government sponsored Arab nationalism is an explained plot devised against the ottomans to explain their relation with Arab people in the early 1700s, planted as '*Doctrine of Dissent*'. This entire instrument was political in nature and sowed dissent among Muslims across Middle East. When the unity of Muslims is broken and the common

sympathy among them is impaired, their strength thawed and thus was easily destroyed. Same doctrine was practised in Arab uprising called Arab Spring. This doctrine took life of millions of Arabs from Tunisia to Yemen. It is a strong blow to Arabism in particular and Muslim Ummah in general. In the contemporary era, European dissent is sowed among Arabs as an ideological base rather than concept of Ummah. In contemporary era, they apply this dissent through economic and strategic potential of the Gulf region, in order to strive to direct these shifting dynamics in favour of their own interests.

The term 'Arab Spring ' was coined in connection to early revolution of 1848 known in history as 'People's Spring ' once political mayhems stormed Europe. Since, term 'spring ' has been posted to designate activities which are launched to democratize societies like Czechoslovakia's 1968 called 'Prague Spring. ' In 2011, during political upheaval in Arab world, Western media applied the term Arab Spring to galvanize and boost the uprising in order to achieve their own benefits too. In veridical sagacity, it is tough for the Arabs to concede that the Middle East has under no circumstances been copiously decolonised. A Palestinian blogger Lina Al-Sharif tweeted on Armistice Day, 'The reason World War One isn't over yet is because we in the Middle East are still living the consequences ' (Seumas Milne, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com)

The political upheaval engulfed the Arab world and has been called as Arab spring. Many scholars viewed it opposite and declared it Arab Autumn, others called it Arab winter, because of the unrest prevailing in the Middle East that engulfed millions of people. An attempt has been made to unveil the causes that ceased the main cause of Arab spring which forced many scholars to call it *End of the Beginning*. Though, it is very tough task to uphold the opinion about emergence of Arab spring and the role played by hidden forces (conspirators). So analytical methodology pragmatically will help conclude in reality what actually happened and how it happened. Political change in Middle East apparently started with the Tunisian oppression of Bouz Aziz, but it is not the first people's unrest popular uprising beside despotic rulers installed by Western powers in the world war-1. People laid their lives to achieve rights for the bright future. In the 1919s and 1950s till date,

these anti-colonial popular uprisings were unsurprisingly accused by colonial governments and their supporters as *'Fanatical ' and 'Extremist '.* The US support to Anwar Sadat in 1970s for accepting Israel labelled his assassinators as terrorist. Though, they were people who have full faith for their cause of liberation from western domination. Even though situation emerged against them and failed to achieve their goal, they embodied a stern socio-political coincidence to the nation states that had stemmed from decolonization. All of these resulted through religious movements, in national parties and local secular setups in the form of Nasserite Arabism and pan Arabism. The ditch turned from bad to worse by implementing the seed of dissent of sectarianism.

After the outburst of political catastrophe kindled in Tunisia by self-burning of fruit grower whose maintenance was snatched by police. This issue swamped the streets of Tunisia and smashed out Bin Ali's regime who was so terrified of crisis. He feathered to Saudi Arabia for safety. (Mark Levine, 2013, 191–212) It is observed as a new beginning in the Arab world but in reality it was in many cases end of the Arab credibility in general but a voice of democracy against the tyrant rulers in particular. The political chaos in the Arab world establishes a convoluted outcome of a diversity of inland forces in quest of change. The semantics of the term 'spring ' one way or other refers to a newly-emerging state of affairs. Rationally the term Arab spring implies a multifaceted change in societies that bear analogous but also divergent topographies. The term Arab Spring refers to a wave of politico-economic vicissitudes on a multifaceted schema. It appears, these vagaries came on front as a means of the internal initiation of social and political forces struggling for re-distribution of power. The terms of rendezvous in this complex chemistry are distinct, inter-supporter, by the degree of consistency of the Arab world (James Gelvin, 2012) and the level of packages of a rude dense negotiating and perceptive relationships interplanetary.

The vicissitudes and political changes in the Middle East since 2011 have re-kindled discussion about historical transformation in a region that for decades experienced controlling suppleness and the lack of democratic development. The events in the Middle East and North Africa region and the scope and significance of the dynamic processes have prompted lively scholarly debate, which inspires a rethinking of

changes and gives rise to discussions about conformist theoretical and methodological paradigms. In other words, understanding the recent changes in the Middle East requires new explanations and insights, but also seen the continuity in developments. The Arab revolts have a history, which goes beyond the unexpected uprisings. Adding to the ambition of theorizing and analysing the uprisings, in Egypt, Bahrain, Tunisia, and Syria are focusing on the 'intricate undercurrents of the actual uprisings and their immediate consequences (E. Hooglund, 2013, 189–190.)

The occurrence of Arab Spring can be divided into two phases; one that people of the Middle East revolted against dictators of the region who besmirched their rights over decades which resulted in death of thousands and imprisonment of lakhs. They were forced to live a tedium life with all economic disparities and inequalities. The role of conspiracies or economic colonialism is to devastate life of the people by supporting weak central governments of the region. The role of western powers is eminent to pull down the indigenous voices for full-fledged control on the vast resources.

All across the globe, scholars and political analysts, consider Arab uprising initiated by the absence or lack of democratic means for regime change and the pertinent social pressures which were increasing in some countries of the Middle East and North Africa against the regime officials. (Campante and Chor, 2012, '167-187) Transversely, the broader region MENA, from Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen Syria and Libya was engulfed by the wave of violent protests. The wave of protests strengthened all across MENA were driven by similar demographic realities, failures of state policies and demands for greater representation of general public. However, they failed to achieve their objectives due to external interference. The Arab Spring was a historic moment in the politics of the modern Middle East and North Africa, but its long-term impact remains erratic and centuries remember the effects of the violent deaths by extremists working under cover of external forces. Arab uprising has demolished all the structures having sway in Arab affairs and who wish to bring Arabs on the political front as deliverers in order to act as decision makers. Among these Arab states Syria and Libya since December 2010 has been turned upside down. (Luigi Narbonne et.al. 2016, 1) by agents of foreign powers

The Arab Spring has added a complete new discourse to the winds of transformation sweeping in the Arab world. The rebellions look largely like a grass root problem, home-grown nature in the region. Many viewed it inherently irresponsive to popular needs as happened earlier when Ottoman power was shattered and Ummatic concept ruined into pieces. (Eugene L. Rogan, 1999, 69) Ottomans ruled from 16th century to early 20th century and stretched their rule from their capital in Constantinople to the Middle Eastern and North Africa, Sudan, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Tunisia. (Marcovitz, Hal, 2014, 17) Some dynasties that allied with foreign powers shattered Muslim power and under the conspiracy design of T. R. Lawrence with fake hopes of independence. Muslim solidarity was shambled undercover conspiracy of British Cabinet. Lawrence points out that, 'In our two years' partnership under fire, (the Arabs) grew accustomed to believing me and to think my Government, like myself, sincere. In this hope they performed some fine things, but, of course, instead of being proud of what we did together, I was continually and bitterly ashamed. ' (T.E. Lawrence, 1979, 23-34) Instead of complete independence theses Arab states remained under the influence of Western powers and timely threatened their so-called sovereignty. (Marcovitz, Hal, 2014, 18)

Same manoeuvres were repeated in Arab spring behind which the interests there were European powers more particularly American allied interests. Arab uprising paved way to demoralise and dethrone rivals in order to achieve self-interests. In this regard, they used aspirations of ordinary people mostly young people far away from the corridors of big businesses, media companies and government offices as tools. Operating against the toughest of odds, organizations like ISIS and Pashmerga forces were equipped with sophisticated weapons, spread with an astonishing power. Procuring one surprising conquest after the other they devastated structures, killed and torched human beings and did the crimes they never thought. Inside the comprehensive perspective of Middle East most academics and analysts failed to predict and understand emergence of such a heinous force (http://opencanada.org/features/the-arab-spring-opportunities-and-implications). The intense vacillations in the Arab world for a number of varied explanations, like, local societies that believe in representation in countries affairs were kept away by strong outside forces leading to total devastation

of infrastructure and massacre. The indigenous Islamic parties lost credibility due to heinous crimes performed by west oriented Islamic groups.(Djerejian E. 1992, 32–38) Apparently it gives impression that Arab uprisings were mostly indigenous, home-grown but are also reactive in nature in the region.(Jon B. Alterman, 2015, 73, 90)

The social media (Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) contributed to the outbreak and expansion of the youth rebellions substantially. Just like the Green Revolution in Iran several decades earlier, (Evgeny Morozov, 2009) Arab youths capitalized capabilities provided by the internet and digital media to circumvent the tight control imposed by the authoritarian regimes on communication or self-organization. The internet and digital media endowed the disaffected Arab youth to establish large gatherings and movements for wide spectrum of protests (F. William Engdahl 2009, 4) to interconnect with the external world and acquaint themselves with the freedom and prosperity. Oppressive political structures, anti-standards and values through the brand of outside world resulted in killing and imprisoning increasing youth and (Philip Howard and Hussein, 2011, 36-37, 41-42) operating against the harshest of odds, they spread with a phenomenal rapidity in a way never seen before for a movement of this kind, reaping one unexpected victory after the other. It is fair to say the sequence of events we associate with the Arab Spring has come as more of a surprise and also gained more widely spread attention than basically any other societal developments around the world in recent years. (Thomas Anderson Abd-el-Kader Djeflat, 2013, 1) Scholars observed three diverse changes which occurred are; political, social and economic in nature in the region. They are all considered essential for the consolidation of democracy. Although the speed of their progression is different, economic liberalisation would lead to political candidness. It is organized that political structures vary largely in the region and there are huge disproportions between different Arab countries. People in these countries face harsh hands of their rulers and political dichotomy is prevailing between people and the rulers which resulted into collection of wealth by the rulers on military and intelligence might. With regard to social transition, it is influenced by such factors as transformation in attitudes, values and aspirations of the people, resulting from education, increased contact with the outside world and dissatisfaction with the existing political system. As for the

developments on the political transition level, they are currently shaped by main drivers of change. The first one is youth and their demands for better opportunities. The second one is the role of the Arab women, whose position in society and family as well as the economic role exist in the system. (Cavalluzzo, J. 2011, 75-77) At large extent information and communication technologies, enabled change with wider access to the independent sources of information and world at large. (Wilson, C. & Dunn, A. 2011, 1248-1271) Despite these twisted transitions, the Arab world still faces some major challenges, such as human rights, public sentiments and their role in framing the policies of their countries. Therefore, democracy should not be conceived only as a goal, but also as a method to solve problems and respond to growing expectations. (Stepanova, E., 2011, 1-6)

It's different and opposing methods to the Arab uprisings are obvious and lead to achieve economic gains. Economics have delivered an operational description and motivational alliance of the social unrest. (Adeel Malik & Bassem Awadallah, (2012. 33-43) Economic gains have changed the whole structure of Arab spring and new players with self-interests use sophisticated weaponry where disparities and multilevel inequalities. (Steven Heydemann, 2007, 21)

Arab uprising is a result of economic failures of a more or less obsolete statist model of progress that was outside its capability. (Steven Heydemann, 2007, 45-48) Society as a system and state structure and its effective approach is defined, by the economic input delivered. In effect the multi-level back-and-forth of negative economic input gave vent to a social output (uprisings) through which groups expressed their desire for a swotted re-distributional procedure but incited political involvement in the procedure. That was the result of a de-legitimization procedure that directed combined social revolt. This revolt fulfilled the aspirations and hopes of people to come with vibrant political-economic systems. (Omar S. Dahi, 2012, 4)

This crucial and decisive aspect brought political Islam and the Islamists into the picture and multiplied the side-effects of any attempt to reform the economic model of development peacefully and orderly. But it has reached to the highest form of stagnation where it is impossible to reform it from. The Arab uprisings hardly can be understood without taking into consideration the economic crisis. Hauling to the

desire of theorizing the uprisings, an analysis of events presented over Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain and Syria concentrating on the 'thorny undercurrents of the actual uprisings and their instantaneous concerns. (E. Hoagland, 2013, 189–190) The American architects of post-War power centred in and around the powerful Council on Foreign Relations, the Rockefeller Foundation and, above all, the Rockefeller faction in US politics and economics. (F. William Engdahl, 2009, 14)

Islamists are the main stake holders today after they proved their metal in Egypt and Libya but the wave of their ascension to power was turned down, and failed to achieve their objectives in Tunisia by al-Nahda, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and National Transition movement in Libya. While the Arab Spring was not Islamic at its beginning in 2011except in Egypt, few observers had predicted such a significant phenomenon. From Tunis to Bahrain, from Sana'a to Homs, demonstrators disparaged local regimes for their exploitation and incompetence and demanded privileges, opportunities, jobs, and represented all walks of life including political encouragement. In almost all other countries in the region there have been at slight protests against local regimes. This approach of swearing to the depth of phenomenon, scholars have declared it Arab Awakening. (Lorenzo Vidino 2013, 4)

This widespread character of the civil uprisings, several authoritarians in Arab states were forcibly deposed from power, leaving behind an unclear political situation, instability and uncertainty. Morten Valbjørn has underlined: 'what we are witnessing is a re-politicized new Middle East in a 'transition to somewhere. ' (A. Teti 2012, 5-11) The Middle East is changing, as opposed to a situation where no transition takes place beyond what used to be dominated by limited disguise democratization reforms and authoritarian upgrading. (A. Teti 2012, 19-24)

From a comprehensive perspective, the political scientist Jack Goldstone said, Arab Spring followed the same design as any other revolution, foundation with socioeconomic press and leading hostility, followed by popular anger, common assessments, and benefit of encouraging international relations. (Jack Goldstone 2014), 130) According to Asef Bayat, 'Others consider the Arab Spring as true revolutions that was hijacked, manipulated by the counter revolutionaries and supported by regional and international powers. What occurred in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya was no less than a 'political revolution. ' In

Gilbert Achcar's assessment, 'The emergence of the people freed from the shackles of serfdom, the assertion of collective will in public squares, and success in overthrowing tyrannical oppressors, are the distinctive works of a political revolution. ' (Asef Bayat, 2017, 15)

In Libya and Egypt, state and rebel elites tried to resolve their own impasses and broaden their alliances, so as to establish social and political order which serve their interests. These changing alliances threatened the democratic way of engaging in solving matters of instability. Consequently, variant paths of Arab uprising, daunted many countries to fulfil the promises of transitions and are currently facing the problems of social division of sectarian nature, which resulted in somewhere as authoritarian regime while somewhere else as a serious security deficit, with disastrous outcome in the region. (Senen Florensa, 2016, 15)

The events that occurred due to Arab Spring in some states are those that have descended into civil war, (Libya, Yemen and Syria). Libyan case is very volatile any time it will burst again and very less chances of stability are observed in it. Involvement of CIA in Libyan matter resulted costly for America and paid high involvement in which it is the fact that Libya today has all the rudiments of an unsuccessful state springs from the heirlooms of Gaddafi's rule. Assassination of Gaddafi, was an international conspiracy in order to have hold on its resources by applying the art of malfunctioning of state, with weak governmental institutions and little or no civil society. France and Britain pushed for further action against Gaddafi. French President Nicholas Sarkozy led from the front in the campaign to intervene more forcefully in Libya. (Haaretz, 18 March 2011) To oust Gaddafi, the well designed plots and snatching the right of rule, an Arab academician Jihad al-Khazen expressed his view about liberty as, 'Freedom is a plant alien to our part of the Arab world. Whenever implanted, it dies. Some of us colonized others and the plant of freedom died over and over again. Each time it died as a dreamer who inhabited his own world would try to revive it only to perish along with it … all those who made the effort rode against powerful windmills with wooden swords. ' (Fouad 'Ajami, 1992, 3)

Al-Bablawi thinks that a balance must be created among the various meanings of liberty: balance between individual rights, state authority and civil society; balance between the executive branch and the legislative

and judicial branches; and balance between economic considerations and private interests, on one part; state government and public interests on the second; and moral principles and ideals on the third.(Eliezer Tauber, 2000, 41–50) The variation is observed prominently in these branches in the Arab world. Monarchical families enjoy lofty life style while as the Bedouin life is facing harsh slaps of the deserts due to political frustration in every nook and corner of the MENA. In this context, the Egyptian sociologist and liberal Sa'duddin Ibrahim distinguishes between two types of authoritarianism, *istibdād*, in the twentieth century: total despotism, *'al-istibdād al-shumūlī'*, the despotism of an ideological political party. The second type is 'authoritarian rule', *niẓām al-ḥukm al-sulṭāwī,* despotism of tribes. Large numbers of examples are eminent about it in Arab world, Syria (Assad the father and son), Libya (Gaddafi) and Sudan (Bashr and Turabi), (Zaki Badawi, 1978, 100-135) others are Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait, politically week but economically sound Arab Principalities.

Arab Uprising is filched by Romeos on every step of its march towards liberation from despots to achieve democratization. It is moving towards its purpose without any true, trustworthy and guiding principles just as a torch in the hands of blind. Local and international events served as a catalyst, from the beginning, for the new liberal discourse on political reform and democratization in Arab states. It meaningfully subsidised importance of democracy and civil values among intellectual circles. The discourse abetted a comprehensive Arab public to adopt the urgent need for political reform but failed to achieve their goal by international interference. (Nadav Safran, 1961, 76).

The tendency of mass protests revelled through the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) in early 2011 raised the hope for bringing greater freedom and democracy to the Arab World. People through the region came on the streets to materialise their hope for bright future by addressing politico-economic grievances. (Vera van Hüllen, Eu, 2015, 45) From 2011 to early 2014, the so-called 'Arab Spring' encompassing the MENA region came to the forefront of international political affairs. In the words of Sergei Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister and Revolutionaries in Syria started their movement as peaceful protestors but with the use of excessive force by Syrian government and infiltration

by different religious groups and supply of funds to these groups by external powers have changed the discourse of revolution in Syria. International agencies funded and provided weapons to foreign militants to implement their own agenda in Syria same as it happened in Libya and other places. (Larbi Sadiki 2015, 146.152) This is especially true more recently in their relationship with burgeoning youthful populations. Arab historian Said K. Aburish argues that these various regimes all lack modern political legitimacy—from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states to Egypt, from military cliques to monarchies. (Said K. Aburish.1998, 13) This lack of modern political legitimacy—coupled with decades of political repression, world economic crises, and unresolved grievances such as the unmitigated oppression creates potential for massive political awakening. Historically, youth cohorts are eager to challenge the status quo of political stagnation under demographic that spearheaded the MENA mass protests. (Christopher L. Brennan, 2015, 3) According to Volker Perthe, the Arab Spring has its roots deep into volatile demographic developments in the Arab world. (Volker Perthes, 2011, 24) It originated in between 1970 and 2010, around 30% of them aged between 20 and 35 with high rate of joblessness. (Perthes, 2011, 30; United Nations Development Programme, 2009, 22)

This widespread Arab upheaval takes place in the context of a period when the restructuring of the world order from being unipolar towards multi-polarity (Muppidi, Himadeep, 2005, 294) unites with motivated economic breakdown. In Arab world political disturbance worsened from 1950 and busted in Arabs of 2011 even resulted in rebirth of despotism and extremism. US involvement in the region spawn consequences against the will of the people perished the whole middle class within hopes of reform and induced torcher. (Micheline Ishay 2013, 9)

Professor Chalmers Johnson, sorts' modern imperialists into two groups: 'those who advocate unrestrained, unilateral American domination of the world and those who call for imperialism devoted to 'humanitarian' objectives. The complex issue at the heart of liberal imperialism is 'humanitarian intervention'…'the responsibility to protect ' (Chalmers Johnson, 2005, 67) as a cause for military intervention. Within and outside support to Arab spring, no one can

deny that economy has its role in it and igniting the uprisings, did so for economic motivations.(R. Abouzeid, 'Bouazizi, 2011) The protesters in Cairo streets screaming 'Bread' as one of their foremost slogans. That emphasizes on the increase of the role of economic factors and actors, and the reaction of civil society through increased social discontent and requests for economic growth, jobs and regime change. (Maloney, S. 2011, 66–76) The idea that romantic Arab youth activists alone initiated the attempt to topple their autocratic regimes is a myth. In truth, the so-called 'Arab Spring' which swept through the Middle East and North Africa region was a wave of destabilization sponsored by Washington and launched through 'civilian-based power' techniques. The architects of the post-war US-dominated global order explicitly chose her project of imperial power under the guise of colonial 'liberation,' support for 'democracy' and 'free markets.' It was one of the most effective and diabolical propaganda of modern times. Bush's remarks were calculated to fan the flame of further regime destabilizations across Eurasia where the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and its related NGO's were now coordinating for accusations of 'human rights' violations across the region. (F. William Engdahl, 2004, 253-255) The consensus was that US foreign policy should aim to secure what the Pentagon termed 'Full Spectrum Dominance.' The strategists of Full Spectrum Dominance envisioned control of entire universe, including outer and inner-space of mind. The control of energy, particularly global oil and gas resources, is ideally suited to weave the US military and energy policies for coherent strategy of dominance is explicitly clarified by Dick Cheney. (F. William Engdahl, 2004, 256)

Additionally, the 'Arab Spring' offensive was given impetus by the imperative to hasten the regional process of what Bernard Lewis, perhaps the most influential British Arabist, termed 'Lebanonization ' as a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Christopher L. Brennan, 2015, 9) This refers to the far-reaching balkanization, social collapse, and eruption of sectarian conflicts. This principal symbol is explicit, the successive unfolding of transnational uprisings have influence to the Arab Spring and the nature of the development in revolution. The novel design of the Arab Spring appears to be more transnational, hatched, influenced and controlled by world powers than indigenous people. By advantage of these transnational revolutionary uprisings people try to bring fervour

to the conflict through weaponization. As Hennery Kissinger rightly said, 'Those who do not hear the drums of wars are deaf ' (Fridayspecial. com.pk/2017)Western powers fully geared to take every benefit of the hatched Arab Spring. The Conspiracy is not limited to US only but many European countries along with Arab counterparts are fully involved in this conflict. They managed it by raising the valour of Arabs to fuel their sentiments against their rulers. The Arab Spring is a wave organised by people applied for reg*ime change*. But while observing its true nature, it clearly explains the outside interference to sabotage to overthrow anti-western dominance in the region.(N. Woods 1996, 11) The tactics have caused foremost technical arguments and debates among scholars of inter-disciplinary thinking. According to J. Rosenau, scholars need 'to comprehend the political universe and International Relations as puzzle solvers while as in case of the Arab Spring the puzzle is multi-purpose, since inland vicissitudes in several Arab states yield a gigantic influence, on international and regional security balances '. (J. Rosenau, (1976, 1)

Historically speaking, Islam emerged as a source of unity with universal teachings, now the same religion is used as a bone of contention and disagreement. Among Arabs, Islam became a source of ideological conflict and western powers are using it to achieve their goal.

The dissent philosophy involves people in mundane matters, competition and disputes erupt between them. According to Ibn Khaldun, 'When their hearts turn towards God and the truth, they reject the world and its falseness, their orientation becomes one and division disappears while mutual cooperation and support flourish. As a result, the writ of law widens and the state strengthens. ' (Ibn Khaldun, 1965, 124)

He further says; 'The religious call boosts the power of people in general and the state in particular. ' (Ibn Khaldun, 1965, 124-125)

For modern Arabs it proves fatal as it created dissent which resulted in the worst conflict of Shia-Sunni, Wahabi-Ikhwani etc. Within the perspective of current uprising Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen are entrenched into deep crisis with arduous chauvinistic biases among the populace. The 'Day of Rage ' unleashed by religio-political ideologies resulted in secularist nationalism and Islamic nationalism, terminating in wrath upon diverse people. (Nizar Messari, 2017, 9)

These uprisings seem spontaneous, to uproot the decade's long injustice faced by the people due to military dictators and monarchs who devastated economic, political, and social fabric of Middle East, whose dynamics extremely resulted in a volatile climate. (Game, F. G. 2011, 81-90)

The demonstrations were ignited and fuelled by socio-economic whinges and political foiling. The Tunisian unrest began from impoverished bucolic regions organised in more orchestrated manner through labour activities steering social pyramids. On the other hand, Egyptian uprising was cemented for the reform of the political system but resulted in sectarian and intentional western interference. This uprising was orchestrated in such a manner that all the western opponents were put out of scene by arming the youths in Libya and Syria earlier. (Anderson, L. 2011, 2-7) In Egypt, a wrest sectarian plot was applied to put down the first ever elected President by pulling down coalition support through financing sectarianism. In Syria and Yemen inter-sectarianism paid high prize and engulfed millions of people. Sectarianism has been recognized as having an exceptional mobilizing power which leaders are liable to tap into rally followers behind defensive or offensive campaigns. (Aziz al-Azmeh, 1997, 150)

The sectarian conspiracy can better be understood in the words put forward by Benjamin Franklin. He suggested that insurgence against dictatorial and tyrannical rule is a kind of service and conformity to God which He pointed out in the Quran. Conspiracy is always anti-God which creates discord among the people. The pharaoh design is meant for dissent and distinction as mentioned in Quran; 'Truly the Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and broke up its people into factions, subjugating a sect among them . . . for he was indeed a maker of mischief. (Al-Quran, Chapter: 28, Verse: 04) Precisely assumed by S Skinder and Scheltima, the sectarian prejudice in relation to Syria is nurtured by European suspiciousness. (Iskandar, Scheltema, 1920. 18) Maulana Maududi pointed 'He had adopted the polity of dividing them into groups. He bestowed privileges and preferential rights on some to be made the ruling class and reduced others to serfs to be oppressed and exploited. '(Abul A'la Maududi, vol.4, 580)

The negative connotation of Ummah resulted in factions which

adversely signify a 'group ' of swindlers and deceivers, usually from a different faith. (3:69, 72; 24:2; 61:14) In a straightforward call the earlier warnings about 'divide and rule ', the Qur'an outwardly rejected the Pharaoh's stimulation of sectarianism in addition to the plague of divergence. Abdul Wahab el-Effendi indicates that in the reproach to 'not be dividers ', Muslims fell to the ditch of sectarianism egotistically, though there are clear Qur'anic instructions and directives to remain away from division. (A. El-Affendi, 2014, 100) In the beginning of multitude of the contrasting, revolts exposed their miscarriage to create a synchronised trans-border uprising. Rather, as Olivier Roy states: 'For the first time in the Arab world, revolution has not attached itself to some grand, supranational cause … these movements are patriotic rather than nationalist, taking root in a domestic context and confronting the authorities accusing them of being incompetent to solve their problems in the earlier phase.' (O. Roy, 2012, 23) Modernistic substantial reorganisers like Hassan Hanafi put forth his views and perceptibly 'the expounder's of Euro-western philosophy of secularism, is a direct cause of fundamentalism. West is direct responsible for fundamentalism, in Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Libya and Yemen by digging an internal ditch as the root cause for sectarianism. (M. Gray, 2011, 28)

Outwardly well organised Arab league OIC and GCC failed to achieve its objectives of its foundation while falling prey to external influences. There are many causes which are behind in falling victim to external powers. Arab league being the earliest organisation remained under crisis due to western influence. The sectarian dent resulted in zoolatry which paved way to western powers to tighten their grip on the region. According to the words of Muhammad bin Salman, we did everything on the directions of West, be it export of extremism or radical funding. In this regard CIA issued a plan of countering the criticism in 1967. (M. Gray, 2010)

Maryam Jamshidi says, Arab region is encircled by a never ending cycle of autocracy, oppression, corruption, and economic stagnation. This region is dominated by rulers who snatched freedom of speech and expression, restricted opportunities to assemble and gather, committed gross human rights violation through secret force abuses, and left domestic population with little hope of social, professional, or economic

mobility. ' (Maryam Jamshidi, 2014, 09) When these people of MENA raised their voice against such cruelties, it got detracted and the tide of popular revolution was diverted by external forces. Mapping out the history of independence as sovereignty in MENA oil rich reserves, unity of Arabs has been deprived by western powers.

According to Hamid Dabashi 'The counter revolutionary forces are now fully geared to oppose and reshape these uprisings '. (Hamid Dabashi, 2012, 12) Now the war is not limited to US and NATO forces involvement in Libya nevertheless Monarchs of the region are fully involved in these crises and joined in equal ranks by supporting financially and providing military assistance and arms to the insurgent groups on the basis of likes and dislikes. (Hamid Dabashi, 2012, 16) However, Arab league never succeeded in providing any relief. The Arab world has been the target of continuous interference ever since face-wash independent. Arab world continuously engraved in artificial state dependence after the disintegration of Ottoman Empire. Political subjugation as resource states, bombed and occupied by the US, its allies and foes, locked down by US military headquarters and western sponsored autocracies. (Michael L. Ross, 2011)Arab league founded in 1945 has still not provided any sort of relief to sum up their interests to have any know-how at international forum so as to overcome the colonial pressure. Its fundamental aim was robbed by Western powers, a direct threat to their strategic order (the West). From the overthrowing of dictatorship in Tunisia and Egypt the Western powers and their Arab Allies fell asleep to counter the revolution and to achieve their framed goals lying in the region. They sedulously worked for counter-drive, to buy off, crush, or hijack the Arab revolutions. While knowing weakness and breach in Arab league, western powers bombed Libya and Syria and got militarily involved in occupying the country. (Seumas Milne, 2011) Arab league was formed to overcome the regional conflicts and to safeguard the interests of Arab countries. It is failed at all its fronts during Arab spring as a paralysed organization which resulted in killing of millions of people. The Arab League showed complete indifference towards the popular rising broke out since 2011. Same is the condition of OIC in any uprising and issues pertaining to it. Both OIC and Arab League came out as a second-rate actor during

and after the 'Arab Spring '; Western countries attacked Libya, Syria, and Yemen without the consent or the need for the OIC and Arab League approval; Arabs, mainly Qatar and Saudi Arabia, distressed on the Coup d'état that took place in Egypt for personal benefits and their relation with Husni Mubarak. But these countries on US initiatives got involved in Syrian and the Yemeni crises. After many failures of the OIC and Arab League, the Gulf countries revived the Gulf Cooperation Council which was established in 1981. The organization intensified its activities by using weak and foreign sponsored joint belligerent militaries; Peninsula Shield Force, to curb uprising in Bahrain. A strong but cold war design criticism aired the Arab world. The belligerent force was actually sponsored on the dictum of US to count down the Iranian influence in the region and to alienate Iranian republic. It is observed that scarcely in any meeting voice was raised about the Arab uprising. The full-fledged military intervention was appreciated and financed by many Arab Monarchies. Such approach is always appreciated by western powers which is an irrefutable fact that both the US and Europe have frequently and enthusiastically supported and cherished Arab authoritarian regimes in reoccurrence for western-friendly strategies. The worst features of OIC, Arab league and GCC members is, their criminal negligence on the issue of Palestine, blind eye on Arab uprising and enflaming hatred against Islam-rooted political movements.

The Arab Spring has exposed the differences among the GCC states, Arab League and OIC members and widened the gulf of their differences and complete divergence of their policies. These policies undermine their power and unity which further ruptured their relations and uncovered conflicts amongst them. These discordant and conflicting strategies have had adverse consequences on the whole region, exclusively on the Arab nations in changeover. These seismic impulses in the Arab world twisted new geopolitical suggestions, regional uncertainty and great insecurity, in turn posing a huge security challenge for the Muslim world. Moreover, in such circumstances Euro-Western invasion of countries like Iraq, Libya and Syria was result of their anti-western stand. This was fostered by their allies who financed the local for western friendship. It was not done to provide a security shield for people in general but to achieve one's objectives. (Riccardo

and Miguel, 2012) Western new directions towards the Muslim world, as underscored in President Barak Osama's address at Cairo University, raised the eyebrows of many secularists and nationalists in the Arab region. President Obama described the type of new relations he proposed for the United States and Arab World:

I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition. Instead, they overlap, and share common principles - principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings. (The White House, 2009)

Keeping in view the change at global level, where exclusive regional partnership is raising head and others are not tolerated at any cost. These global developments have been enlarged and strengthened by new designs of regional sensitivity among governments of Arab Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). These three states are acting as play cards for western players particularly US, acting as fuel to burn down any one for the cause of US relationship. These states provided funds to every Arab uprising and created a dissent among OIC, GCC and league members. Their approach and methodology to dominate over the region is now at stake due to their internal differences. They have struck their economic and diplomatic influence inside the GCC and Arab League, both ideologically inclined to and politically motivated by them to raise an uprising which suits their interests to sustain a regional order.

CONCLUSION

Deliberating on the issue of Arab spring, it is clear that Arab spring was more a crisis creation by external forces in order to give setback to major voices like Muslim Brotherhood and other pro-regional groups by creating an opponent in the form of extremist ideology like ISIS and other armed groups. So Arab spring is and was not an event that happened without any disruption orchestrated by external forces. All political groups having faith on regional sovereignty were earlier trying to achieve goals of regional interests and indignity. They tried to

materialize their voices through peaceful demonstrations and to live as per their regional and cultural values. Such things are not acceptable to external (Western) and internal (Arab monarchies allied with West) powers. A breach was created to widen the gulf between people and rulers, religious versus secular and peaceful versus extremists through monetary funding and arms supply. In Tunisia and Egypt Islamist with liberal and democratic outlook were given a complete setback. Among them some *salafi* groups worked as turncoats while as in Libya and Syria Islamists acquired contour of violence. They received weapons from regional monarchs and some international big guns like USA and France in Libya. In Syria regional antipathy between Pro-Saudi monarchs and Iran also worsened the situation and brought death to the region. Involvement of Israel and Russia further devastated the region and killed millions of people. The cargo and shipment of lethal weapons deployed by world powers for monetary benefits gave set back to modern day civility. The essence of UNSC is at cards and its role for safeguarding the public interests has utterly failed and it served as partisan in the region. The whole devastation resulted in the world powers through their armed machinery that massacred humanity for trifling interest. The other aspect is to safeguard and protect interests of their own regional alliance. But in both forms humanity is in loss and civilisational character has lost its essence. People of the region and rulers need to understand the upsetting situation and have to share table with each other for the welfare of the people in general.

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HADI SOLEIMANI ABHARI

The Historical Process of the Qurānic Interpretation in Medieval Indian Subcontinent (with a Focus on Characteristics of Some Interpretations in the Tenth Century AD)

ABSTRACT

After the establishment of the Muslim rule in the Indian subcontinent in seventh century AH, the process of the Qurānic text interpretation took a new form, quite different from the traditional approach of the Qurānic commentary. Interpretations of the Qurān in the land emerged in the first half of the seventh century, using the theological and philosophical trends. It continued in the next one and half century, using the spiritual and moral tendencies. In the ninth century, it appeared in the form of structural interpretation. That method was further developed in the tenth century in a number of interpretations of the commentators like Shaikh Mubarak. Historical and social conditions of the tenth century in the subcontinent led to a new feature of the Qurānic interpretation in the form of quantitative and annotation compared to more ancient interpretations. The features of these integrations can be easily understood if we pay attention to a historical overview of the interpretation process in the subcontinent. Features of that process can be determined by the properties of the interpretations. This paper provides a method for dealing with the above issues based on using descriptive and historical accounts.

Keywords: *Structural Interpretation; India; Sheikh Ali Bin Ahmad Muhaimi; Shaikh Mubarak Nagori; Order of the Qurān*

INTRODUCTION

Overviewing Qurānic Studies developed in the Indian subcontinent in the tenth century- which coincides with the beginning of the Timurid rule in the Indian sovereignty- reveals that the interpretation of the Qurān in the Indian subcontinent has distinct quantitative and qualitative features. This phenomenon has been a result of broader cultural developments in that period. During that time, Qurānic studies, as a main dimension of Islamic culture, developed features of interpretations which are specific to that historical stage in the Indian subcontinent. One of the features is formation of interpretations based on the order and sequence of the verses of Qurān or the instructive approach. This approach emerged in the interpretation of Shaikh Ali Muhaimi in the ninth century and was extended in the interpretation of Shaikh Mubarak Nagori, Shaikh Hasan Gujarati and Shaikh Monawwar Lahori in the tenth century. The feature can be easily understood if we investigate the interpretation process based on a historical overview of the interpretation process in the subcontinent. Dealing with that process is one of the crucial aspects for this paper. Using library method based on a descriptive and historical style, we have tried to accomplish this goal. The purpose of our paper is to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the steps that have been taken in the Qurānic studies (particularly interpretation of the holy book) during medieval Indian subcontinent?
2. What characteristics have been developed by each step of interpretation in the subcontinent and what are the most prominent characteristics in the tenth century?

Research History: While many works exist in the fields of culture and civilization of the Indian subcontinent and its effect on the cultural relations with other nations, especially Iran, research about the history of interpretation of the Qurān in the subcontinent is scarce, despite well written commentary on the subject of Qurānic studies in India. Except for few works published in recent decades that discuss the content and the translations of the Qurān in the contemporary era, not too much work has addressed the history of interpretation in the Medieval Subcontinent (7-12 centuries AH). The two works are in Persian and have

been relatively successful in evaluating the works of commentators of the subcontinent:

1. 'Interpretation and Shia' interpretations'1

2- 'The Science of the Qurānic Exegesis and its Experts in India'.[2]

The former discusses Imamia interpretations and the later analyzes the works introduced on the subject.

SOME NOTES

1. Ali As'aghyr, a scholar of the Qurān in modern Iraq, divides historical stages of interpretation in the Islamic lands into three stages:

A-The Formulation. B-Establishment. C-Renewal [3](Ali As'aghyr 1410 A.H:27).

Although these three stages have occurred in the history of the Qurānic interpretation in Indian subcontinent, some differences make it inevitable to present new division for the process historical interpretation of the Qurān in India. The history of interpretation in India has two stages: A: the Formulation of the commentary (bloom and geniture) B: expansion and development.

Expansion stage continues into both classical and modern periods. Classical period can be investigated in two stages: pre and post Timurid (Goorkanyan) rule in India.

2. The focal point of this research is analytical study of some interpretations in the subcontinent in the tenth century which dealt with the order of the Qurān in the stage of interpretation expansion.

3. Structural interpretation is a special style in Tafsir. The Interpreter illustrates the meaning of verses by showing their relation to each other. In that method, commentator pays attention to Qurān order and his effort is important to express sequence of the verses and semantic relevance in the Qurānic chapters and their verses.

Overview of Islam in India: In 92 AH, Muhammad bin Qasim Thaqafi, Mohalleb bin Abi Safrah Azdi, marched through Kabul, Kheybar, Makran, and Baluchistan to India and conquered areas in Sindh. Muhammad bin Qasim became Governor General of the conquered land. Sindh and Multan remained for half a century in the hands of Muslim Arabs. Between -401-417 AH, Sultan Mahmud

invaded at the northern cities of India, defeated powerful dynasties Such as Vihend Hindu kings and brought down the Rajput rulers of Ghaznavi to tributary state (Bosworth 1388 Sh, 554)

With growth of the power of the Ghooryan, the power of the last kings of Ghaznavi decreased, and they finally were limited to the Punjab government. Finally Muizzuddin Muhammad Ghoori put an end to the Ghaznavid dynasty in 582 AH. (Bosworth 1388 Sh, 565) The first Muslim state was established in northern India in 602 AH by Ghotbeddin Aybak, who was the agent of Ghooryan. Mamaleek from 602 to 689 AH, which ranged nearly the whole of the seventh century, led the kingdom of Delhi. After the Mamalik, the reign of the kings of Delhi, continued in a series of Khalaji, Toghloqyan, Sadat, Lodhi, and Sori dynasties until the Timurid invasion of India. Timurid rule and their domination lasted until the 12th century AH which ended when Great Britain colonized territories until 1945.

HISTORICAL PROCESS OF WRITING QURĀNIC INTERPRETATION IN THE MEDIEVAL INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

First, the formulation of the Qurānic commentary in the Indian sub-continent took place from 1st to 6th centuryAH. At the beginning, the Interpretation offered to the local Muslims using traditional sources which were relevant to explaining and revealing the meaning of the verses of Qurān. For this purpose, some cities (cities of Mansoureh and Deybl in Sindh province) became centers for publishing and teaching of Hadith in the middle of third century. The first translation of the Qurān into the Sindhi language was done during the ruling time of Bani Habar, on the request of Mahrouk from the ruling king of Mansoura, (Schimmel 1368 Sh,61 Yari 1388 Sh,46) in the late third century in Sindh. The Raja of Sindh (d.321A.H), who ruled in a portion of the third century and early fourth century, expanded that cultural work in the form of educationalizing interpretation in the subcontinent (Maghdesi 1361 Sh, 123). In the fifth century, after the conquest of new areas by Mahmud Ghaznavi in the Indian subcontinent, Punjab and Lahore became the scientific center for Hadith and the Qurānic commentary for Muslims .In Lahore, ninety out of a hundred people were scholars and nine of ten people were Qurān commentators' (Schimmel 1368

Sh, 62.). Shaikh Ismail Bukhari Lahori published and taught *hadith* and the verses of the Qurān in that city in 395 AH (Rahman Ali 1894, 89). Shaikh Ali bin Usman Hujweri (lived until early fifth century), known as the Ganje dana (Treasure of the wise) was among the foremost interpreters of the Qurān in the century. One can find abundant citations from the verses of the Qurān in his books including Kashf al- Mahjub. In the second half of the sixth century, one of the students of Fakhruddin R'azi named Allama Najmuddin, Abdul-Aziz Bin Mohammad Damascene, using his Tafsir- e Kabir provides the background for developing philosophical interpretation in the Indian curriculum in the next century. In that century (VI), one can find domination of the Qurānic studies in the same format of hadith books of the previous centuries. One of these works belongs to Hassan o-R'azi Saghani Lahori, one of the great Hindi scholars born in 577 AH in Lahore. He traveled to Iraq and studied Hadith and the Qurānic interpretation before he returned to India. In his book (Mashariq- al Anwar), he dealt with the verses concerning the do's and don'ts (Ahkam). He also mentioned ahadith interpreting the Qurānic verses, their causes of revelation) and issues like *nasikh* and *mansukh*. (Naqvi 2014, 27)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE QURĀNIC INTERPRETATION IN THE SUBCONTINENT

First Stage: Interpretation of the Qurān in the first stage (bloom and formulation) which was in the form of teaching and promoting ahadith were expressed in narrative sources and sometimes mystical texts. By then, it did not become independent from books of hadith.

Second stage: the development of interpretation in the Indian subcontinent occurred in the two time periods: before and shortly after the rule of Timurid or Goorkanyan (seventh to tenth century AH)

The stage of development itself is divided into two periods: the classic and the modern. One can consider the first period (classic) in two separate times, including the rule of Goorkanyan and after their domination until the contemporary era and in the period prior to the domination of Goorkanyan (Timurid). Classic period begins with independence of the interpretation books from narrative sources in the seventh century AH, and then during the eighth to tenth centuries, it

continues its development in mystical and rational interpretations in which formation and compilation of structural interpretation is one of the dimensions of rational interpretations.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE QURĀNIC INTERPRETATION IN THE SUBCONTINENT

Classic period before Goorkanyan in India, (seventh century AH): In this century, we experience a rational approach in Islamic Studies in the Subcontinent. With the establishment of Muslim rule in Delhi, India, on one hand, and the ruinous Mongol invasion of Iran, on the other hand, many scientists immigrated from Afghanistan, Iran, Khorasan and Transoxiana to India. They were mostly skilled in Kalam (Theology), principles of logic, and intellectual debates. They transferred their knowledge to that land.

The interpretation of the Qurān can be investigated in the form of teaching and written interpretations with the influence of the emigrants to this century.

Teaching Interpretation: With the beginning of this period, theological and philosophical interpretations of the Qurān became the educational resources in the curriculum at higher stages in the Institutions. Students in the classes had to use Zamakhshary's book named Kashsh'af, but some Sufi leaders such as Baha-u-dddin Zakariya of Multan did not accept the Mu'tazili interpretation and later adopted Bayzavi Interpretation (Schimmel 1368 Sh, 69). People like Allama Najmuddin Abdul Aziz Bin Mohammad damascene using interpretive approaches of Fakhruddin Razi and Zamakhshari incorporated their theological and philosophical interpretations into the educational curriculum of the Subcontinent (Naqvi 2014, 28-29).

Writing Interpretation: In this century, the process of the Qurānic studies in the form of writing independent interpretations took on a new format and accelerated in the Subcontinent. These interpretations emerged in the first half of the 7th century with theological and philosophical trends and with mystical trends in the second half of the century.

The First |Half of the Seventh Century: The interpretation ideas of Fakhruddin Razi and Zamakhshari in the first half of the seventh century

were published in the form of a commentary titled *Gharaeb al-Quran*, by an emigrant from Iran named Nizam- al Aa'raj Nishaboori which is the first Farsi interpretation in India. He also offered his independent views in the interpretation. This work is referred to be as important as Tabari from the viewpoint of those such as Moosavi, the writer of *Rauzatul Jann'at*. A major difference is that in many cases, it condemns Umayyad and gives legitimacy to Ahl- al Bayt and appreciates them (Moosavi 1411 AH: 7,222).

The Second Half of the Seventh Century: Kamaluddin Zahid Shoreyhi (lived in 7th century) wrote *Kashif- al Haqayeq Wa Qamus- al Daqayeq* which is the first complete interpretation in Arabic language in India. It associated commentaries in the subcontinent with mystical interpretations. In addition to interpretation of Kamaluddin Zahid Shoreyhi, mystical interpretations in the form of sermons and written works, including mystical contents of the mystics in interpretation of the verses, continued in a way such as in the previous century. These interpretations were in the form which only was acceptable to Sufis and followers of the mystics like Khwajah Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer and Khwajah Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi. During the next centuries, we see the rise of mystical interpretations by those such as, Syed Muhammad Husaini, and Mir Syed Ali Hamadani and Ali bin Ahmad Muhaimi.

The Eighth Century Commentators: In this century, while Qurān commentators from Islamic countries were influenced by interpretation methods of scholars such as Fakhruddin Razi who expanded application of philosophical and theological approaches in the scope of interpretation, mystical interpretations in the Subcontinent, particularly in Kashmir and experienced a special resurgence. In this century, several works of interpretations can be named. One of them belongs to Ibn Taj and the remaining to two mystic interpreters, Mir Syed Ali Hamedani and Syed Muhammad Husaini. The later wrote a complete independent book of interpretation whereas the former didn't. However, he presented his ideas in mystical epistles.

1. *Shaikh Abu Bakr Ishaq, known as 'Ibn Taj (died 736 AH)'*: He is the son of Abi al-Hasan Tajuddin, who several years after Khaljian and during the reign of Muhammad Tughlaq, became his adducent and came with him to Delhi. He released *Jawahir- al Qurān* based on Imam Ghazali's

interpretation. He also wrote a brief story of his interpretation besides his other works. A copy of this work was named a brief of *Jawahir- al Qurān* in releasing semantics of the Qurān.' Although his complete interpretation has never been found in any of the libraries, he expressed virtues of the chapters, then explained simple words, then meanings of difficult words, and finally explained the verses. (Elahi dana 1972: 2, 158).This book, from the viewpoint of Brockelman, is a type of short dictionary of difficult words of the Qurān in Persian which begins with Surat-al Fatiha. The author reversely describes the words from the chapter al-N'as to al-Baqarah and quotes some Prophetic hadith (Noshahi 1372 Sh, 261).

2. *Syed Mohammad Husain or Khwajah Gesu Daraz (72-825 AH):* His ancestors were migrants from Khorasan to India. When he was sixteen years of his age, he became a prentice for Chiragh Dehlavi. Since adolescence, he had been bewilderment of his spiritual master (Nadwi 1956, 161). Gesu Daraz, one of the great Sufis of the time, has left behind a number of books and scholarly works in Tasawwuf. Writers have attributed more than a hundred and five works to him with special mention of Al- Tafsir al-Multaqit among them. Among mystics in India, Gesu Daraz was the first person to develop an independent book of interpretation (Naqvi 2014, 41) He wrote Al- Tafsir al-Multaqit which is in Arabic in mystical style. It is available at the Library of Indiana Office in the UK and also in the library of Lucknow. His son wrote a description on the commentary, which is now available in two volumes in the library of Indiana Office. The first volume contains the interpretation of the chapter *Fatiha* to the chapter *Kahaf* and the second volume is from the chapter Maryam to the end of the Qurān (Naqvi 2014, 41).

3. *Mir Sayyed Ali Hamedani:* He was from the dynasty of Najmuddin Kubra. Once he met Timur Lang. Timur did not tolerate his advice and was displeased. Apparently, he was going to kill him which caused him to seek asylum and migration to Kashmir with his 700 followers. They transferred Persian language, science, and technology to the language of the then Kashmir. Many *Sadats* in Kashmir are descendants of his generation. (Norman Halister 1373 Sh, 175). He also met Shah Nematullah Vali (Anvari 1356 Sh 123). Great people of the time such

as the writers of *Tarikhe Farishta, Safeenat –al Auliya*, and *Tarikh-e-Aa'zami* praised him (See Farishta 1321, 89 Dara Shikoh 1885, 277 Ghaffar Aava, 1390, 243). This great man trained thousands of pupils who became masters in Kashmir (Motah'ari 1364 Sh, 293 Gaffar Aava 1390, 243). Mir Sayyed Ali, in addition to founding Qurān School, put his effort in publishing Qurānic knowledge. Apart from some work on the Qurān, he had no comprehensive book of interpretation. He wrote his Qurānic commentaries in various treatises. He tried to show a reasonable and subjective interpretation.

INTERPRETERS OF THE NINTH CENTURY

1. *Makhdoom Ali bin Ahmad Muhaimi (776-835 AH)* is the first commentator in the Subcontinent who based his work on structural style. He is the interpreter of Sufi school (Naqvi, 2014, 41). His book, *Tabsir-al-Rahman Wa Tayseer-al-Mannan*, is in Arabic and in two volumes. They are known as *Interpretation of the Qurān* or *Al-Tafsir al-Muhaimi* (Tafsir Muhaimi and Tafsir al-Quran) copies of this book exist at the University of Al-Azhar and Ummul Qura University in Makka. It is a brief interpretation which contains all verses with expressing and pointing aspects and is very different from literary discussions and technical classical interpretations. Of course, this does not mean that his interpretation turned out to be paraphrasing. He, first, expresses meaning and then refers to the mystical interpretation (Ayazi 1378 Sh, 60). Another interpretation named *Alif- la'm- Meem* is attributed to him and some sources have referred to it (Shahidi 1381 Sh, 176 Mahdavi Ra'd 1375 Sh, 10). Shaikh Abdul Haq of Delhi honored this interpretation by citing the opinions and views of great scholars of Arabic syntax and etymology like *Seebuwaih* and *Akhfash* which shows his mastery of Arabic literature (Abdul Haq 1953 , 173 - 179) for example: see Al-Tafsir al-Muhaimi, 1403 p:80

Main Features of Muhaimi Interpretation: From the perspective of some Qurān scholars, the most important features of this interpretation are emphasizing on the relevance of verses, the connection between words, and a rhetorical perspective to interpret the verses to demonstrate the miracles of the Qurān (Mahdavi Rad 1385 Sh. 78, Ayazi 1378

Sh, Naqvi 2014 ,25). Muhammad Hasan Ghosy states that lack of repetition and abiding by the discipline are of prominent features of this type of interpretation (Nadvi , 1956,59)

To illustrate this relationship, Muhaimi expresses the main focus of the first chapter and then links the various materials to the verse. For example, in the interpretation of *Al-Zuha,* he writes, 'This chapter is named Zoha because it's a reason for the resumption of the revelation after a period of interlude and recess.' Therefore, the main focus and goal of this chapter is to point to the Sunrise and Sunset. However, God does not leave the prophets alone. Discontinuation of the revelation does not mean reduction of God's grace upon his Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) (Muhaimi 1403 A.H , 453 and see Naqvi,2014:53).This interpretation also has other features such as the points mentioned in the interpretation of the verse Bismillah at the beginning of each chapter. Muhaimi's descriptions are comparable with narrative interpretations. He often expresses the cause of revelation of the chapters and the verses. For example in the interpretation of the verse: *and he shall surely be satisfied* from the last verse of the chapter *al-Layl*, he relates the verse to the first caliph of Islam. Familiarity with issues such as appearance and essence and other information required for the interpreter of the Qurān are mentioned in the Introduction of the first part of Tafsir-e Muhaimi. (Naqvi. 2014 :52)

2. *Ahmad Ghazi Shihabuddin Dowlatabadi (810-850A.H)* His works are abundant in Arabic and Persian. Some of them are common as textbooks in Sunni spheres. But his most important work, interpretation of the Qurān is one of the earliest Persian interpretations and is called *Bahr-al Mawwaj Wa Siraj-al Wahhaj fi Tafsir-al Qurān* (Raging sea and Glowing light for interpretation of the Quran) consists of three volumes and contains a specific language. In the interpretation, Dolatabadi has entered lexical and syntactic issues and gave some attention to jurisprudential matters. His references are Zahidi interpretation, *Madarik-al Tanzil, Kashsha'f, Tafsir-al- Kabir*, and the interpretation of Abul-Laith Samarqandi (see Abdul Haq ,1332A H, 321 Naqvi, 2014:55, Farishta 1321 A.H. :2 ,306,Jonpoori-n d- 13)

Features of the Interpretation in the Tenth Century: In this century, interpretation of the Subcontinent, not only contains the ninth-century interpretation characteristics (interpretation based on structural

style) but is distinguished from earlier ages in other features. This is a result of quantitative development of interpretation and annotation interpretation which mainly took place on Baizawi interpretation.

INTERPRETERS OF THE TENTH CENTURY: SCHOLIASTS OF THE QURĀN IN THE TENTH CENTURY

1. *Shah Tahir Husaini (880-952 AH):* He is one of the most prominent Shia Iranian personalities in Deccan. After he traveled to India and was appointed as the minister of the king (dynasty of Nizam Shahian), a new era in political and cultural history of this dynasty began (Qadiri 1387 Sh, 23). It was under his impression that Borhan Nizam Shah became Shia and declared Shi'ism as the official religion (Rizvi 1376 Sh,447) .With the efforts of Shah Tahir, who was also a prominent scholar and poet, a religious school was constructed in Ahmad Negar which attracted a number of scholars, scientists and poets. He has many works but only two of them are available: 1 - the letter of conquering 2 – Monsha'at, detailed annotations on Baizavi which is his interpretation in Arabic language.

2. *Syed Raziuddin Hamadani (952-900 A.H):* The one who noted down annotation on Baizavi interpretation.

INTERPRETERS WITH STRUCTURAL APPROACH IN THE TENTH CENTURY

1. *Shaikh Mubarak (911-1002 AD):* He was one of the pioneers of interpretation of the Qurān with *structural approach* in tenth century in the Subcontinent. Shaikh Mubarak is the father of two renowned scholars, Allama Abul Fazal and Abul Faiz Faizi, who were in Akbar Shah's court. His Qurān interpretation was written in the last years of his life when he lost his eyesight. His teachings about the Qurān inter-pretations were written by his students in three volumes which became known as *Manbaul Ma'ani Wa Matla-al Shams-al Masani* (Naqvi 2014, 64-65). The most important characteristics of this interpretation is us-ing of structural interpretation method which is a special style in Tafsir. The interpreter illustrates the meaning of the verses by showing their

relation to each other. In that method, commentator pays attention to Qurān order and sequence of its verses. His effort is important to express consistency of verses and semantic relevance in the chapters and their verses.

2. *Sheikh Hasan Gujarati* (923-982 AH) is the author of the interpretation named Muhammadi. He grew up and was trained in a scholastic family. Under the supervision of his wise and mystic father and uncle, he reached the high level of mysticism when he was 19 years old (see Naqvi ,2014:59-61 Gholam Sarvar 1873: 1,436 Hafiz , 1876,380, Rahman Ali 1894 ,14).

Of important features in his interpretation is to pay attention to the sequence of the verses in the chapters and relations of each chapter with the previous and the next one. Shaikh Muhammad in the introduction of that interpretation has said that one of his aims is to pay attention to the sequence of the verses and the chapters of the Quran and relations among verses (Naqvi 2014, 60).

In the interpretation, he tries to help a justice who had been moved during the fight against the division of the classes in India in commentator viewpoints. The commentator expression about retaliation verses is based on negation of class conflicts in implementing divine sentence, promotion of equal Islamic education, and instruction towards all social classes under monotheistic attitude.

The other feature of this interpretation is to enjoy original comments without relying on legitimacy or a rational specific criterion. For example, the design basis for the division of property (spoils of war) in the *Khums* form was based on division of each army into five parts of *Maysara*, *Maymana, Qalb, Muqaddimah, and Aqabah* which does not transport any rational basis (Naqvi 2014, 61).

Shaikh Ahmad Yaghoob Sarfi (928- 1006 AH): According to the history accords, he was one of the scholars of the Quran, in addition to his role in the scientific literature in the Subcontinent. He also influenced the political history of that area, especially Kashmir (Afaqi 1388, 48). His influence was so great that the son of Kashmir's Prime Minister (Mohammad Mir, son of Joseph Mir) followed him and became his caliph. Mojadded Alf thani (Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi) has been Sarfi's disciple. Sarfi is the first poet among the poets of Kashmir

who wrote five Mathnavis versus Khamsa Nizami (Neyazmand 1365, 33 No 50) as Muhammad Abid Husain says he has composed many chansons and other writings that the most notable one is *Lavaueh dar nasr*. His interpretation book is called *Maqatil-al Talibin* which is the recent interpretation of the holy Qurān (Gande parsi 2009, No 47). According to Naqvi's claims, this Persian interpretation is almost preserved perfectly and its manuscript is held at the library of Lahore Punjab University)Naqvi 2014, 67).

Shaikh Abul Faiz Faizi (1004–956 AD) The son of Shaikh Mubarak and the writer of the interpretation in dotless words (Sawate-al Ilham). His brother, Abul Fazal, had scientific reputation and was courtier in Akbar Goorkani's period. Despite being with intelligentsia of his era, Faizi has followed traditional beliefs in his interpretation. Badayuni, his contemporary historian writes, 'The dotless interpretation is for cleaning stain that is not cleaned easily by doomsday. He was drunk when he had written it and dogs had violated it too' (Badayuni 1310:2, 300). On the contrary, Shooshtary and Shaikh Yaghob Sarfi have written comments on Faizi's book. According to Allama Shibli Nomani, a wise scholar of contemporary era, although this interpretation has been written after the famous story of the announcement of new religion by Akbar (surely Faizi was involved in its formation), but nothing is expressed that contradicts the Islamic beliefs, juristic speech, and ideological positions (Nomani 1920, 52). Naqvi does not accept the charge of writing of this interpretation in a drunk state, because someone like Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind has had relationship with him during the writing time of the interpretation (Naqvi 2014, 73).

Shaikh Abul Faiz: This character is known for his writing approach of historical books of Timurian era of India, especially during the rule of Akbar. His *Akbarnamah* is the first and the best historical source of Timurian era in the Subcontinent. Historical evidence suggests that Abul Faiz valued Qurānic studies (Badayoni 1310: 2, 163). You can justify the writing of the interpretation to Ayat-al Kursi and its gift to Akbar Shah as a motivation for having access to the court of king. But as the owner of Moaser Alomara cites, it is also showing his interest and higher endeavor to Qurānic studies. One day, Saleem, the Prince went to Allama Abul Fazal home and finds that forty people were writing

the Qurān and its interpretation (Qawafi 1888: 3, 610). He has had interpretation to Ayat-al Kursi, and also another interpretation to the chapter Fatah.

Features of Glossography, Second Stage Interpretations in the Subcontinent: At that stage, interpretation books became independent from traditional resources and the interpretation books of mystical and intellectual methods came into light (seventh to tenth century). One of the rationalistic aspects at that stage was found by advent of interpretations with structural method (ninth and tenth century). Of course, from that period either imported sources of theological philosophical interpretation of the Qurān in the teaching areas took the form of educational resources or the Qurānic research in India took the form of independent interpretation writing and more acceleration took place in the Subcontinent. These interpretations were found with philosophical and theological trends in the first half of the seventh century and with mystical trend in the second half of the same.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that the Qurān interpretation of the tenth century in the history of the Medieval Indian Subcontinent has had quantitative development and qualitative changes. To achieve this result, we have based our analysis on historical review of the Qurān interpretation in the middle centuries of the Subcontinent in which the historical perspective in these writings has been done by dividing the Qurānic studies process at the Subcontinent into two major stages of genesis and development. This division suggests that in the genesis stage (from beginning of the presence of Islam in the Subcontinent to the end of the sixth century), Qurān interpretations are presented in the form of traditional texts, narrative books, and sometimes mystical texts in the development stage, that is isolated to two classic and modern stages in the writings. The Subcontinent Glossography became visible in the form of independent books from narrative texts at first (7th century) by derivation of commentators such as *Zamakhshari and Fakhruddin Razi* and by modeling the *Baizavi* interpretation. During the eight to tenth centuries, it continues its development in mystical and rational interpretations in whose formation and compilation of structural

interpretation falls one of the dimensions of rational interpretations. The analytical aspect of the research examines the method of structural interpretation from commentators like Shaikh Mubarak in the tenth century which discussed the important features of interpretation which is commentator attention to 'Qurānic order' and his effort to express sequence of verses and semantic relevance in the chapters and their verses. The article has also shown other aspects of the changes in the historical process of interpretation in the Subcontinent. Historical and social conditions of tenth century in the land led to another feature of the Muslim interpretation in the form of quantitative and annotations to ancient interpretations.

NOTES

1. Written by Shahidi Salehi, Abdol –hosayn, Iran
2. Written by Naghavi,Sayyed Ali Mohammad, Iran
3. 1-The formulation (interpretation in the form of hadith books) 2-establishment (interpretation with independence from narrative and hadith books) 3-renewal (the 14th century that begins by 'Abdeh' Quranic studies)

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ZAHOOR AHMAD WANI

Analysis of Justice through *Maqāṣid* Theory

ABSTRACT

The notion of Justice (*al-ʿAdl*) is one of the basic objectives (*maqāsid*) of Islam and an inherent right of all human beings under the *Sharīʿah* to establish a just society. It exists in Islamic resources from all perspectives. In *Shia* theology of Islam, it has been given a separate place under the basic tenets and principles of Islam (*uṣūl al-dīn*).

There are various *Qurānic* verses and *aḥādīth* explaining this very essential principle of Islam and it has been asserted that one of the basic purposes of the Divine revelation is to achieve Justice and welfare of mankind and other creatures.

It is also certain that essence of *Sharīʿah*-which includes justice and welfare of earthly beings-cannot be achieved without a sincere attempt to follow the *Sharīʿah* in accordance with the Divine will and wisdom. This is the reason why *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* (objectives of *Sharīʿah*) and the notion of justice have been elaborated side by side by innumerable scholars since just after the time of the Prophet. *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* aims to promote the *Sharīʿah* in accordance with the will of Allah and develops a strong sense of justice among all human beings.

In the proposed paper an attempt has been made to study the notion of justice in the light of the Holy Quran and the Prophetic traditions and to illustrate its relationship with the *Maqāṣid* theory. It will also focus on the analysis of the contemporary literalist groups who insist on reference to the Texts but oppose interpretations based on the objectives (*maqṣid)*. In this analysis, the paper will highlight how the approaches of the contemporary literalist lack the very spirit and essence of *Sharīʿah* in their elicitations and references and will emphasize on the need to interpret *Sharīʿah* in the light of *Maqāsid* in order to establish an intrinsic sense of justice and equality in the society.

Focusing on textual and material resources, this study will apply the exploratory and descriptive design using the content analysis method.

INTRODUCTION

Islam has been sent down as an ideal way to fulfil the purpose of human life on earth which according to Islam, is to submit oneself to the will of Allah and promote peace, fraternity, freedom and equality for all fellow beings and other creatures through compassionating justice.

It has been narrated that a companion of the Prophet (pbuh) asked him if he could summarize Islam in a few words for him. The Prophet, in response, recited the verse of the Quran, 90 of the Chapter, al-Naḥl: '*Allah commands justice, beneficence and giving (of your wealth) to kith and kin, and He forbids indecency, evil and lawlessness.*'[1]

The notion of justice in Islam has been described as the basic objective and the fundamental principle of Islam when the Holy Quran states as follows: 'And the Word of your Lord is fulfilled in truth and in justice.'[2]

There are various *Qurānic* verses and *aḥādīth* explaining this very essential principle of Islam and it has been asserted that one of the basic purposes of the Divine revelation is to achieve Justice and welfare of mankind and other creatures.

The scholars of Islam, particularly those who dealt with *Maqasid al-Shariah* (objectives of *Sharīʿah*) have extensively defined and elaborated the notion of justice. They gave justice such importance that they have conferred it a separate category, known as *ʿIlm al ʿAdl*. This paper explains the concept of justice in the light of *Maqāsid al-Sharīʿah*. It will present some of the *Qurānic* verses in detail to shed light on how Islam perceives justice in a holistic and dynamic way, taking into consideration reality and ever-changing circumstances. It will also emphasise the need to interpret the *Sharīʿah* in the light of *Maqāsid* in order to establish an intrinsic sense of justice and equality in the society.

THE NOTION OF JUSTICE

Justice means fairness in a way people are dealt with or to treat people or things in a way that is fair[3]. According to the Oxford dictionary, it refers to the quality of being fair and reasonable or conformity to truth, fact or sound reason.[4]

Justice, both from Western and Islamic perspectives, is a social concept as well as a moral virtue and an attribute of human personality within or outside the social context.

In Arabic language, specifically in Quran and *ḥadīth,* there are two terms which have been extensively used for the notion of justice and these are *al-ʿadl* and *al-qisṭ* and they jointly formulate the concept of justice.

Al-ʿAdl, is lexically an abstract noun which refers to establish balance or to give others their right indiscriminately.

Al-Manawi defines *al-ʿadl* as something in the middle compared to *al-ifrāṭ* (excess) and *al-tafrīṭ* (negligence) which means to deal with things in a just manner whether the matter is linked to the intellect such as the implementation of laws or related to the sense such as the different means of measurement. He has further quoted a narration '*bil ʿadl qāmat al-samāwāt wa al-ardh*' which he explains that if any of four elements of universe had been imbalanced; out of proportion or contrary to divine wisdom, the world wouldn't be in such a just and systematized order.[5]

Al-Qisṭ: The word *al-qisṭ,* means to give someone his complete and absolute right or to protect one from oppression, is the Arabic derivative of the Roman word '*qisṭās*' which means balance and pair of scales. Since the scale is considered as the sign of justice, the word *al-qisṭ* has also been used to describe the meaning of justice and fairness. Al-Mutrizi defines it as to do justice and put something in order.[6]

Some scholars have used these two words interchangeably while the others have written that the term *al-qisṭ* only relates to legal justice while *al-ʿadl* is wider in its application and includes both legal and non-legal justice. The sources of non-legal justice may include social behaviour and conduct, customs, values, way of living, professional ethics, business practices etc.

CONCEPT OF JUSTICE IN SACRED SOURCES

There are dozens of *Qurānic* verses and *aḥadīth which* elaborate the notion of justice in Islam and its different aspects and applications.

While emphasising on the essentiality of justice in daily affairs of human beings, the Holy Quran directs believers to maintain justice and fairness in all walks of life. The holy Quran reads, '*Say, My Lord*

advocates justice…'[7] and at another place it goes as *'Allah commands justice and fair dealing.*'[8]

Ibn Ashur believes that the order of maintaining justice in the verse is general and covers all matters of life and all words and acts of human beings.[9] The same view has also been held by Ibn Kathir.[10]

While maintaining justice in natural and social orders, the Quran points out, *'And the Firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the Balance (of Justice), in order that ye may not transgress (due) balance.*'[11] This has been further explained to lay the foundation of a healthy and just social order where the Quran says: *'O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even if it be against yourselves, your parents, and your relatives, or whether it is against the rich or the poor...*'[12] and *'O you who believe! Be steadfast for the cause of Allah and just in bearing witness. Let not a group's hostility to you cause you to deviate from justice. Be just, for it is closer to piety. Have fear of Allah; Allah is well aware of what you do.*'[13], Ibn Kathir writes that every individual of this *Ummah* is being addressed here to maintain justice in all times and in every situation.[14]

Syed Quṭb expressed the same view in the verses, 151-153 of *al-An'ām* and writes that maintaining equality and justice by means of measurement is metaphorical to maintaining justice in all worldly affairs. There are some other commandments in these verses of 151 and 152 indicating different aspects of spiritual and material life where Allah Almighty directs people to observe justice to the best of their ability and in the very next verse of 153 Allah calls it His Straight Path (*siraṭ al-mustaqīm*) which is the only path to be followed and rest other ways are to be left.[15]

Dr Asghar Ali Engineer observes that the concept of justice requires that there should not be excess even in spiritual life as for as an average person is concerned.[16]

Prof. Kamali explaining the verse, *'Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts (amānāt) to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing',*[17] writes that the reference to *amānāt* immediately followed by a reference to justice implies that it is one of the most important of all *amānāt* (trusts).[18]

From the above accounts, it is illustrated that justice is a collective

responsibility of all members of a society, community and a nation and as a matter of fact it is the responsibility of all humanity. As for Muslims, since they are the first audiences of the Quran, it is obligatory upon them to maintain justice in all circumstances at all times and never be deviated from it.

The concept of justice in Islam is not limited to this world only, Quran declares justice as the basic criteria for Hereafter as well.

The Holy Quran says, *'We shall maintain proper justice on the Day of Judgment. No soul will be wronged the least. For a deed even as small as a mustard seed one will duly be recompensed. We are efficient in maintaining the account*[19]'. Al-Qasmi explains that on the Day of Judgment everyone will be requited just and fair and not a single deed will be increased or decreased from one's book of deeds.[20]

Ibn Kathir has narrated a *ḥadīth,* 'The rights will be rendered back to those to whom they are due, and even the sheep that does not have horns will take revenge from the horned sheep.'[21]

Ḥaḍrat Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates that a companion of the Prophet (pbuh) came to him and said, 'His slaves are disobedient to him. They prevaricate and deceive him so he scolds and beats them. How would be his matter with them?' The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied that on the Doomsday both parties will be treated equally. So if your scolding and beating them are found equal to their deceit and disobedience, there will be no harm to any party then and if the punishment is found less than the disobedience and deceit, you will be compensated for the rest from their deeds but if it is found that your punishing them is more than their deceit and disobedience, they will be compensated from your deeds then. Hearing this, the companion of the Prophet (pbuh) became sad and started crying. The Prophet asked him, 'Haven't you heard the verse *'We shall maintain proper justice on the Day of Judgement'?* The companion uttered: O Prophet of Allah! There is nothing better than to keep myself away from them. Be witness that I set them free.[22]

These evidences from the Quran and *Hadīth* clarify that Islam prescribes for humankind the highest and the most comprehensive concept of justice and defines it with all its requirements and conditions, applied to establish a just and prosperous society.

The Prophet made untiring efforts to establish a just society where

there would be no excess, exploitation and oppression. He led a great revolution based on the concept of justice in all fields of life which W.C. Smith has termed the greatest and the most systematic revolution before the communism in the world.[23]

Scholars of Islamic *Sharīʿah* have put great emphasis on the notion of justice and stressed it to the extent that Al-Sarakhasi declares Justice as the noblest act next to belief in oneness of Allah and Prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh) in Islam. He writes that it is the greatest of all duties entrusted to the prophets and the strongest justification for man's vicegerency on earth.[24]

Abu Zahra believes that the Islamic concept of justice is absolute, comprehensive, impartial and universal. He describes a *ḥadīth* in which a companion asked the Prophet if he could summarize Islam in a few words for him. The Prophet recited the following verse for him in response.

'God commands justice, beneficence and giving to kith and kin and He forbids indecency, evil and lawlessness.'[25]

JUSTICE AND MAQĀṢID AL-SHARĪʿAH

Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah (Objectives of *Sharīʿah*) is conceptually very close to the concept of justice as much as it finds its very true essence in justice. *Maqasid al-Shariah* consists of two words; *Maqāṣid* (objectives) and *al-Sharīʿah* (Islamic Law) and it has been defined as the purposes or goals of *Sharīʿah* (Islamic Law) intended by the Lawgiver for the enhancement and realization of justice and human welfare as a whole.

Ibn Ashur defines it as underlying meanings of *shariʿah* injunctions intended by Allah in all or most of the cases.[26]

Jassir Auda writes that *Maqāṣid* are the group of divine intents and moral concepts upon which the Islamic law is based, such as, justice, human dignity, free will, magnanimity, facilitation, and social cooperation.[27]

It is believed that most of the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* have certain objectives and reasons. These objectives are rational and easy to be identified except in some injunctions related to rituals *(ʿIbadah)* which are sometimes only known to the Creator.

The Primary objective of the *Sharīʿah* is to set the just order in this

world so that the mankind as the vicegerent of Almighty Allah can freely assign his bestowed duties concerning their affairs both in this world and the Hereafter. It is generally held that the *Shari'ah* as a whole intends to maintain justice or secure common good for the people and protect them against evil. The Qur'an explains it in the following verse:

'We sent Our Messengers with clear evidences, and sent with them the Book and the Balance so that people would maintain justice.' [28]

Al-Shatibi asserts that primary goal of the *Sharī'ah* is to establish the rule of justice among people and prevent the tyranny. This is the basic objective of the Lawgiver and it can be seen in all of the detailed injunctions of the *Sharī'ah*. [29]

Al-Qarafi states that an objective *(Maqsad)* is only valid if it leads to justice or the avoidance of corruption. [30]

Mohammad al-Ghazali even has included justice and freedom in *Maqāsid* at the necessities level. [31]

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah states that justice is the supreme goal of *Sharīʿah*. Allah sent messengers and scriptures to establish justice among people. Any ruling that replaces justice with injustice, mercy with its opposite, common good with evil, or wisdom with triviality does not belong to the *Sharīʿah* even if it is claimed to be so according to some interpretation. [32]

The five basic values (*dharūriyyāt al-khamsah*) of al-Maqasid theory, which are agreed unanimously to be protected at any cost, are the ultimate objectives of Sharīʿah despite that there is no specific reference to these values in the primary sources of Islam. But overall contents of the Sharīʿah and Islam's firm stand on justice compel scholars to treat these values as basic rights of all human beings.

When we look into categories of *Maqāsid*, identified by scholars, we feel the essence of justice there also. For example, the very first category, necessities (*ḍarūriyyāt*) includes the first value-*hifz al-dīn* (protection of religion) and it is obligatory upon Muslims to adhere to their *dīn* all their life both at individual and collective level. At first level, it is preserved through *ibādāt* and rituals such as prayer, *zakāh*, *ṣaum* etc. The intention and purpose of executing all these rituals is believed to strengthen the *Imān,* God-consciousness and fear in person and thus will protect them from committing sins and unjust deeds.

The protection of *dīn* at second level is meant to defend the faith. One

of its various means is jihad which is to wage war against the enemies of Islam if it is demanded. At that level also one can find presence of justice as Allah commands Muslims to defend their faith but not cross the limits of justice:

'Fight for the cause of God, those who fight you, but do not transgress, for God does not love the transgressors.'[33]

At other place the Quran guides believers:

'Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just.'[34]

Another example may be taken from the very next value, *ḥifz al-nafs* (protection of life) of the first category and some scholars have given this value precedence over the protection of religion. Protection of life has been classified as the very basic value and the birth right of every individual by all faiths and religions. Islam also recognises it and protects it under all circumstances without any discrimination between the life of the rich and poor, between the leader and the subordinates, Muslims and non-Muslims. Life is equally important to each and it is obligatory to every individual and society to protect it. The Quran emphasises it saying:

Do not kill any person - for Allah has made life sacred- except in the course of justice. If one is killed unjustly, then we give his heir authority to enforce justice. Thus, he shall not exceed the limits in avenging the murder; he will be helped.'[35]

These examples clearly show that the notion of justice has a significant role in the discourses of *Maqāṣid* theory and almost all scholars of *Maqāṣid* have developed their understanding of *Maqāṣid* laying particular stress on notion of justice.

Al-Raysuni believes that the theory of *Maqāṣid* suggests that maintaining justice and the objectives of the law are interlinked, and that any interpretation of Islamic laws and the principles inconsistent with the notion of justice is invalid, and that one's understanding of the concerned texts and the conclusions drawn from them must be found on the principle that the objectives of such texts are to achieve justice and benefit.[36]

CONCLUSION

To sum up the discussion, it can be safely said that the *Sharīʿah* was revealed to guide the human being and make him the real vicegerent of his Creator. In other words, *Sharīʿah* is here to create a just society free from corruption and social destruction and this primary objective of *Sharīʿah* could be achieved only when we strive to study the *Sharīʿah* in a way to grasp the possible intention of the Lawgiver (*Shāriʿ*) behind His commands and prohibitions. The analysis of justice through *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* is one of such approaches that could lead to gain this goal. This approach provides adequate ethical and juristic guidance to promote the order of justice in the society at ground level. This method is also significant in the way that it will immensely help to redefine and reconstruct the notion of justice and its application. It implies that the deduction of rulings must not follow the mere literalistic approach; rather, it should seek the objectives of the Lawgiver behind the injunctions in order to promote the true sense of justice and welfare among people and prevent harm and tyranny as a whole.

The study suggests that *Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah* needs to develop in a more scientific and systematic way, widen its scope, universalise the objectives and reconstruct it in a way that it would include all contemporary fatal issues which challenge the *Sharīʿah* and haunt humanity on the whole.

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11. Al-Qur'an, 55 [al-Raḥmān]:7-8.

12. Al-Qur'an, 4 [al-Nisā]:135.

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23. Engineer, 259.

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ZAHOOR AHMAD BHAT

Da'wah in Islam: A Study of its Conceptual and Practical Dimensions

ABSTRACT

Da'wah is one of the main themes in Islam. It is derived from the verbal noun *da'a*, literally means to call, appeal and request people either towards the truth or falsehood. In the Quran, however, it is used for different meaning which signifies an 'act of invitation' etc. Its lexical meaning includes the concept of summoning, propagation activity, legal proceeding and claims. In Islamic or technical sense Da'wah means efforts to call people towards the belief of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh) by obeying and implementing the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. Whenever the term Da'wah is attributed to Islam, it means an effort to spread and convey the message of Islam to people. The paper attempts to study the meaning of Da'wah and its conceptual and practical dimensions in Islam. The primary sources of this paper are the Qur'anic verses and Ahadith dealing with the concept of Da'wah. Muslim scholarly discourses, books and papers will be the secondary sources to present the conceptual framework and touch the practical dimensions of Da'wah. The main aim of the paper is to explore and analyse several concepts vis a vis Da'wah and to derive the contours for its practical applicability, in order to provide a framework for Du'at (plural form *Da'ī* meaning the one who invites). The paper will also highlight the significance of Da'wah and its internal and external dimensions vis a vis the responsibility of Ummah to carry out the prophetic mission. The paper will follow the descriptive and comparative methodological approaches to explore its objectives.

Keywords: *Da'wah, Conceptual, Practical, Dimension, Da'ī, Ummah* (The community that invites to the good).

INTRODUCTION

The word Da'wah is a verbal noun, derived from the verb *da'a*. Its infinitive noun (*masdr*) is *du'a* and *da'wa*.[1] Literally Da'wah means to call, appeal and request people either towards the truth or falsehood. It can also be rendered as an appeal for an aid or a call for help (*Istigathah*), an appeal to God or Prayer and an invitation to meal.[2] The word Da'wah and its verb form *da'a*, is used with different meanings in the Quran as well as in the ordinary speech. It signifies an 'act of invitation'. Its lexical meaning includes the concept of summoning, missionary activity, legal proceeding and claims.[3]

Technically Da'wah means efforts to call people to believe in Allah and His Messenger (pbuh) by obeying and implementing the teachings of the Quran and Sunnah. Da'wah covers all the aspects of human life personally and collectively. Whenever the term Da'wah is attributed to Islam, it means an effort to spread and convey the message of Islam to people.[4] Da'wah is a religious outreach to exhort people to embrace Islam.[5]

Da'wah is the invitation addressed to men by Allah through His Messengers to believe in the religion of Islam. The religion of all Messengers is Islam, and each Messenger has his Da'wah to perform. Those to whom Da'wah has not yet penetrated, have to be invited to embrace Islam before any fighting takes place.[6] In fact all the prophets have been sent to invite and guide mankind towards their Lord .The Quran illustrates this as: 'And Allah sent Messengers with glad tidings and warnings; and with them He sent the Book in Truth to Judge between People in matters wherein they differ.' [7]

Da'wah- ila-Allah is the second name of calling people towards the chosen and perfect religion of God. It is a follow up to the divine guidance and its implementation. It signifies and implies that worship is for none besides Allah (alone) and it is the categorical rejection of all those false gods who are worshipped in one or other form. Da'wah implies exerting oneself to the utmost to disseminate the word of Allah and to make it supreme, and to remove all the impediments in the way of its observance. Da'wah is the sacred duty of every Muslim who is under a religious obligation to 'Call' the people to the true path of Islam and thereby enable them to share and benefit from the supreme vision of Truth.[8]

While going through the Quran and Hadith, we find that the term Da'wah has been exclusively used for 'inviting' towards Islam. Even from the *Tawatur* (continuity) of the *Ummah*, it reflects that Da'wah is an effort to call people towards the fold of Islam. The exclusiveness of the term Da'wah for invitation towards Islam, can be realised in most of Qur'anic verses and Ahadith, some of which are: 'Invite to the way of the Lord' (Al-Quran,16:125), 'Invite them towards your Lord' (Al-Quran, 22: 67), '…I invited my nation day and night' (Al-Quran,23: 73), 'And every time I have called to them' (Al-Quran, 71:06), '….Calling you towards salvation….' (Al-Quran, 71: 08), 'I call you towards the Lord' (Al-Quran, 40:41), '.Inviting to all that is good...' Q. (Al-Quran, 40:42), '.One who invites to Allah's grace...' (Al-Quran, 14:10), '.One who calls men towards Allah…' (Al-Quran, 41: 33), '….and the Messenger invites you to believe in your Lord…' (Al-Quran, 31: 32). All the above mentioned Qur'anic verses use the term 'Da'wah' for the 'Invitation' or 'Call' towards Islam and some of the Ahadith mentioned here connote the same meaning: 'Invite them to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah Almighty and that Muhammad is His Apostle…..'[9], 'First of all invite them to worship Allah (alone)'[10], '…Invite the people to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah'[11],'…..then Invite them towards Islam.' [12]'…..and also Invite our people we left behind…'[13],'…..wrote to Caesar and invited him to Islam….'[14],'….He invited them towards Allah…'[15],'…..He who Calls people to righteousness…'[16] These Qur'anic verses and Ahadith use the term Da'wah for 'Inviting' towards the Lord, towards the faith, towards the *Shahādah*, towards Islam, 'Calling' towards righteous path, towards Almighty Allah, towards salvation. Thus Da'wah encompasses all the efforts meant to direct a man towards the Lord, in establishing the Faith, in convincing a man about the Truth of Islam. This also includes the efforts in bringing the mankind to salvation and perform the activities for enjoining the good and forbidding evil and all this characterizes the ample scope of Da'wah.

CONCEPTUAL DIMENSIONS

In the foregoing, we have shown that in the Quran, the word Da'wah has been used to indicate the process of calling or inviting mankind

towards the *Truth* or to the right path – Islam. The Quran mentions; 'Invite (all) to the way of your Lord' (Al-Quran.16:125). There are several other terms in the Quran which are synonymously used for Da'wah and together they represent the conceptual framework of Da'wah.

The mission of the Prophet (pbuh) in Qurānic terms which are synonymously used for Da'wah are *Indhar* (warning); *Tabshir* (bringing glad tidings); *Da'wah* (inviting or calling); *Tabligh* (communicating); *Dhikr* (reminding); *Ta'lim* (teaching and instructing); *Tilawat* (conveying and propagating); *al amr bi-al-ma'ruf wa-al-nahy 'an al-munkar* (enjoining and promoting what is good and right and forbidding and eradicating what is wrong and bad); *Qist* (establishing justice) and *Shahādah* (witnessing). All these expressions pertain to the same mission, though from different perspectives and with different emphasis.[17] This assertion is furthered by Jamil Hashim, who has counted many Qurānic terms which are synonymously used for Da'wah. Those terms are *al-amr bi-al ma'ruf wa-al-nahy-'an-al-munkar* (enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong); *al-indhar wa-al-tabshir* (warning of bad news and announcement of good news); *al-Shahādah ala-al-nās* (witness to mankind); *al-Islah* (reformation); *al-nasihah* (good counsel); *al-tadhkir* (reminding); *al-tabligh* (conveyance); *Iqamat-al-din* (establishment of religion); *i'lā-e-kalma-tu-Allah* (exaltation of the word of God); *al-tawasi bi-al haq* (exhortation of one another with Truth); *al-ta'awun* (cooperation in goodness).[18]

From the above opinions it can be understood that there are number of terms in the Quran and Ahadith which are synonymously used for Da'wah. These terms broaden the scope and interpretation of Da'wah and in a way explain its purpose. Furthermore, the conceptual dimensions of Da'wah in the light of above mentioned Qurānic terms can be summarized as under:

1. *Shahādah ala-al-nās* (witness to mankind)

The term *Shahādah* here denotes witnessing or testifying the ultimate Truth – Islam, before the people who either do not know it or have not accepted it.[19]The Quran mentions: '… and thus I (Allah) have made you a just community that you will be witness over the people and the Messenger is a witness over you.'(Al-Quran. 2:143) and 'so that the Messenger may be a witness for you (Muslims) and you be witness

for mankind.' (Al-Quran. 22:78). Thus we can conclude that witnessing before mankind is used for Da'wah in the Quran. This is because through Da'wah Muslim missionaries (*Da'ies*) would preach Islam to all the people. All the prophets have been 'witness' (*Shāhid*) to their people so that on the Day of Judgement, their nation should not be able to claim their ignorance about Islam.[20]

2. *Al-amr bi-al ma'ruf wa-al nahy 'an al-munkar* (Enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong)

The words enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong connotes the meaning of Da'wah itself. This is the crux of Da'wah work. It is an effort to encourage Muslims to obey the Islamic teachings without any deviation or crookedness. The Quran has expressed the Da'wah by the phrase 'enjoining the *ma'ruf* and forbidding the *munkar*.' The Quran specifies it as a prophetic mission, purpose of raising Ummah, duty of *Khalifa* (ruler of Muslims) and quality of the believers.[21]Some of the Quranic verses regarding this aspect are: 'Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel, who enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong…' (Al-Quran. 7:157), '[and they are] those who, if we give them authority in the land, establish prayer and give Zakāh and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. (Al-Quran. 22: 41), 'You are the best of people ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin the right (*ma'ruf*) and forbid the wrong (*munkar*), and believe in Allah.' (Al-Quran. 3:110), 'And let there arise from amongst you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining the right (*ma'ruf*) and forbidding the wrong (*munkar*). And it is they who are successful.' (Al-Quran.3:104).

3. *Tabligh* (conveying the Message)

The Arabic term Tabligh is derived from the root word *balagha* means propagation, proclamation, conveying and making a certain thing known. Technically it means communicating the Message of Islam. In the modern context, *tabligh* and Da'wah are interchangeable, its verbal form has been used in conjunction with prophetic mission (*Risālah*) which means to communicate a message or revelation or to fulfil the mission.[22]The Quran has expressed Da'wah with the term *balagha* (*tabligh*)

without which the prophetic mission would not be complete and. The Quran mentions: '…so is there upon the Messengers except (the duty of) clear conveyance.'(Al-Quran. 16:35), '…and there is not upon the Messenger except the (responsibility for) clear conveyance.'(Al-Quran. 24:54), '…and there is not upon the Messenger except (duty of) clear notification.' (Al-Quran. 29:18), '…upon you is only the (duty of) proclamation, and upon Me is the account.' (Q. 13:40), '…but if they turn away-then upon you is only the (duty of) conveyance. And Allah is seeing of His servants.'(Al-Quran: 3: 20), and 'O Messenger! Convey (the Message) which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you did not, then you have not conveyed the Message. And Allah will protect you from the people.' (Al-Quran: 5: 67)

4. *Islah* (Reformation)

The word *Islah* implies the meaning of 'reconciliation', 'reformation', 'correction' and 'rehabilitation'. The word Da'wah covers *Islah* as it is included in the purpose of Da'wah. Reformation carried out by Da'wah movements embraces the reformation of the people and society.[23] Variants of the word *Islah* appear in the Quran to connote the meaning of 'reformation', striving for pious actions', 'rehabilitation', 'reconciliation' which are synonyms for the term Da'wah. The Quran mentions: 'I only intend *Islah* (reformation) as much as I am able, and my success is not but through Allah.' (Al-Quran. 11:88), 'And Moses said to his brother Aaron, take my place among my people, do *Islah* (reconciliation) and do not follow the way of the corruptors.' (Al-Quran. 7:142), '…. Make *Islah* among people. And Allah is hearing and knowing.' (Al-Quran. 2:224), 'Save those who repent and amend, hold fast to Allah and are sincere in their obedience to Allah -- these are with the believers. And Allah will soon grant the believers a mighty reward.'(Q Al-Quran. 4:146), '……anyone who does wrong out of ignorance, and then repents after that and makes reformation of himself.' (Al-Quran. 6:54), 'except for those who repent and reform themselves and make evident (what they concealed).' (Al-Quran. 2:160).

5. *Al -Indhar wa -al Tabshir* (Warning of bad and announcement of good)

The prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is addressed by Allah as *mubashshir*

(bearer of glad tidings) and *mundhir* (Warner). These terms are also used in the Quran to indicate the prophetic duty and are related synonymously with the term Da'wah. Allah has sent all the Prophets with good news and warnings for the reason that the mankind should not have any excuse against Allah. The Quran mentions: 'We have truly sent you as a witness, as a bringer of glad tidings and as a Warner.' (Al-Quran. 48:08), 'O Prophet, indeed We have sent you as witness and a bringer of glad tidings and a Warner.' (Al-Quran. 33:45), 'He sends down the angels, with the inspiration of His command, upon whom He wills of His servants, (telling them), 'warn that there is no deity except Me' so fear Me.' (Al-Quran. 16:02), 'O people of the scripture, there has come to you our Messenger to make clear to you (the religion) after a period (of suspension) of Messengers, lest you say, 'there came not to us any bringer of good tidings or a Warner.' But there has come to you a bringer of good tidings and a Warner.' (Al-Quran. 5:19), 'And We have not sent you, (O Muhammad) except as a bringer of good tidings and Warner.' (Al-Quran. 25:56), 'And We have not sent you except comprehensively to mankind as a bringer of glad tidings and a Warner. But most of the people do not know.' (Al-Quran. 34:28) and 'Indeed, We have sent you with the Truth as a bringer of glad tidings and a Warner. And there was no nation but that there had passed within it a Warner.'(Al-Quran. 35:24)

6. *Hujjah* (conclusive/decisive argument)

Hujjah means concluding argument, conveying the complete Message leaving no room for any excuse, and no scope for further argument.[24] It is a Qur'anic term which indicates both 'proof' and presentation of the proof. This is applied to a convincing argument attempting to prove what is false and what is true.[25] The term *Hujjah* is also interrelated with the term Da'wah and many times it is interchangeably used for Da'wah in the Quran. For instances: '…so that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the Messengers.' (Al-Quran: 4: 165), '…..And wherever you [believers] may, turn your faces towards it in order that people will not have any argument against you.' (Al-Quran. 2:150), 'And that was our (conclusive) argument which We gave Abraham against his people.' (Al-Quran: 6: 83)

7. *Nasiha* (Advise or Good counsel)

The term *Nasiha* also comes under the scope of Da'wah because the Quran describes many prophets as *Nasiheen* (advisers) and they call the people towards the Lord and introduce themselves as sincere advisors. The Quran mentions; 'I convey to you the messages of my Lord and advice you; and I know from Allah what you do not know.' (Al-Quran. 7:62), 'I convey to you the messages of my Lord, and I am to you a trustworthy adviser.' (Al-Quran. 7:68).

8. *Al-Tawāsi bi-al Haq* (Admonition of each other)

The Quran also expresses the idea of Da'wah recommending one another to the Truth. The 'exhortation' of one another with Truth is the instruction of the Quran and the core of the Da'wah activities. The Quran illustrates: 'And then being among those who believed and exhorted one another to patience and exhorted one another to compassion.' (Al-Quran90:17). The Quran declares a 'great loss' for those who do not exhort one another with Truth and patience. For instances; 'By al-'Asr (the time) verily! Man is in loss, except those who believe and do good deeds, and admonish one another to the Truth, and admonish one another to patience.' (Al-Quran. 103:1-3)

9. *Bayān and Tabyīn* (Manifesting the Truth)

The term *Bayān* means lucidity, distinctness, the means by which clearness is achieved, *Tabyīn* means explanation; hence clarity of speech or expression and the faculty by which clarity is attained.[26]In the Quran the term *bayān* represents the manifestation of the Truth, it also includes miraculous signs brought by the prophets, which are used as a tool for Da'wah work. Sometimes Allah manifests His signs before the mankind so as to admonish them. As the Quran illustrates: '…thus Allah [does] clearly manifest His signs to the people that they may become righteous.'(Al-Quran. 2:187) '…thus Allah makes clear to you the verses (of revelation) that you might give thought.' (Al-Quran. 2:219) '…He makes clear *(ubayinu)* His verses to the people that perhaps they may remember.'(Al-Quran. 2:221), 'Say, 'Indeed, I am on clear *(bayyin)* evidence from my Lord, and you have denied it.' (Al-Quran. 6:57), 'And We revealed to you the Message that you may make a clear

(manifestation) to the people what was sent down to them and what they might give thought.'(Al-Quran. 16:44).

All the above mentioned Qur'anic terms are synonymously used for Da'wah and represent the conceptual framework of Da'wah activity. These can also be considered as the offshoots and contours of Da'wah, leading towards one goal, inviting mankind to the religion of God – Islam. For instance the Quran mentions: 'Say this is my way; I call to Allah with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follow me.'(Al-Quran: 12: 108). The Quran is the Book of *Hidāyah-wa-al Da'wah* (divine guidance, call towards righteous path) as well as the Book of *ahkam-e Shari'ah* (divine rules and regulations). However the Da'wah and guidance aspect is dominant over the other commands regarding *'sharia'h* matters'. There is no deny of the legal *shari'ah* matters but the question is of preference and priority. The foundation of faith (Imān) is 'Guidance' and to believe in it depends on Da'wah – the modus operandi for the realisation of divine guidance as well as other commandments of *Shari'ah*.[27]

PRACTICAL DIMENSIONS

Da'wah was the mission of the Messengers who were sent among their nations with the guidance and instruction to 'call' their people towards the true religion – Islam.[28] Their 'call' and 'invitation' was limited to their nations. However with the advent of last prophet Muhammad (pbuh) the 'Dīn' (religion) was perfected and completed upon him.[29] He (pbuh) was chosen as last Messenger with final Universal Message.[30] His mission was designed to 'call' and 'invite' the whole of mankind towards the Message of Islam. Thus imply that all the human beings irrespective of their colour, caste, creed, language and nation deserve to receive the message of Truth. The divine guidance contained in the universal Book – al Quran conveyed through last and final prophet must reach to the whole mankind. This makes the Da'wah work practically applicable for the times. Islamic Da'wah is the spirit of truth in the hearts of believers which cannot rest, unless it manifests itself in thought, word and deed and which cannot be satisfied till it has carried its message to every human soul.[31] This assertion is furthered

by Abdussalam, who counts, many valuable arguments regarding the practical dimensions and importance of Da'wah. He writes that Islam is Universal by its very nature. To substantiate his argument, he elaborates (i) Allah is the creator and sustainer of the whole universe and of the whole mankind, (ii) Quran is the final universal book. It has been revealed by the God of the Universe and its message is naturally universal. It addresses the whole humanity and hence it belongs to the whole of mankind (iii) Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the last Messenger of God for mankind. He was appointed to convey a message and accomplish a mission that was universal to the core. The scope of his Message or mission was in no way confined to any particular nation, community or even time and (iv) Nature of Muslim community is universal by principle comprising people of diverse cultures, languages and nations. The Ummah is supposed to remain open to admit and welcome any human being into its fold.[32]

Every sane person considers it as the moral and human responsibility to soothe the distress and suffering, relieve the pain, compensate the loss of a fellow human being in this world. All these gestures are treated as the highest level of service to the mankind, although they are done to save human beings from a temporary pain and suffering. Then pursuing for the safety of human being from the permanent pain and suffering of *Ākhirah* (the Day of Judgement) must be considered as the greatest service to mankind. One of the accepted principles of Islamic Fiqh is to address the issues on their priorities. If a person is performing *salāh* (obligatory prayer) and he realises a blind man moving towards a ditch and falling in it may cost his life, under such circumstances it becomes mandatory for the man in *Salāh* to cut short his prayer and save the blind person. Same principle applies for Da'wah. When human beings, due to ignorance are moving towards a permanent loss, the spirit of Islam demands that conveying the message of 'divine guidance' be given priority and precedence over all other aspects of *Shari'ah* and humanity be saved from getting ruined.[33] Imam Muslim reports: The Messenger (pbuh) Of Allah said, 'My example is that of a person who lit the fire and when the atmosphere was glowed, moths and insects began to fall into the fire, all he would be making efforts to take them out but they are plunging into it. He further added: that is your example and mine. I am there to hold you back from fire and save you from it, but you are

plunging into it despite my efforts.' [34] The prophet (pbuh) was very much anxious about the people's state of disbelief; it was his love for humanity that would make him restless and painful. Allah consoles the prophet by mentioning in the Quran, 'Perhaps, [O Muhammad], you would kill yourself with grief that they will not be believers.' (Al-Quran: 26:03) and 'Then perhaps you would kill yourself through grief over them [O Muhammad], if they do not believe in this Message, [and] out of sorrow.' (Al-Quran. 18:06). Da'wah is based on feelings of love and fraternity. Islam believes that entire humanity is the family of Allah and therefore, all human beings are members of the same family and are linked in a common bond of brotherhood. The love for humanity and feelings of fraternity towards their non –Muslim brethren is neither superfluous nor one sided or showy. It is deeply rooted and comprehensive, wishing their worldly success and above all their spiritual salvation.[35] The prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was sent by Allah with the sole mission of calling people towards Islam. After the Prophet left the world, it became the mission of his followers. As the Quran mentions, 'Say: this is my way, I call to Allah with sure knowledge and I and whosoever follow me.' (Al-Quran: 12, 108). The commandment from Allah to the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) for proclaiming the Message is so serious that the fulfilment of his mission depends upon the propagation of the Message. Thus testifies the Quran: 'O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. And Allah will protect you from the people. Indeed Allah does not guide the disbelieving people.' (Al-Quran: 5, 67)

After believing in Allah, a man is required in practical life to carry out a twofold task, asserts Wahiduddin Khan, one is *ita'at-e Khud*ā and other is *nusrat-e Khudā. Ita'at-e Khudā* means obedience to all the commandments given by God through His revelations to the Prophet, and refraining from all such acts as have been forbidden by God in His Book or through His Prophet. *Nusrat-e Khudā* means 'Helping God'. This is an exceptional honour which is granted only to a true believer. It is the same precept which is mentioned in the Quran as *Da'wat ila Allah* or 'calling people to God'. Since it is a task which is seen as desirable by God Himself and is performed by servant of God, it is therefore called 'helping God'.[36]

With the end of chain of Prophets (*khatm-e-nabuwwat*), the Muslim

Ummah is to witness and convey the Divine Message to the whole of mankind up to Doomsday.[37] The belief in *khatm-e-nubuwwat* (seal of Prophet-hood) connotes, the task of Prophet, is to be undertaken by his followers. The responsibility of conveying the Message - Da'wah was then shifted, after the Messenger (pbuh), and passed on to the Ummah. The Quran illustrates it as: 'Thus We have made you a middle (*wast*) nation, so that you may act as a witness for mankind, and the Messenger may be a witness for you'(Al-Quran: 2:143) and '..Allah named you Muslims before [in former scriptures] and in this [revelation] that the Messenger may be a witness over you and you may be witness over the people.'(Al-Quran. 22:78).The Ummah is considered as 'just' and the 'balanced nation'(*Ummat-e-Wasat*) for the peculiarities that it conveys the Message of Islamic monotheism to mankind and it would be witness over mankind and Muhammad(pbuh) would be a witness over it.[38]Imam Bukhari reports, the prophet (pbuh) said, 'Muslims are the witnesses of God on earth.' [39] Being the *Ummat-e wasat,* the believers of Islam are considered as an intermediary between the last prophet and later generations of people. The intermediary Ummah takes the religion of Islam, from the last of the prophets and conveys it to later generations of people, without expecting any recompense for this till the Day of Judgement. The relationship between the Ummah and other people is just one –and that is, that the former are *Shāhid* or those who bear witness to Truth, while the later are *Mashhūd* or those who are witnessed to. This can also be expressed as the relationship between *Da'ī* (one who invites) and *Mad'u* (one who is invited). [40] On the occasion of *Hajj-al-wida,* the prophet in his address, transferred the prophetic responsibility (conveyance of Message) towards his Ummah. All those who were present took pledge to carry forward the divine message, and it became the primary concern of Muslim Ummah.[41] Both Bukhari and Muslim have reported the sermon of the prophet (pbuh) from different narrators. The prophet (pbuh) while addressing people at Mina said, 'And you would be asked about me (on the Day of Resurrection), what would you say? They (the audience) said: we will bear witness that you have conveyed (the Message), discharged (the duty of Prophet-hood) and given wise (sincere) counsel. He (the narrator) said: He (the Prophet then raised his forefinger towards the sky and pointing it at the people (said): 'O Allah, be witness. O Allah, be witness'. Saying it thrice, he

then said, 'So it is incumbent upon those who are present (*Shāhid*) to convey it to those who are absent. [42] About the commandment of conveying Prophetic Message, Abdullah bin Abbass said: 'By Him in whose Hand my soul is, it is a *'Wasiyyah'* (will) of the prophet to his followers: - it is incumbent upon those who are present to convey this (Message of Islam) to those who are absent.[43]On the day of Khyber, the prophet advised Ali to convey the Islamic teachings to the Jews and reminded him of the reward of guiding a single person towards Allah. 'Invite them to Islam and inform them what is enjoined upon them, for, by Allah, if Allah gives guidance to somebody through you, it is better for you than possessing red camels.' [44]Imam Muslim reports; The Prophet said, 'He who called the people to righteousness….there would be reward for him like the rewards for those who adhered to it, without their rewards being diminished in any respect. And he who called (people) to error, he shall have to carry (the burden) of its sin, like those who committed it, without their sins being diminished in any respect.' [45]

Enjoining good (*al-amr bi-al ma'ruf*) and forbidding wrong (*wa nahi an-al munkar*) is one of the key concepts of the Quran that broadens the practical dimension of Islamic Da'wah. In the Quran, Allah declares that the group of people who invites to all that is good (Islam), enjoining all that Islam orders and forbidding all that Islam has prohibited, are the people who are the successful. [46] Enjoining good and forbidding evil is the quality of the faithful believers,[47] the righteous,[48] and the blessed ones which lead them to paradise.[49] The Ummah (nation) is the best among the nations because it is entrusted with the responsibility of enjoining good things and forbidding evil things.[50] The teaching of *amr-bi-al-ma'ruf and nahi-an-al-munkar* highlights the fact that Da'wah is not just aimed externally at non Muslims so as to enlarge the Ummah and widen Islamic religious and political domain. Rather there is an internal Da'wah that targets Muslims by teaching them the basics of Islam and strengthening their commitment to it.[51] The right (*ma'ruf*) mentioned at numerous places in the Quran imply for Islam as a whole. This is what a large chunk of classical and modern commentators of the Quran have interpreted. A key Qur'anic verse shows that scope of Da'wah includes not only to preach but also to establish the rule of Islam, an authority that will implement the *ma'ruf* and forbid from

munkar and thus change the whole of a society. As the Quran mentions: 'Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity' (Al-Quran: 3:104).

Although every Muslim individual is responsible for enjoining the *ma'ruf* (good) and forbidding the *munkar* (evil), the above verse makes it mandatory that among the Muslims there must arise a group who will shoulder the responsibility of establishing the whole of Din (religion). In case the Muslims have authority and the Islamic state exists, then it has to undertake the responsibility of its implementation by enjoining the right and forbidding the evil. While explaining the Qur'anic verse: 'And when a community among them said, 'Why do you advise [or warn] a people whom Allah is [about] to destroy or to punish with a severe punishment?' they [the advisors] said, 'To be absolved before your Lord and perhaps they may fear Him.' (Al-Quran. 7:164) Sayyid Mawdudi argues that if there is no country implementing Islamic law (Shari'ah) in which Muslims can move and practice Islamic teachings peacefully, Muslims have to perform Da'wah in their country to reform their society to be more Islamic in their life.[52] *'Amr bi al ma'ruf* and *nahi an al munkar'* is so important that if Muslims show least negligence in this respect, they will be punished and no supplication of theirs will be granted. Imam Tirmidhi reports: The Prophet said, 'By the one in Whose Hand is my soul! Either you command good and forbid evil, or Allah will soon send upon you a punishment from Him, then you will call upon Him, but He will not respond to you.'[53]The reason for the decline of *Bani Isra'il* [Children of Israel] was that they abandoned the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil.[54] The need for enjoining the *ma'ruf* and forbidding the *munkar* is necessary and permanent as long as the need remains for life, its security and well being. The Da'wah is equivalent to all of that. The prophet has explained the extent of that need and gave an example for that. Imam Bukhari reports: the Prophet said;

'The example of the person abiding by Allah's order and restrictions in comparison to those who violate them is like the example of those persons who drew lots for their seat in a boat. Some of them got seats in the upper part, and the others in the lower. When the later needed water, they had to go up to bring water (and that troubled the others), so they said, let's make a hole in our

share of the ship (and get water) saving those who are above us from troubling them. So, if the people in the upper part left the others to do what they had suggested, all the people of the ship would be destroyed, but if they prevented them, both parties would be safe.' [55]

The Hadith explains how enjoining the *ma'ruf* and forbidding the *munkar* is equivalent to the life and security of society. Any complacency in undertaking the task has no outcome except that the boat sinks with everyone in it, to the bottom of the sea and everybody would perish and drown. The *amr bi al ma'ruf* and *nahi an al munkar* connotes not only the adherence and implementation of ma'ruf at individual level but it also implies to 'call' others towards –*al ma'ruf* (Islam) and collectively strive for its establishment in the human society.[56] The prophet (pbuh) instructed his followers, 'If anyone sees an evil, he should try to stop it with his hands and if he is unable to do so then he should forbid it with his tongue and if he is not able to do so, then he should hate the evil with his heart, and this is the weakest form of *Imān* (faith)'.[57] The work of Da'wah (*amr-bil-ma'ruf and nahi-an-al-munkar*) if not done at individual and collective level, wickedness will prevail in the society, as a consequence of which; even the righteous person may also suffer. Imam Bukhari reports; the prophet (pbuh) was asked, 'O Allah's Apostle! Shall we be destroyed, though there will be righteous people among us? The Prophet (pbuh) said, 'Yes if the evil increases (if the wickedness prevails).[58] But the one who disapproves the *munkar* as per his capability will be safe and rewarded. The Quran mentions 'And when they forgot that by which they had been reminded, we saved those who had forbidden evil and seized those who wronged, with a wretched punishment, because they were defiantly disobeying.'(Al-Quran: 7:165). Abu Dawud narrates, the Prophet (pbuh) said, 'When a sin is committed on the earth, he who sees it and disapproves of it, will be taken like the one who was not present, but he who is not present and approves of it will be like him who sees.' [59] Da'wah by enjoining truth and forbidding evil is a differentiating factor between Muslims and *Munafiqīn* (hypocrites). It acts as a litmus test to recognise whether a person is a *Mumin* (true in faith) or a *Munafiq* (hypocrite). The Quran illustrates: 'The hypocrite men and hypocrite women are of one another. They enjoin what is wrong (*munkar*) and forbid what is right

(*ma'ruf*) and close their hands.'(Al-Quran. 9:67) and 'The believing men and believing women are allies of one another. They enjoin what is right *(ma'ruf)* and forbid what is wrong *(munkar)*.'(Al-Quran. 9:71). Qurtubi [Renowned Qur'anic commentator] explains, Allah made enjoining the *ma'ruf* and forbidding the *munkar* differentiating point between believers and *Munafiqīn* (hypocrites). Thus it indicates that the most specific description of the believers is: enjoining the *ma'ruf* and forbidding the *munkar* and at the head of which is the Da'wah to Islam.[60]

The task of Da'wah does not seize to exist, once the establishment of religion is fulfilled. The internal dimensions of 'reformation' increases manifold. In that case the authority, governments in Islamic states become more accountable for enjoining good and forbidding evil. The Quran mentions, '[and they are] those who, if We give them authority in the land, establish prayer and give *Zakāh* and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And to Allah belongs the outcome of [all] matters.'(Al-Quran. 22:41)

There has always remained a difference of opinion among the Islamic jurists, whether the work of Da'wah is '*fard-e'Ayn* (the obligation each and every Muslim should follow individually) or '*fard-e kifayah*' (the obligatory duty which if performed by a fellow Muslims serves the purpose). Some of the scholars (Qurtubi, Abu Hayan Andalusi, Tabari, Ibn Taimiyyah and in recent past Hamiduddin Farahi[61]) support the view that Da'wah is *fard-e kifayah* keeping Qur'anic verse (3:104) under consideration wherein it has been asked that there must be a group of people among the Muslims to carry the work of Da'wah. While second group of scholars (Ibn Kathir,[62] Ibn Hazm,[63] Shakyh Muhammad 'Abduh, Rashid Ridā, Ibn Bāz, Mufti Muhammad Shafi) place Da'wah under *fard-e'Ayn.* The late Shaykh 'Abdul 'Aziz Ibn 'Abdullah Ibn Bāz, former grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia and head of the council of senior scholars, argued that the obligation of Da'wah is both collective duty of the Muslim Ummah and a personal duty of each individual Muslim.[64] Imam Shātibi has presented one of the concluding approach keeping all the aspects of the Quran and Hadith with regard to Da'wah in view. He says, 'Generally speaking inviting others to good is *wajib* as its fulfilment is obligatory on all. Some are capable to do it while some are not. Those incapable should persuade the capable ones to perform it.

In other words, those capable have to perform it while those incapable are required to persuade the capable ones to perform the duty. Both capable and incapable are thus entrusted with the responsibility of its performance'.[65] Irrespective of these jurisprudential differences, the fact of the matter is Da'wah has remained the basic subject of religion. Gazali asserts, enjoining good and forbidding evil is the basic subject of religion. It is such a necessary for which all the prophets were sent to the world. Had the work of Da'wah been closed, the prophet-hood would have been meaningless, religion lost, idleness reigned, ignorance spread, disturbance prevailed, dangers and calamities appeared and mankind destroyed.[66] The Muslim Community has lost its glory, due to their negligence towards Da'wah. History stands witness that when the collective practice and trait of Muslims was Da'wah, they were accepted and honoured throughout the world. Those who used to rear goats and camels became the masters only because of Da'wah. When the Ummah deviated from this primary responsibility, the decline started as a natural phenomenon.[67] Sulaiman Nadvi argues, 'It is a pity that within a century of the advent of Islam, the Muslims became forgetful of this (Da'wah) responsibility. The Muslim Sultans and Kings were content with making conquests and expanding their domains, thereby collecting ransom and land revenue, believing that leading a life of comforts and luxuries was the only end worth achieving. The Islamic Scholars limited themselves to scholastic pursuits, preferring the life of contentment and seclusion to the trials of the world. The '*Sūfī's*' and the '*Darveshes*' (ascetic Muslim monks) resorted to prayers and counting rosaries and adopted the cloistered life of the hermits, away from the busy life of the world. This resulted in that due to absence of true guidance and direction, the Ummah became forgetful of its position, and the actual course of the bringing forth of Muslim Ummah was lost by all sections of the Muslim community.[68]

CONCLUSION

Da'wah is the effort to call people to believe in Allah and His Messenger, to spread and convey the message of Islam to people and the ultimate purpose of the Prophet-hood. All Prophets from Adam to Muhammad (pbuh) shared this identical responsibility. Various Qur'anic terms

represent the conceptual frame work of Da'wah ranging from 'calling' and 'inviting' mankind to Islam, enjoining the 'good' and forbidding the 'wrong' and the 'reformation' of the human society. The believers of Islam are the *Ummat-e-wasat* and act as the intermediary between the prophet and the later generations of the people. The responsibility of Da'wah shifted from the prophet towards the Ummah as mentioned above. The prophet declared on the occasion of *Hijjat-ul-Wida*, 'It is incumbent upon those who are present to convey it to those who are absent'. Ibn Abbass acknowledged 'It is the *Wasiyyah* [will] of the prophet to his followers'. Thus it is the sole responsibility of the Ummah to carry out the mission of Da'wah, collective duty of the Ummah as well as personal duty of each Muslim. It is the two fold mission of the Ummah, with its internal dimensions that are focussed on the *Islah* [reformation] within Muslim community by enjoining what is 'Good' and forbidding what is 'Wrong' to strengthen the commitment of the Muslims towards Islam, and its external dimensions of 'inviting' mankind to the fold of Islam. The Ummah has to take on this prophetic mission in all the circumstances, and the ages to come, face the challenges and elucidate the ways and means that may appeal the hearts and minds of the people, more importantly follow the prophetic legacy of love and affection for the humanity, in the right spirit with sincerity and selflessness, solely for the sake of winning divine approbation. In the age of Islamophobia, it is more important for the Ummah to play a vital role vis a vis Da'wah. It is the sole task of the Muslims to convey the message of Islam in such a way, so as to clear the misconceptions which in contemporary era are alarming and becoming hurdles in accepting the message of Islam.

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AMREEN

Liberation in Islamic Theology: A Qur'anic Hermeneutics for Liberation from Injustice

ABSTRACT

This paper is briefly an overview of liberation theology as developed in modern Christian theology in the West. Along with that, it is an explanation of Islamic liberation theology from a socio-economic and theological viewpoint, extracted from the Qur'an and its hermeneutic aspects. Islam has, since time immemorial, through the Qur'anic injunctions and the ahadith, liberated human beings from all kinds of sufferings and restored their dignity from social curses. Islam, by its teachings, condemned ignorance and socio-economic injustice and promoted wisdom, knowledge, justice, equality, respect, and impartiality. All such teachings with respect to liberation from all kinds of socio-economic afflictions and oppressions are clearly mentioned and their solution is described in the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah. Classical Islamic theology, in only its metaphysical form, has been criticised by progressive Muslims because it does not imply human liberation in worldly life.

The paper also deals with the modern issues and challenges of cultural globalisation or the Westernisation of science in view of new dialectical theology (*kalam e jadid*) and proposes de-Westernisation of academic culture as an integral part of the Muslim's liberation in modern age.

Keywords: *Islamic liberation theology, Qur'anic hermeneutics, challenges of modern Age*

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is the age of science, technology and globalisation, but several human societies are blundering into many crises and facing grave peril. Today, millions of people are suffering from injustice and oppression. They are still undergoing the stress of unemployment, poverty, starvation, malnourishment and homelessness. Marginalised people and refugees are victims of war and violence brought about in many socio-politico-religious (in terms of religious extremism, ethno-religious nationalism) and economic factors. People leave their homeland and become scattered in several neighbouring countries, and doing work in very low wages, facing the problems of racism and discrimination. But, only for the survival of their children and family members, they are tolerating such afflictions and hope to achieve liberation from unjust condition.

Liberation is not only emancipation from slavery and injustice, poverty and cruelty, sufferings and atrocities, violence and oppression but it is also for overcoming ignorance, illiteracy, and unemployment. Moreover, liberation from one's ego, and the will to control and to dominate it, are also valued in most of the world religions. The major world's religious traditions have different types of concept about the term *liberation* but all religions admit that it is a basic requirement for every human being to be liberated from economic greed, spiritual immorality, racial prejudice and cultural and political imperialism.[1]

LIBERATION THEOLOGY

The term *Liberation Theology*, according to the Oxford Dictionary of World Religions, means 'An understanding of the role of theology in moving from abstraction to praxis, in which the actual condition of the poor is the starting point.'[2] The Encyclopaedia of Religion defines liberation theology as 'Critical reflection on the historical praxis of liberation in a concrete situation of oppression and discrimination.'[3] Moreover it is also known by academician as a social movement within the Christian Church and a school of thought, both of which respond against human suffering due to various forms of oppressions.[4]

'Liberation theology'[5] as an insurrection movement was a Christian struggle that started during the 1960s in Latin America. The movement

sought to revive basic human values within the biblical sources and the teachings of Jesus and the Church. At the same time, Asian and African countries were also involved in struggling against colonial domination and other afflictions.[6]Therefore, the term *liberation theology* may be applied to these problems because it stands for the revival of the liberating notion that calls for the uplifting of human dignity not only from socio-economic and political oppressions but also from spiritual decadence.[7]As we discussed above, *Liberation theology* is defined 'as a critical reflection on the historical praxis of liberation in a concrete situation of oppression and discrimination'.[8]It is a constant struggle to establish an unbiased, just and brotherly society where people can live together with dignity and freedom.[9] We can say in other words that it means to interpret scriptures through the conditions of unprivileged people for the betterment and upliftment of them (poor, oppressed and marginalised), to struggle for helping the poor and liberate them from the suffering of poverty and starvation and enable them to stand with the working class.[10]

Liberation theology, actually, was a religious movement that tried to liberate people from unjust behaviour and poor social conditions. It stresses the Christian mission of giving justice to the poor, oppressed and marginalised. As part of Christian theology, liberation theology has most commonly been connected with the Catholic Church in Latin America. However, many other religious traditions have also indicated the trends of liberation theology which express it through their teachings, symbols, discourse and activism.[11]

The real message of liberation theology is to highlight the plight of the hungry, poor, oppressed and the marginalised that have attempted to their upliftment. God encourages us to strive for human well-being, to struggle for human rights and to liberate humanity from socio-economic discrimination and injustice. We can say, a discipline, a way, an exercise that has to be practically carried out. As mentioned above, liberation theology associated with the Christiania tradition, emphasises that the Church must support and help the poor, the unprivileged and should make an effort to save them from affliction and marginalisation owing to socio-political injustice, in a spiritual way and with regard to the scriptural message.[12]

In a comprehensive view, the liberation theology includes an

interpretation of the scripture that is rooted in everyday experience of poverty. It is an endeavour to improve human welfare in very basic ways. The Poor are encouraged to read the scriptures themselves so that they may know what the purpose of God is and how much hope He gives through His Scriptures to His servants.[13]

According to Leonardo and Clodvis Boff, 'Liberation theology is a systemic structure, like an organization that works for the betterment of every individual in society; everyone has a right to benefit from its sources and means; no one should be deprived of its benefits'.[14] Liberation theology is one of the most significant movements in Christian theology, dominating the intellectual horizon of theologians in universities and seminaries. It is currently among the manifestations of a worldwide movement for human emancipation.[15]

Liberation theology, for Phillip Berryman (1987) is, 'A systematic and disciplined reflection on Christian faith and its implications'. He explains that it is an interpretation of Christian faith out of the experience of the poor and an attempt to read the Bible and key Christian doctrines with the eyes of the poor. At the same time, it is an attempt to help the poor and interpret their faith in a new way. He further elaborates that liberation theology focuses on Jesus' life and message. He quotes the words of Jesus (Luke 4:18-19), '*He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives...*' Moreover, the poor learn to read the scripture in a way that affirms their dignity and self-worth and their right to struggle together for a more decent life.[16]

THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIC LIBERATION THEOLOGY

Islamic liberation theology emerged in the context of unjust social systems and systematic oppression.[17]Asghar Ali Engineer defines Islamic liberation theology as *a theology which puts great emphasis on freedom, equality and distributive justice and strongly condemns exploitation of man by man, oppression and persecution.*[18] His definition is similar to Farid Esack definition of liberation theology.[19] The main objective of Engineer's liberation theology is to make religion meaningful to the oppressed and weaker sections of the of society.[20]

Additionally, Islamic liberation theology emerged with the revelation

of the Qur'an on the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The Qur'an, like the Bible, strives to liberate people from all sorts of sufferings and in different theological and socio-economic ways. The Qura'nic injunctions were an open challenge to the tribal lords of Makka, who would oppress and dehumanise the poor. Islam since its beginning, through the Qura'nic teachings and commandments, has condemned injustice and oppression, and denounced the prevailing social system of Makka. With the message of the Qur'an, Islam proclaimed liberation, freedom, justice and equality.[21] It is said that all people are equal before God and there is no entity who deserves to be worshiped but He (God) (Qur'an, 2:255).

Islamic liberation theology is the best source and guideline to liberate people from all sorts of injustice and discrimination. It harmonies with socio-economic balance, an equal social structure and gives a high position to human dignity. We see that Muslim revivalist movements also began struggles for liberation form social, political, and economic injustice and they sought liberation from colonial oppression during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nonetheless, the dominant perception was that Muslim reformers simply wanted to defend the Islamic faith against its loss in the wake of imperialism and cultural destruction.[22]

In present time, discrimination and injustice to the oppressed and the marginalised section of the society is being done in almost every part of the world, especially in developing countries. International media and human rights organisations have often considered Rohingyas as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. The plight of Palestine is a big challenge for the Muslim world. The globe faces the challenge of ethno-religious nationalism and intolerance, notions of racial superiority, and inter- and intra-religious conflicts. Differences and clashes are indeed a big threat to world peace. So, a lot of questions raised about such circumstances, for instance, how to address the issues of injustice and oppression? What are God's commandments about exploitations and abuses? How to mitigate these pressures upon the weaker section of the society? How do scriptures and theology admonish the authorities to help the poor and ease their suffering? What should be the multi-dimensional solution for the world peace?

THE BEGINNING OF ISLAMIC LIBERATION THEOLOGY

According to many progressive thinkers, Islamic liberation theology began with the first revelation of the Qur'an. It instructed the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) 'Read'. It was a message which came to liberate humanity from darkness, ignorance and illiteracy.

Thus, in the light of the revelation, we can say that the Qur'an liberated humanity from ontological ignorance and stated that there is One Entity Who gives life and brings human beings into existence (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 96, Verse: 01). From this verse, it is inferred that man should not hold any misconceptions about his creation. Such indications and instructions were also mentioned in previous divine scriptures'.[23]

Caesar E. Farah (1968) writes, 'Muhammad (pbuh) had no intention of founding a new religion and did not consider his mission as superseding his predecessors. He looked upon his mission as serving to complete and revitalize the earlier religions and to remove misconceptions about them.' When the Prophet Muhammad received divine scripture, revealed in the form of a reformative and revolutionary message to all the people of the world, as he was given the title of mercy for all the worlds (al-Qur'an, 21:107), he delivered the divine message him for the reformation of the whole society in general and of Arabia in particular. The Almighty Allah confirms in the Qur'an that He sent Muhammad (pbuh) to deliver glad-tidings to people (Al-Qur'an, 2:119). From then, the Prophet started to preach a new version of the previous Shariah and to work upon the teachings of the Qur'an. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) acted to liberate the poor, the needy, the oppressed and the ignorant from suffering. In the line of his project of liberation, he was not only an apostle, teacher and philosopher, but also an activist who sacrificed his whole life for spreading justice and equality. The Arabs not only liberated themselves from oppression and subjugation under the Prophets 'inspiration but also liberated others (non-Arabs).[24]

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF ARABIA BEFORE PROPHET (PBUH)

At the time of Prophet Muhammad's birth, the social status of the Arabian Peninsula was based on diverse tribal factions without any organised ruling system. Connected families made a clan, while a number of clans formed a tribe and every tribe had hegemony in its territory. The Arabs laid great emphasis on tribal bonds as they were the foundations of their power. Their tribal relationship was not merely for individual identification but also for protection and safety. The unending wars among the tribal fractions continued for long time and many deaths were claimed in those wars. The society was at risk, in those circumstances and people were waiting for a miracle to save them from the oppression and subjugation of the dominant merchant class that has marginalised the poor and left them helpless.[25]

As far as religious conditions are concerned, worst anarchy and confusion prevailed in the religious life of the Arab. 'Many gods and goddesses held as the 'protectors' of individual tribes and their spirits were connected with sacred objects, for instance the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the pieces of stones, the springs, and the wells. The focus of rituals (sacrifice, pilgrimage, prayer) and of supplication and appeasement were on local shrines. Makka possessed a central shrine of the gods. The *Kaaba*, a cube-shaped building housed the 360 idols of tribal patron deities and was the site of a great annual pilgrimage and fair (Fair of Ukaz).[26] The condition of the days of ignorance has been well expressed by Jafar the spokesman of Muslims emigrants of Abyssinia. In reply to the query of their king, he said to Negus, 'Jahiliyah people were we, worshiping idols, feeding on the dead animals practicing immortality, deserting our families and violating covenant term of mutual protection. The strong among us were devouring the weak. Such was the state when Allah sent unto us a messenger.'[27]

In this situation, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) received revelation from God to deliver His' commands to human beings. The message was to liberate people from superstition and polytheism, and to teach monotheism. It was a call to worship God in gratitude for His goodness both to each individual and to the people of Makka as a whole. But the people of Makka refused to accept the message, except for a few. The first

ten years of Muhammad's preaching were hard because of the resistance and rejection of the people at Makka. He (pbuh) was persecuted and threatened by them. The message and aim of Muhammad (pbuh) were to make reform in the society with its condemnation of the socio-economic inequalities of Makkan life. Therefore, he constituted a direct challenge not only to traditional polytheistic religion, but also to the power and prestige of the establishment, threatening their economic, social and political interests. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) denounced false contracts, usury, and neglected exploitation of orphans and widows. He defended the rights of the poor and the oppressed, asserting that the rich had an obligation to the poor and the dispossessed to use a portion of their wealth for their benefit.[28]

Thus, we can say that a truly liberating theology developed within the historical tradition, which is derived from the primary foundations of the Islamic tradition—the Qur'an and the Sunnah and, more importantly, in how the core message affects the daily lives of the people in need of this theology. The importance of Islamic liberation theology is not just its relation to historical, religious, and cultural contexts; it provides the grounds on which the liberating elements must be developed for the welfare of the people in general.[29]

CRITICISM OF CLASSICAL ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

Classical Islamic theology began to face the problem of free will and *vis-à-vis* determination only after the establishment of the powerful Umayyad Empire founded by Muawiyah (RA), (602-680). 'Muawiyah (RA) and his successors established a dynastic form of rule that was against the Islamic democratic spirit. Opponents of the Umayyad, however, were persecuted. To prevent further arrest, the Umayyads encouraged the dogma of pre-determination against free will. This became the subject of intense discussion in Islamic theology. Those opposing the regime supported the concept of free will. Those supporting the regime emphasised pre-determination. In Islamic theology, the two terms that were used during the Umayyad regime were invented by the Mu'tazilah: 1) '*ikhtiyar*' (free-will) and, 2) *Jabr* (pre-determination). The followers of the former were called *qadriyah*, while the latter were known as *Jabri-yyah*. Besides these two groups, there was another sect, the *Kharijite* that

was in favour of free will as well as revolution. That sect was against tyrannical rulers and fighting them was the primary principle of their theology'.[30] Muslim theologians during the Umayyad dynasty[31] only discussed theology in its metaphysical context.[32]

By contrast, progressive Muslim scholars[33] have criticised and opposed classical Islamic theology and Muslim theologians. In fact, theology in its received form, according to progressive Muslims, does not support human liberation. It only supports the *status quo*; moreover, theologians who support this form of theology are partners to the *status quo*. 'The actual purpose of liberation theology is liberation from suffering. If theology is to be considered in its metaphysical form only, then liberation would take only a metaphysical, not a physical, form. The metaphysical concept of theology appears obscure and confused. The received form of theology supports the status of traditional theologians who became allies of the establishment to gain personal benefits. They supported a pre-determined fate for human beings and opposed freedom of action by man, reducing him to a mere puppet in the hands of fate'.[34] Thus, classical theology in its orthodox form was careful to steer away from the real problems of human life. This makes religion meaningless to the weak and the oppressed people – a view attributed to Marx, who labelled religion as the 'opium of the masses.'[35]

THE QUR'ANIC EXAMPLES OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY

As shown by the Qur'an, the first objective of Islamic liberation theology is to liberate people from illiteracy, ignorance, superstitions and polytheism. The revealed message further wants to make known the believers with the concept of the unity of God (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 96, Verse: 1-5), (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 112, Verse: 1-4). The Qur'an liberates human being from false notion and superstition, exhorting them not to take any figure, idol or stone for worship as deity. It liberates from polytheisms which is a source of injustice and oppression, and says: 'If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides Allah, they would have been in disorder! But glory to Allah, the Lord of the Throne: (High is He) above what they attribute to Him!'[36]

The Qur'an also liberates humanity from racism and condemns notions of racial superiority or inferiority because it creates social

problems and hatred between social classes. In fact, Qur'an teaches that all people are the children of Adam and Eve and equal before God (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 49, Verse::13).

As per the revealed scripture, the major goal of liberation theology is to provide financial help to the poor and liberate them from poverty (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 04, Verse: 95). The Qur'an emphasises that a Muslim must always take the side of the weak regardless of their religion and race, and ask the question, 'Who among those in need would require more attention than the poor and the destitute?' (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 04, Verse: 95). The Qur'an also protects man from subjugation. It liberates man from the tyranny of governments and rulers. The Qur'an gives rights to every individual equally so that all are treated and judged on an equal basis, irrespective of race, colour and faith (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 49, Verse: 130). It also admonishes believers to establish justice in all spheres of life (Al-Qur'an, Chapter: 04, Verse: 135).[37]

THE FINAL PROPHET, MUHAMMAD (PBUH) AS A LIBERATOR

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), liberated people not only from all sorts of sufferings, poverty, inequality, subjugation and injustice, but also from ignorance and superstition, from polytheism and racism. The Prophet (pbuh) struggled for promoting Islamic injunctions against the tribal cruelties without engaging in any kind of violence. He and his companions, even faced the brutalities by the people at Makka, but they continued to propagate and practice a way of life that was based upon revealed teachings/instructions. Thus, it is not wrong to say that the paradigm of struggle and resistance to injustice, established by the Prophet (pbuh), was a movement of liberation. Many Muslim movements developed in later centuries, attempted to follow that prophetic paradigm, and together these have become important sources of inspiration for many contemporary Muslim liberation struggles'.[38]

Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the guiding light who announced to women rights. The Qur'an, for the first time in the history, gave them various rights such as the right to acquire knowledge, the right to be a witness, the right to marry of her own choice, the right to divorce her husband without any pre-condition, the right to inherit her father's property, the right to have custody of children, and the right

to make decisions free. Thus, women gained social dignity and respect by the Qur'an. The Prophet (pbuh) aimed to establish justice within the socio-economic and religious environment of Makka as he was deeply disturbed by the poor conditions of women.[39]

Although, we saw that the idea of modern liberation theology has been derived from Christian hermeneutics, but we can say that all revealed scriptures have a solution for liberating people from all types of suffering. As far as the Qur'an is concerned, it supports the oppressed and the weaker sections of the society, and teaches equality, dignity, freedom and respect for all. It also says to its believers to respect and recognise the truth not only of Islam but also of other religions. The Qur'an provides the guiding principle and ways to liberate the oppressed from all kinds of sufferings. A universal theology of liberation is seen among all faiths. Liberation theology prioritises praxis over theory. It advocates the protection of the oppressed and the marginalised from the oppressors and provides socio-political struggle against the oppressors. In other words, it is a theology in real sense that aims to implement a world reality based upon respect for human dignity and the realisation of justice.[40]

LIBERATION THEOLOGY FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Many progressive Muslim scholars[41] believe that the actual spirit of theology also has sociological relevance. It is not limited to its classical or purely traditional manifestations. Many Qur'anic verses, in this regard, justify sociological theology as the Holy Scripture (the Qur'an) advises applying theology and theological teachings in their practical modes, i.e. in a sociological context so that those people who suffer from troubles and worries may get satisfaction and the help of Divine commandments. For instance, Ali Shariati[42] focused on the sociology of religion from the Islamic perspective. He stimulated people to take revolutionary steps, by providing many examples and lessons from the Qur'an and examples of liberators from Islamic history. Shariati also reminds us that history is full of struggle and resistance between *haqq* (truth) and *taghut* (falsehood), and confrontation between monotheists and polytheists, a battle between the deprived and the usurpers, and between the oppressed and oppressors.[43]

Thus, we see the traditional and medieval approaches to Islamic theology are different from the intellectual and rational development towards the progressive mode of Islamic hermeneutics of liberation that advocates the core Qur'anic values of equality, justice and freedom. To evolving a theology of liberation for the poor and the marginalised, modern Muslim theologians must propagate views in keeping with the spirit of the Qur'an which are the values of equality, justice and freedom.

Many progressive Muslim scholars like Said Nursi, Farid Esack and Asghar Ali Engineer addressed about the Qur'anic hermeneutics. Here we cannot discuss about their views, but we may note that while operating in specific socio-political and cultural contexts, they suggested progressive ways to promote justice, gender equality and religious freedom on the basis of the liberation methodology. They provided a rational and intellectual exegesis, unlike the traditional and conventional theologians, who tended to rely on traditional interpretations. In these ways, the progressive and libratory elements of the Qura'nic message have been highlighted by progressive intellectuals who focus on the challenges of modernity.[44]

ASGHAR ALI ENGINEER'S INTERPRETATION OF THE QUR'ANIC HERMENEUTIC OF LIBERATION

Asghar Ali Engineer (1939-2013) is considered to be one of the progressive and reformist faces of the Islamic world. He has been a progressive and critical Indian scholar, known among the Muslim thinkers of Islamic liberation theology and interfaith dialogue. Engineer developed the idea of Islamic liberation theology, which he retrieved from the Qur'anic teachings. He defines Islamic liberation theology as that which puts great emphasis on freedom, equality and distributive justice and strongly condemns exploitation of man by man, oppression and persecution.[45] His definition is similar to that of Farid Esack regarding liberation theology.[46] The main objective of Engineer's liberation theology is to make religion meaningful to the oppressed and the weaker section of the society.[47]

Engineer's hermeneutics which he retrieved from the Qur'anic

teachings is that he believes the Qur'an itself promotes and encourages liberation using specific hermeneutical terms. These terms are essential tools for understanding the Qur'an and its motivation in the struggle for justice and freedom. The key words focus on justice, freedom and equality on one hand, and the condemnation of exploitation of man by man, oppression, and persecution on the other.[48] He identified its core values in key terms of the Qur'an comprising *tawhid*, (oneness of God), *deen* (religion), *adl* (justice), *rahmah* (compassion), *ihsan* (benevolence), and *hikmah* (wisdom). These key terms, to Engineer, are the main tools for constructing the platform of Islamic liberation theology.[49] Other scholars take the idea of liberation theology in a very theological way, such as Abu A'la Maududi, whose notion of liberation theology may be found in his book, *Four Basic Qura'nic Terms*. He says that the main teachings of the Qur'an consist of four theological terms that are *Ilah*, *Rabb*, *Deen* and *'Ibadah*. A Muslim, according to Maulana Maududi, cannot attain a full understanding of Islam until he/she understands all four of them.[50]

In Engineer's hermeneutics outline, there are three basic aspects that one must take into consideration regarding a particular Qura'nic verse or text: (1) that there is a dissimilarity between normative and contextual verses; (2) that every reader considers a divine scripture with a specific worldview; (3) every text or verse exists a social context and needs to be understood as such.[51]

As per the Engineer, the Qur'an was revealed in the particular concrete historical experience of the Arabs. It was then interpreted according to the social and intellectual context of a particular community. It thus becomes an imperative for Muslims to contextualise divine guidance in their present context and needs. Those who objected to any re-interpretation merely admit that the early jurists and theologians were free from any sociological influence.[52] This creates a serious error and reflects immature thinking. As Engineer commented:

…though the source is divine (i.e. the Qur'an), its understanding is human. Also, it should be noted that one's understanding of the Qur'an is also affected by one's own circumstances and one's own perception of reality. Though the Fuqaha (i.e. the jurists) tried most sincerely to understanding the Qur'anic injunctions, they could understand them only in the light of their own cir-

cumstances. The understanding of the divine word can and should change with one's circumstances. What is of essence in the Qur'an is divine guidance, principles and values.[53]

A NEW DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY (*KALĀM AL-JADĪD*)

In the last age of second millennium, Islamic revivalism arose in the Muslim world, faced and struggled against the challenges of liberalism, nationalism and globalisation and cultural hegemony. In particular, a main challenge remained in the Westernisation of science. Liberation in Islam is freedom from all forms of discrimination, subjugation and domination by 'others 'including the sphere of science and knowledge. In this regard, Muslim scholars have produced a dialectical theology that charts the way of resistance and liberation from a new wave of western attacks on Islamic science, philosophy and ethics - in other words, on the theory of knowledge.[54]

CONCLUSION

Indeed, liberation generally indicates salvation and freedom and it seeks to liberate human beings (oppressed) from all sorts of oppression, especially socio-economic and political injustice, in the light of the scriptures that were interpreted by the prophets and theologians, in order to help the oppressed and marginalised people. Liberation theologians affirm that Jesus played the role of liberator for his people and he came to liberate humanity not only from spiritual decadence, but also from the bondage of material poverty and social injustice. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) liberated people from the oppression of the upper classes at Makka. He conveyed the message of God to the people, with warnings and glad tidings, for the construction of a just society that should be based on equality, fraternity and justice.

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was born at a time when people were engaged in the arrogant displays of tribal superiority. Privileges were based on unjust conditions and prejudices. In such circumstances, he stood up and challenged unjustified privilege and established social and moral values based upon the revealed message. He liberated people

from slavery and delivered the oppressed from the dictatorship of the tribal leaders of Makka.[55]

Thus, revelation exhorts us to struggle for the welfare of human beings, to help them against all kinds of injustice and inequality. Islamic liberation theology includes all aspects of existence, such as the socio-political, economic and theological, historical, religious, and cultural domains. The Qur'an and the traditions of Muhammad (pbuh) are the best sources of Islamic liberation theology as both provide guidance to those who suffer in the world. They denounce ignorance, illiteracy and injustice.

This paper has discussed that, although the terms and theory of liberation theology have been derived from the modern Christian context, it has further been used and developed by progressive Muslim thinkers and educators in the context of liberation from all kinds of socio-political, religious and cultural oppressions. It also includes colonialism, neo-colonialism and westernization. Moreover, several progressive Muslim scholars, in this regard, have contributed original views and methods from their own socio-politico perspectives. The latest trend in this history of Muslim liberation theology viz. the new dialectical theology or *kalame jaded* will go a long way towards addressing and guiding the future Muslim generations in their struggle to maintain and preserve their freedom as taught by the Qur'an.

In the inception, I argued that though the 21st century is the age of science, technology and globalisation, several human societies are blundering into many crises and facing grave peril. Today, millions of people are suffering from injustice and oppression. They are still undergoing the stress of unemployment, poverty, starvation, malnourishment and homelessness. Marginalised people and refugees have also been suffering from socio-politico-religious (in terms of religious extremism, ethno religious nationalism) and economic factors. People want to be liberated from all torments. Now there is a need, for reformers and progressive Muslims, especially theologians to re-work, re-interpret and re-look at the traditional and medieval interpretation of classical Islamic theology.

In light of the above discussion, the following recommendations are made for educators and policy makers in Muslim countries:

- 'To obtain liberation from poverty, injustice and inequality, theologians have to propagate an Islamic theology that is relevant to the current time; human liberation lies in helping out the poor from a sociological and not only a metaphysical perspective.
- In addressing the challenges of the modern age, the fanatical approaches based on the superiority of one's race, faith and colour are non-productive. Guidance derived from the teachings of the Quran, must play a central and critical role not only in creating harmony and religious coexistence but also in explaining that human and religious diversity is normal. There is an urgent need to develop religio-cultural understanding of Islam as a civilisational project. An apparatus should be provided to help obtain the maximum development of love, peace, harmony and tolerance.
- The Monarchical practices of Muslim rulers cum religious leaders should be void of nationalism, tribal and communal practices. They are supposed to be free from the intoxication of the power. Their role should be like that of the model caliphs and other leaders, who gave rights and dignity to every individual, irrespective of colour, race, gender and religion to help and serve the people, and to bring peace and justice to the society.[56]

NOTES

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2. John Bowker, *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (London: Oxford University Press, 1997) 577.
3. *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2nd ed., s.v, 'Liberation.'
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5. In the mid-1960s some theologians, most particularly Gustavo Gutierrez of Peru, began to formulate a liberation theology rooted in the prophetic tradition of the Bible and contemporary social analysis, communicating this vision to progressive networks of patrol leaders throughout Latin America. See Rosemary
Radford Ruther, 'Catholism,' in *The Hope of Liberation in World Religions*, ed. De La Torre Miguel (Texas: Baylor University Press, 2008), 17.
6. Irfan A. Omar, 'Islam,' in *The Hope of Religion in World Religions,* ed. De

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8. *Encyclopaedia of Religion*, 2nd ed., s.v, 'Liberation.'

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10. Christopher Rowland, *Introduction: The Theology of Liberation*, Publication details, 1999, 1-5.

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12. E.A. Livingstone, *Concise Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Publication details, 2000, 341.

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18. Engineer, A. A. (1994). Islam and Revolution. Delhi: Ajanta Books. p. 19 also see Nuryatno, M. A. (2000). *Asghar Ali Engineer's Thought's on Liberation Theology and Women Issues in Islam: An Analysis.* (Mastered Thesis) Canada: McGill University. P. 24. See Farid Esack. Qur'an Liberation and Pluralism. p. 25

19. Farid Esack defines liberation theology as 'one that works towards freeing religion from social, political and religious structures and ideas based on uncritical obedience and the freedom of all people from all forms of injustice and exploitation including those of race, gender, class and religion.' Nuryatno, M. A. (2000). *Asghar Ali Engineer's Thought's on Liberation Theology and Women Issues in Islam: An Analysis.* (Mastered Thesis) Canada: McGill University. P. 24. See Farid Esack. Qur'an Liberation and Pluralism. p. 83

20. *Ibid.*, p. 23

21. Asghar Ali Engineer, *Islam and Liberation Theology: Essays on Liberative Elements in Islam* (New Delhi: Gyn Publishing House, 1990), 1-15.

22. Omar, 'Islam', 102.

23. Abdul Rehman, Kaloi. 2017. 'Islamic Liberation Theology: Qur'anic Hermeneutics for The Challenges of The Modern Age'. Islam and Civilisational Renewal </Br> ICR Journal 8 (1):66-81. Retrieved from https://icrjournal.org/index.php/icr/article/view/617 on 02/08/2020 pdf

24. Asghar Ali Engineer, *Muhammad as a Liberator: Rational Approach to Islam* (New Delhi: Sterling Publisher, 2001), 171-8.

25. John L. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 4-6.

26. *Ibid.*, p3

27. Dr. Rahim, A-Islamic History, 4rt edn, Delhi, 2003, p. 10

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29. Omar, '*Islam*,' 97.

30. Engineer, *Islam and Liberation Theology*, 11-12.

31. The Umayyads were the first Islamic dynasty founded in Syria, and ruled from 661 to 750 CE.

32. Engineer, '*Islam and Liberation Theology*,' 13

33. These include Asghar Ali, an Indian, and Fazlur Rahman, a Pakistani modernist, both progressive Muslim scholars.

34. Engineer, *Islam and Liberation Theology*, 13.

35. *Ibid.*

36. Yusuf Ali, The Noble Quran, 21:22

37. Abdul Rehman, Kaloi. 2017. 'Islamic Liberation Theology: Qura'nic Hermeneutics for The Challenges of The Modern Age'. Islam And Civilizational Renewal </Br> ICR Journal 8 (1):66-81. Retrieved from https://icrjournal.org/index.php/icr/article/view/617 on 02/08/2020 pdf

38. Omar, 'Islam,' 110.

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40. See Nasir Nasrin and Daud Abdullah, *The Universal Theology of Liberation: Views from Muslim History* (London: Islamic Human Right Commision, 2011), 10-1.

41. For example, the work of Chandra Muzaffar with the International Movement for a Just World in Malaysia and the efforts of Farid Esack with HIV-positive Muslims in South Africa, are examples of progressive Muslims who occupy themselves with activist approaches. See Omid Safi, 2003, 'What is progressive Islam?' I S I M N EWS L E T T E R 1 3 / D E C EMB E R 2 0 0 3, 48. Available at http://jsrforum.lib.virginia.edu/pdfs/SafiProgressive.pdf

42. An Iranian revolutionary and sociologist, who supported Iranians who were oppressed, afflicted and humiliated by the Shah.

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47. *Ibid.*, p. 23

48. Engineer, *Islam and Liberation Theology*, 13.

49. Engineer, *Muhammad as a Liberator*, 21-30.

50. Maududi Abdul A' la Sayed, *Four Basic Terms of the Quran*, trans. Abu Asad (Lahore: Islamic Publication Academy Centre 1979), 3-5.

51. Engineer, *Muhammad as a Liberator*, 21-30.

52. *Ibid.*,

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54. Abdul Rehman, Kaloi. 2017. 'Islamic Liberation Theology: Qur'anic Hermeneutics for The Challenges of The Modern Age'. Islam And Civilizational Renewal </Br> ICR Journal 8 (1):66-81. Retrieved from https://icrjournal.org/index.php/icr/article/view/617 on 02/08/2020 pdf

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