

**SELF, SOCIETY AND THE UNIVERSE FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article History</b> Published Online:</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Peace</li> <li>➤ Deveopment</li> <li>➤ Reigion</li> </ul>	<p>According to Mahatma Gandhi, History records wars, that is, cases of breach of love. Peace works so quietly, it has no history. And yet it is by love and peace that mankind survives. D. Nesy, in his article Religion for Peace and Development, has analyzed various dimensions of religion. In his opinion, the moral energy to change ourselves and the social order in which we live must be sought not through armed might, through respect for humanity, through religion. From etymological sense, the term religion carries a number of connotations. Literally it means to bind together. It has the dual function of binding together the adherents of religion and the impulses within each man himself. It is the experience of the whole man, it is a holistic experience. Religion is an integrating force; it is the integrative experience of man - individually and collectively. Peace is a necessity for survival. It is a moral necessity. A society cannot be peaceful when millions of its people are subjected to oppressive, economic, social and political conditions when its people are condemned to a haunted life of misery and reduced to the level of marginal existence unit for human beings.</p> <p>Speaking about peace, Mr. Claes Nobel of the United</p>



Earth Movement opines that peace represents the totality of peace in four specific areas: 1. Peaceful existence with ourselves. 2. Peaceful existence with others. 3. Peaceful existence with nature and 4. Peaceful existence with the universe. According to him peace has reference to oneself, in how a man treats and manages his body, mind, emotions, feelings and attitudes on an individual basis. Second his relationship with his family, friends and neighbours or in short, his right behavior and relationship to other cultures, religions, races, nations and minority groups. Third, the manner in which man treats, respects and interacts with the environment, his ethical relationship with the plants, the animals, the air, the fresh water, the oceans and the land represents peace. And finally, peace relates to our respect, reverence and right ethical relationship with God and the Creative powers of the Universe. This comprehensive conception of peace goes along with the religious view of peace.

Nesy observes that peace making is a human affair. Unless a man is at peace with himself, he cannot be at peace with his brother nor with his Maker. Peace being beneficent adjustment on one side with his Creator and on the other with his fellow beings, applies to the entirety of the concentric relationships between the whole of humanity and the universe. No sphere of human life is exempted. In the context of struggle of the needier nations for a better life, we speak of peace as development a newer dimension attached to the concept of peace.

In this paper an endeavour is made to evaluate some of the Islamic teachings, one way or the other, in the light of above framework. The Islamic teachings, being able to influence the heart, soul and mind of man, which happen to be the main sources of human behaviour, can activate the human being to behave in a manner conducive to the self, family, society and the universe, because all these factors are interwoven in the thread of faith in God. Islamic teachings formulate a peculiar paradigm related with the present life and the life hereafter, which have got influence over the attitudes of its followers. The spiritual directives regarding various economic, social and human factors and a sound, comprehensive, harmonious and integrated institutional base to implement the directives of Golden Mean of Matter and Spirit in practice has resulted into the establishment of an Islamic economy in history; giving due weightage to human side of economics. Islamic social



	structure integrates, co-ordinates, navigates and controls all the above mentioned aspects and factors related therewith into one holistic perspective by binding man with his self, fellow men and other objects of creations around him. As such Islamic structure based upon Islamic ideology is able to establish peace in all spheres of life.
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Islam is the religion of unification. It unifies the humankind by declaring, “O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord Who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;— fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights) and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you.”<sup>1</sup>

Islam is a universal religion and whoever embraces it becomes a Muslim and integral part of its society. ‘In mutual compassion, love and kindness, the believers are like a body, if one of its parts feels pain, the whole body responds with wakefulness and fever’ as said the Prophet. Such is the unity of life, while the control exercised by the law guarantees not only the uniformity of society, but also establishes good human relations. To know the moral value of Islamic social system we may consider it under two broad heads- Economics and Politics.<sup>2</sup>

The essence of Qur’an and hadith has been incorporated in the following couplets of Sa’di:

“All Adam's children are members of the same frame:  
Since all, at first from the same essence came.  
When by hard fortune one limb is oppressed:  
The other members lose their wonted rest.  
If thou feel'st not for others' misery:  
A child of Adam is no name for thee.”

(Sheikh Moslehadin Sa'di)<sup>3</sup>



Incidentally, with a view to mark the occasion of completion of 100 years of Nobel Prizes, the organizers got the bright idea that this family of the brightest and the most creative human beings should issue a statement outlining their thoughts on the future of human race and the dangers that mankind faced and must solve in the century ahead. Eventually a statement signed by 110 Nobel Laureates was issued. The Nobelists' statement goes on to state that, "The most profound danger to world peace in the coming years will stem not from the irrational acts of states or individuals but from the legitimate demands of the world's dispossessed. Of these, poor and disenfranchised, the majority, live in marginal existence in equatorial climates. Global warming, not of their making but originating from the wealthy few, will affect their fragile ecologies most. It cannot be expected that in all cases they (the world's poor) will be content to await the beneficence of the rich. If, then, we permit the devastating power of modern weaponry to spread through this combustible human landscape, we invite a conflagration that can engulf both the rich and the poor. The only hope for the future lies in cooperative international action, legitimized by democracy."<sup>4</sup>

According to Rajae, "the combination of the fall of the bipolar world system, the coming of the information revolution, and the emergence of post-modernist thinking has ushered in a new epoch. Its new mode of production challenges existing views and requires an imaginative mode of thinking. The existing paradigms do not completely grasp the nature, the consequence, and the implication of the present transformation. Yet, because the other important variable of the equation — namely, humanity — has remained relatively unchanged and still requires a life of security, welfare, and dignity, this imaginative thinking requires a holistic view that accounts for both change and continuity. The transformation of the material-life world has presented both challenges and



opportunities. It is incumbent on humanity to exercise ingenuity and devise a new mechanism for global governance, one that responds to these challenges and takes advantage of the opportunities. Civilization is a broad framework. It includes not only traditional factors — such as political institutions, military power, and cultural mores — but also the more contemporary social factors, such as ecology, economy, and patterns of communal life.”<sup>5</sup>

### **HISTORY, LOVE AND PEACE: THE STRANGE RELATIVES**

History, Gandhi pointed out, records wars, that is, cases of breach of love. Peace works so quietly, it has no history. And yet it is by love and peace that mankind survives. Had these not been real, had violence and war been the only real things, mankind would have disappeared long ago. It is the force of love that saves. “The greatest and most unimpeachable evidence of the success of that force,” wrote Gandhi, “is to be found in the fact that, in spite of the wars of the world, it still lives on.” Hind Swaraj.<sup>6</sup>

To quote Batul Gazanfar Hussain:

Is peace a substance, something seen and touched?

Or is it a feeling, hanging in the air?

Is it lazy and drowsy?

Does it drift on salty sea air?

Does it touch your bleeding heart, and give it calmness?

What does peace do? She heals.<sup>7</sup>

It is pertinent to point out that, the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mohathir Mohammed, while speaking at the first India-Asean Business Day Summit has said that, sustainable peace was the key to economic success of Malaysia. Using East Asia as an example, he said that its journey from being a “region in turmoil” to a fast



growing economic bloc has been the result of putting the differences between various nations on the back seat and concentrating on prosperity. He further stated that, the East Asian region has overcome conflicts which were plaguing the region three decades ago. China's new path was still uncertain and tenuous. Vietnam had just invaded Cambodia. Southeast Asia was divided into two camps. He further told that, we were at daggers down. The East Asia of today is a very different place; strangers have been turned into friends...not overnight, but still quite surprisingly fast. In what could be a lesson for the sub-continent, he said that, in many parts of the world beggar thy neighbour is a powerful reality, a natural policy response in general and East Asia in particular has found much value in the prosperity neighbour policies.<sup>8</sup> The views of Mohathir Mohammed deserve appreciation from the point of view of its actual experimentation not only at the level of any single nation but in a particular region which was known as a region of turmoil. The essence of this development was the peace with the neighbour. Therefore, with a view to evaluate the importance of peace at individual, social, national and international level, it has been tried to evaluate the concept of peace from various points of views.

The statements made by Mohathir Mohammed have been taken as a starting point of the topic evaluating the significance of peace in all spheres of life. As may be seen from the above statements, peace is a pre-condition for sustainable development. In this context, it can be argued that the attitude towards a particular factor plays pivotal role in navigating the behaviour in all spheres of life. Religions, of course, provide premises for articulating the attitude of their followers. Since the research in question is primarily related with the religious studies in general and Islamic studies in particular, the views of some authors, *interalia* Islamic



literature on this subjects shall be considered with a view to find the peaceful solution to human problems.

### **DEVELOPMENT AND THE UNIVERSAL PEACE: ECONOMIC WELFARE**

Since an economic man is supposed to have a family, therefore, the household's basic wants are also to be provided for. Economic development is expected to provide adequate purchasing power (capability) to the individual so that he can buy the 'minimum economic basket' for his household with dignity and self-respect. To enhance the economic welfare, economic development must ensure both the capacity to demand the economic basket and supply of economic basket in the market. The entitlement, accessibility and capability to earn adequate disposable income to purchase the economic basket is the determinant of economic welfare.

Entitlement would mean a legal right on the nation's assets. The entitlement of 'economic basket' is a fundamental right of an individual. Every nation must ensure this entitlement. It may be in the form of salary, pension or allowances (medical allowance, traveling allowances etc.) But about 1.3 billion population of the developing world is living below the International poverty line. This segment of the world's humanity does not have entitlement to the required disposable income to purchase economic basket. They do not have the capability to earn adequate disposable income. Entitlement means conferring legal right to adequate income.<sup>9</sup>

### **HUMAN WELFARE**

The citation with the Noble Prize to Amartya Sen has focused the attention of the world on economic welfare, human welfare, welfare State and welfare economists. In normal course what is good for individual's welfare should also increase social welfare.



Society is simply an aggregation of individuals. But if individuals become selfish, then aggregation of individuals welfare may not optimize economic humanism.<sup>10</sup>

### **SOCIAL WELFARE**

According to Adam Smith, “No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which by far the greater part of numbers are poor miserable”.

A man is a social being, therefore, some of his wants arise from society. The social welfare has to be decided with reference to a particular social structure and on the basis of some explicit political, social and ethical considerations. Therefore, it is relative in relation to a particular social set up. It is also subjective because it encompasses ethical valuations, which are bound to be subjective. Therefore, it is incapable of quantitative measurement. Even the measuring rod of money is inadequate in measuring it. Proxy indicators like level of education, vertical social mobility, esteem attached to the nature of job etc. are used to measure social welfare. -Social poverty was described by Adam Smith as “By necessities I understand not only the commodities, which are indispensably necessary for the support of life, but whatever the custom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even in the lowest order to be without.”<sup>11</sup>

Nobel laurel Gary S. Becker believes that economic analysis is essential in understanding much of the behavior traditionally studied by sociologists, anthropologists and other social scientists. According to him there are the roles of discrimination and human capital in wage differences, crime, marriage, family relations, fertility behavior, relation between the human capital and population, endogenous growth etc. He seems to have been also pioneer along with Anthony Downs in application of economic theory to politics. A Key idea in most of his works is the application of the postulate of maximizing the prospect of net





economic gain in a wide range of human behavior relations in society. Brahmananda has remarked that what continues to dazzle is the daring novelty of his forays in spheres barred to Economics.<sup>12</sup>

### **RELIGION FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT**

In this connection, D. Nesy, in his article Religion for Peace and Development, has analyzed various dimensions of religion. According to him, the idea of religion working for peace and development seems, on the face of it, to be futile. In a situation when the attempts to curb greed and selfishness and to arouse awareness and concern for the needy are tragically inadequate, the moral energy to change ourselves and the social order in which we live must be sought not through armed might through respect for humanity, through religion. From etymological sense, the term religion carries a number of connotations. Literally it means 'to bind together'. It has the dual function of binding together the adherents of religion and the impulses within each man himself. It is the experience of the whole man, it is a holistic experience. Religion is an integrating force; it is the integrative experience of man - individually and collectively.

Definitions of religion vary from the simplest to the complicated. The Chambers Everyday Dictionary puts it as "religion means belief in, recognition of or an awakened sense of higher, unseen power or powers, with the emotion and morality connected therewith rites or worship." Belief in or worship of higher power and morality are very important in the context of a religion. Man's basic concept about the supreme shapes his attitude towards world.

So is the case with the concept of God. In addition to the ordinary concept of the Supreme Being of the monotheistic religions, it means the object of excessive devotion, which can range anything from a spiritual and superhuman entity to any ideal



of life that can excite a feeling of attachment and desirability in the human heart. The true import of the term religion can be understood only if we take the concept of God in a broad sense.<sup>13</sup>

The entire religious system in the present day society is undergoing rapid changes along with changes in other walks of life. Religion must go deeper and purify the heart of the individual so that the traces of selfishness, personal ambition and temporal avarices are destroyed. It must work for the rejuvenation of humanity, betterment of mankind, for real and constructive transformation of society and individual. Religion does not reject the world. It only gives it a new shape, a new face it dissolves the traces of ugliness and ruin the forces of destruction and oppression. Ultimately it aims at the well-being of one and all.

Peace is a necessity for survival. It is a moral necessity. A society cannot be peaceful when millions of its people are subjected to oppressive, economic, social and political conditions when its people are condemned to a haunted life of misery and reduced to the level of marginal existence unit for human beings. Speaking about peace, Mr. Claes Nobel of the United Earth Movement opines that peace represents the totality of peace in four specific areas: 1. Peaceful existence with ourselves. 2. Peaceful existence with others. 3. Peaceful existence with nature and 4. Peaceful existence with the universe. According to him peace has reference to oneself, in how a man treats and manages his body, mind, emotions, feelings and attitudes on an individual basis. Second his relationship with his family, friends and neighbours or in short, his right behavior and relationship to other cultures, religions, races, nations and minority groups. Third, the manner in which man treats, respects and interacts with the environment, his ethical relationship with the plants, the animals, the air, the fresh water, the oceans and the land represents peace. And finally, peace relates to our respect, reverence and right



ethical relationship with God and the Creative powers of the Universe. This comprehensive conception of peace goes along with the religious view of peace.

Nesy observes that peace making is a human affair. Unless a man is at peace with himself, he cannot be at peace with his brother nor with his Maker. Peace being beneficent adjustment on one side with his Creator and on the other with his fellow beings, applies to the entirety of the concentric relationships between the whole of humanity and the universe. No sphere of human life is exempted. In the context of struggle of the needier nations for a better life, we speak of peace as development a newer dimension attached to the concept of peace.<sup>14</sup>

In this paper an endeavour is made to evaluate some of the Islamic teachings, one way or the other, in the light of above framework. Speaking about peace, Mr. Claes Nobel of the United Earth Movement opines that peace represents the totality of peace in four specific areas:

#### **PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH OURSELVES**

According to Claes Nobel peace has reference to oneself, in how a man treats and manages his body, mind, emotions, feelings and attitudes on an individual basis. In this connection it is pertinent to take cognizance of the Islamic teachings to this effect.

It was related on the authority of Abu Abdullah an-Numan bin Bashir (may Allah pleased with them both) that, he said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say amongst other things, “Surely, there is in the body a piece of flesh, if it is sound, the whole body will be sound, but if it becomes corrupt (i.e. diseased ) the whole body will be corrupted – there is the heart.”

The word heart, here stands for human mind. If the mind is not swayed by unhealthy desires and feelings, the conduct of man shall be good and righteous. The corruption of human conduct



starts from an impure mind. So it is the duty of every Muslim to keep his mind pure and clean.<sup>15</sup>

In one of the Hadith related on the authority of Commander of the Faithful, Abu Hafs Umar Ibn al-Khattab (may the almighty Allah be pleased with him). He said, I heard the Messenger of Allah, on whom be the peace and blessings of Allah, say: “Verily, the deeds are (judged or determined) by the intentions, and for every man is what he intended.”

In this context, it has been narrated that, thought comes first and action follows. Hence intention determines the nature of action. Pure intentions alone can produce pure action. Men may be deceived by outward piety or by apparent goodness of our actions, but Allah Who knows the secrets of our hearts cannot be taken in by such pretence. So every action performed for the sake of Allah, must be pure in its motivation, and should be an unalloyed act of dedication. Purity of intention is emphasized in another Hadith, “Allah looks not on your faces and your wealth, but He looks into your hearts and (the nature of) your deeds.” (Muslim).<sup>16</sup>

It was on the authority of An-Nawwas son of Sam’an (may Allah be pleased with him) that he had it from the Prophet (upon whom be peace and blessings of Allah) who said, “Righteousness is good conduct, and sin is what rankles in your mind and you dislike the people to know of it.” Muslim narrated it.

It was also narrated from Wabisa bin Ma’abad (may Allah be pleased with him), who said, “I went to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH), and he said, “You have come to ask about righteousness?” I replied, “Yes”. He said, “Ask your heart. Righteousness is that in which the soul feels content and the heart satisfied. And sin is what rankles in the soul, and causes trepidation in the heart, even if you ask the people and they give their opinions (justifying) it.”



In this context, it has been narrated that, Allah has laid down clear, and objective standards of good and evil in the Qur'an, and in the example of the Prophet. Human conduct must be based on this unambiguous divine teaching, and every action must flow from this deep belief in the divine guidance and example of the Prophet.<sup>17</sup>

Relating the righteousness with the financial obligation in the form of zakah and charity, Allah warned the believers that, "You cannot attain to righteousness unless you spend out of what you love. And what you spend, Allah surely knows it." (3:91).<sup>18</sup>

### **SELF MANAGEMENT**

Three states of self are identified in the Quran. The first is the self that is prone to evil, the second is the reproaching or blaming self, and the last is the righteous self. The following verses explain:

"Nor do I absolve my own self (of blame): The (human) soul is certainly prone to evil, unless my Lord to bestow His mercy: but Surely my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (7:53)

And I do call to witness the self-reproaching Spirit: (eschew Evil). (75:2)

(To the righteous soul will be said:) "O (thou) soul, in (complete) rest And satisfaction! Come back thou to thy Lord, well pleased and well pleasing unto Him. Enter thou, then among My devotees, Yea, enter thou My Heaven. (89:27)

It can be interpreted that these Quranic states of self are equated with the Freudian id, ego, and superego noting that the Qur'an preceded Freud by fourteen centuries!

Self management is guided by these basic principles in Islam:

no one should charge himself or others with responsibilities exceeding his physical and mental capacities. God follows this



rule in his commands and man is requested to do the same. This verse illustrates:

“No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear.” (2:33).

- 1) Man will personally and directly benefit from his righteous deeds and will suffer from his evil deeds.

If any one does a righteous deed, it ensures to the benefit of his own soul; if he does evil, it works against (his own soul). In the end will ye (All) be brought back to your Lord. (45:15)

- 2) Every individual is paid what he earned, the good and the bad and no one will be treated unjustly.

And fear the Day when ye shall be Brought back to God. Then shall every soul be paid what it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly. (2:281)

- 3) The winners are those who purify their souls and the losers are the ones who corrupt it.

By the soul, and the proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its Wrong and its right: Truly he succeeds that purifies it and he fails that corrupts it. (91:7)

- 4) Morality is the source of righteousness and morality is a self-imposed, inner force, Prophet (PBUH) said:

“Righteousness is good morality, and wrong-doing is that which wavers in your soul and which you dislike people finding out about.”

- 5) Man has the obligation to change evil when he sees it. The following Hadith explains:

“Whoever of you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then with his tongue and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart, and that is the weakest of faith.”<sup>19</sup>



## PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH OTHERS: PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH NEIGHBOURS

The Qur'an says:

“He who strives to earn worldly wealth through rightful means to avoid asking for others help to serve his family, and to show kindness to his neighbour will be made by Allah to resurrect on the day of Judgement with his face bright as a full moon.<sup>20</sup>

The Holy Prophet has said,

“He has no faith in me, who sleeps replete, while his neighbour besides him is hungry, and he is aware of the fact.”

There is reported an incident in the Tazkirat-ul Aulia (i.e. Chronicle of Saints), that a saint went for a pilgrimage to Makkah. While he was there, a divine voice told him that, from among all the pilgrims, Allah had liked most the pilgrimage of a certain cobbler. He was surprised, for he knew that the cobbler was back in Baghdad. On his return, he went to that man to find out the secret of his excellent action which had so endeared him to Allah. After a lot of persuasion, the cobbler told him that, he had been gathering pennies for years, till he had enough money for the Haj. But one night he found the children of his neighbour crying from hunger, and he gave all the money to them. And thus the cobbler was elevated to divine grace and became a great saint.<sup>21</sup>

## PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH OTHER CULTURES

Radcliff Browne, after analysing all the definitions of 'culture', has concluded that culture is the way of life of a society. In case the culture is the way guided by God, it may be called true religion. If the religion has got the potentials of providing principles for the organisation of all the social institutions, it is *Dīn-al-Qayyim*. The religion of such potentials, when put in actual practice is called *Millah*. The *Millah* established exclusively under the directions of God by a Prophet is *Millat-al-Hanīfa*. Hanīf



literally means the person attached to one (God) and detached from everybody else. Such a culture (Millah) is absolutely unadulterated, hence completely integrated.<sup>22</sup>

When the institutions of an *ummah* are organised on the principles which represent the interests of all the people of the world for all times to come it is '*Ummat-al-wasata*'. Quran says:

"Thus, have we made of you a universal and eternal ummah, so that you may be the guards of Mankind." Quran 2:143

There is a difference of meaning in the word 'wast' and 'wasat'. The former means the middle point and the latter indicates any point occurring between the two extremes, which balances the two ends, and signifies the universal and eternal import. In case the institutions are organised exclusively according to the Divine Guidance, by the Muslims, the community called *Ummat-ul-Muslimah*. Quran provides a prayer:

"Our Lord, make us Muslims bowing to Thy (Will), and of our progeny a Muslim Ummah, bowing to Thy (Will)." (Quran 2:128, quoted at p. 310)

According to Dr. Iqbal, the word 'country' as a geographical term, is not contrary to Islam. Love of fatherland is a natural sentiment for which no formal education is required. However, he has got reservations regarding its political implications.<sup>23</sup>

### PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

God-revealed religions strongly oppose disorder, treachery, conflict, and oppression. Islam literally means "peace," "security," and "well-being." Naturally based on peace, security, and world harmony, it sees war and conflict as aberrations to be brought under control. Islam has always breathed peace and goodness. It considers war an accident, and has established rules to balance and limit it. For example, it takes justice and world peace as a basis, as





in the verse: "Let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from Justice" (5:8). **Islam** developed a line of defense based on certain principles that protect religion, life, property, the mind, and reproduction. The modern legal system also has done this.<sup>24</sup> Arab expansion had begun, and, on the whole continued, without useless cruelty. The occupation of new territory created from the outset an aristocratic class which stemmed from racial and religious origins, and was maintained in its position and supported in its opulence by respect and financial obligations imposed on adherents of other cults. The Muslims did not persecute the members of other persuasions and freedom of religious observance was allowed to all. The universalism of Islam applied only to those of Arabic extraction; the choice between conversion or death was something which only the pagan Arab had to face.<sup>25</sup>

*Lakum Dīnukum Wale-yadīn.* [for you your own religion, for us ,ours]

*Lā ikrāha Fid-dīn.* [there is no compulsion in religion]

### PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH MINORITY GROUPS

The characteristic feature of the non-Muslim subjects are different from those of the Muslim subjects. In many respects the former are more privileged. They are exempt from *Zakāt* and compulsory military service. In return to the protection of their life and property and the administration of their personal laws they are required to pay annually *Jizyah* (protection tax). The technical name used for the non-Muslim subjects is *Dhimmīs*. There are many exceptions to the liability of *Jizyah*. The woman, the minors, the indigents and those who become invalid due to blindness, sickness, lunacy and old age are exempted from the payment of *Jizyah*. If a *dhimmī* renders military service



voluntarily, he has not to pay *Jizyah* during the years of active service.<sup>26</sup>

In case a *dhimmī* becomes indigent, the Islamic State must provide the basic necessities of life to him:

"Once, Umar saw somebody asking for charity. He was old. He was a Jew. Umar took him home and gave him something from his pocket. Then he ordered the cashier of the state treasury to remit his *Jizyah* and fix an allowance for him. Umar remarked "By God, we shall be never doing justice if we eat out his youth and leave him deserted in old age." They are one of the beneficiaries of *Zakāt*. The term 'Fuqarā' connotes the Muslims and connotes *dhimmīs* who are poor.<sup>27</sup>

Māwardi and Abu Ya'la hold that the non-Muslim subjects can be appointed to any administrative post and could be sent as envoys. Sarakhsī has cited the case of deputation of Amr bin Umaiyya ad-Dhamry-a non-Muslim subject in second Hijari, as the envoy of Prophet to the Negus of Abyssiniya. The non-muslims, therefore may be appointed as ambassadors of the Islamic state.<sup>28</sup>

### **DHIMMĪ**

Ibn Qayyim has written a complete book on this subject. The title of the book is *Ahkām al Dhimma* in two big volumes.

The *dhimmīs* are full subjects of Islamic state. The right and duties of the non-Muslim subjects are determined by

- (i) the Quran and Sunnah.
- (ii) the terms of the treaty between the non-Muslims and the Islamic state.

*Dhimma* literally means responsibility. *Ahl-al-dhimma* are the non-Muslim subjects whose socio-political status is determined by the contract called '*aqd-al-dhimma*, the fulfillment of which is a



pledge upon the Islamic state. Nationality has been defined by Oppenheim as:

"The nationality of an individual is his quality of being a subject of a certain state, and therefore its citizens."<sup>29</sup>

As such, the *dhimmi*s are the subjects of an Islamic State. The differentiation between the Muslim and the *dhimmi* subjects pertains to three spheres:

#### (a) TAXATION

*Jizyah* is a tax which is levied on the *dhimmi* subjects. *Jizyah* is usually translated as 'poll tax' and is generally misunderstood to be a tax imposed on non-Muslims in exchange for allowing them to maintain their faith. The Arabic root of the word *Jizyah* is *Jazā* which means 'to give what is due in return for something given'. The military service is not compulsory for non-Muslims. The Islamic state is based on an ideology in which the non-Muslims do not believe. It is very fair that the persons who do not believe in an ideology should not be compelled to promote its cause. All the same, they are subjects with equal rights; thus, their life and property has to be protected and defended. For this they pay *Jizyah* which may be called the 'protection tax'. It is not exacted from the women and the minors. Thomas Arnold says:

"The *Jizyah* was levied on the able bodied males in lieu of the military service they would have been called upon to perform had they been Muslims; and it is very noticeable that when any Christian people served in the Muslim army, they were exempted from the payment of this tax."<sup>30</sup>

The Shariah has not fixed any permanent rate for the collection of *Jizyah*. It has been left to the discretion of the Muslim governments keeping in view the financial capacity of the *dhimmi*s. The fact that the tax of *Zakat* is not imposed on the non-



Muslims, implies a fair partnership between equal citizens of Islamic state.

(b) **POLITICAL RIGHTS**

The Islamic state being an ideological state, its ultimate command cannot be entrusted to the persons who do not have faith in the ideology. The non-Muslims can, however hold important jobs under the command of a Muslim.

The non-Muslim subjects have right to both voting and membership of the Parliament provided that the parliament's legislative powers are subordinated to the Shariah.

Von Kremer says:

"The non-Muslim communities enjoyed an almost complete autonomy, for the government placed in their hands the independent management of their internal affairs, and their religious leaders exercised judicial functions in cases that concerned their co-religionists only."<sup>31</sup>

*Bait al-Midras* was an important educational centre for the Jews of Madina during the lifetime of the Prophet PBUH.<sup>32</sup>

(c) **PERSONAL LAWS**

The non-Muslim subjects have judicial autonomy according to their religions. In civil matters if both the parties are non-Muslim, the courts of an Islamic state take cognizance if they agree to come to the court. The Quran (II:179; V:45; V:32; VI:152) prescribes capital punishment for murder, without discrimination between the Muslims and the dhimmīs. The Prophet PBUH ordered the execution of a Muslim who had murdered a dhimmi.<sup>33</sup>

**STATUS OF NON-MUSLIMS**

The security of life and property, and freedom of religion are ensured to non-Muslim minorities who are styled 'Dhimmi', the



protected of God and the Prophet. ‘Beware’! Proclaimed the Prophet, I shall myself be complainant, on the Day of Resurrection, against him who wrongs a ‘Dhimmi’ or lays on him a responsibility greater than he can bear or deprives him of anything that belongs to him’. (Al-Mawardi, Al-Ahkam al-Sultāniyah, p.137). So mindful was the Prophet of their safety and welfare that a few moments before he expired, the thought of the ‘*Dhimmi*’ came to him and he said: ‘Any Muslim who kills a *Dhimmi* has not the slightest chance of catching even the faintest smell of heaven. Prophet them; they are my *Dhimmis*’. (Bukhari). As he lay assassinated:

“To him who will be the Caliph after me, I commend my wish and testament! The ‘*Dhimmis*’ are protected of God and the Prophet. Respect the covenant entered into with them, and when necessary fight for their interests and do not place on them burden or responsibility which they cannot bear’ (Bukhari).

In sum, non-Muslim, in the Islamic state, constitute a protected minority and it becomes the duty of the state to protect their person, property and honour. They are not to be defamed and the jurists are agreed on this point that he who violates a non-Muslim woman is to be punished as if he violated a Muslim woman.<sup>34</sup>

The dealings with the non-Muslim objects is being regulated by means of *Siyar*, which is a major source of the Muslim law. Al Saradhsi defined *siyar* in the jurisprudential sense as follows:

“*Siyar*...describes the conduct of the believers (Muslims) in their relations with the unbelievers of enemy territory as well as with people with whom the believers have made treaties, who may have been temporarily (*musta’man* – the subject of the state which was at war with a Muslim state and granted safe conduct to enter Muslim territory) or permanently *dhimmi*-(the non-Muslim subject



of a Muslim state) in Muslim land; with apostates, *murtad*...and with rebels...<sup>35</sup>

According to Dr. AbdulHamid, Siyar also includes the rules of civilized intercourse with peoples and states living in friendship with Muslims, which are contrasted in the Quran with those in hostility.

### **AL-DHIMMAH**

This term is defined as a sort of permanent agreement between Muslim political authorities and non-Muslim subjects which provides protection for Muslims and peaceful internal relations with non-Muslim subjects. In return they paid *Jizya*. In turn the Muslim state was obliged not only to tolerate with sincerity the non-Muslims' faith, religious practices and laws, but also to provide them with protection for their lives, properties: "Their blood is as our blood and their possessions are as ours."<sup>36</sup>

### **COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH ANGLO- AMERICAN SYSTEM**

The British law divides the people into two main categories; British subjects and the aliens. The former are either the natural born British subjects being born of the families loyal to the King or they acquire the British Nationality by passing through certain legal formalities in which they give assurance of their loyalty to the King. The latter are those people who live in the British territory but are loyal to some other state.

The aliens may become the British Nationals, but the British law prohibits the British subjects from acquiring some other nationality while living within the British territory. They cannot, even revert to their former nationality if they were originally the aliens. This aspect of the British law is similar to the Islamic concept of Apostasy (Murtad).



The status of the aliens in the British Law is somewhat like that of the dhimmis in the Islamic state with the following differences:

1. The aliens, if they enter the country lawfully and respect the British Laws, are given protection of life and property. They cannot enjoy any right of citizenship. The rights of citizenship are exclusively for those who are loyal to the King. Islam gives rights of citizenship to the *dhimmīs*.
2. The status of aliens is given to the people who are temporarily settled in Britain. The permanent residents cannot live as aliens. Islam allows the peaceful non-Muslims to live permanently in the Islamic state although they are not loyal to God and Prophet.<sup>37</sup>

### **PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WITH NATURE AND THE UNIVERSE**

Dr. Abubakr Ahmed Bagader et al have observed that, “Human activities over the last century have so affected natural processes that the very atmosphere upon which life depends has been altered. These impacts are of such a magnitude that Nature itself, as an independent self regulating force has been compromised and will require human intervention; intervention which itself could further alter natural processes.”

”Thus”, they argued, “in embarking upon such an unprecedented intervention in natural processes, it becomes increasingly important to carefully examine the basis of the relationship between our species and the natural world. It is particularly important to examine alternatives to the philosophic regime which has shepherded human society into the present state, and to seek an environmental sustainability in that relationship which can continue in perpetuity... In seeking culturally appropriate modalities, the principles of Islam are providing



guidance for environmental managers; since Islam represents more than a belief system, it is a way of life and a well defined set of values providing specific guidance for virtually every aspect of life. Islam offers a font of inspiration which can be translated into policies for development, for regulation and law, for influencing public attitudes, and for achieving a sustainable relationship between mankind and the natural world provided by his Creator.”

In their effort to prove their point they have tried to introduce Islam’s attitude towards the universe, natural resources and relations between man and the nature. In this context they have put forth the following points:

“1. All things that God has created in this universe are created in due proportion and measure both quantitatively and qualitatively.

2. God has not created anything in this universe in vain, without wisdom, value and purpose.

3. Man is part of this universe, the elements of which are complementary to one another in an integrated whole indeed, man is a distinct. part of the universe and it has a special position among its other parts.

4. God's wisdom has ordained to grant human beings stewardship (*khilāfah*) on the earth. Therefore, in addition to being part of the earth and part of the universe, man is also the executor of God's injunctions and commands. And as such he is only a manager of the earth and not a proprietor; a beneficiary and not a disposer or ordainer. Heaven and earth and all that they contain belong to God alone. Man has been granted stewardship to manage the earth in accordance with the purposes intended by its Creator; to utilize it for his own benefit and the benefit of other created beings, and for the fulfilment of his interests and of theirs. He is thus entrusted with its maintenance and care, and must use it as a trustee, within the limits dictated by his trust.





5. All of the resources upon which life depends have been created by God as a trust in our hands. He has ordained sustenance for all people and for all living beings.

6. The right to utilize and harness natural resources, which God has granted man, necessarily involves an obligation on man's part to conserve them both quantitatively and qualitatively... It follows that man has no right to cause the degradation of the environment and distort its intrinsic suitability for human life and settlement. Nor has he the right to exploit or use natural resources unwisely in such a way as to spoil the food bases and other sources of subsistence for living beings, or expose them to destruction and defilement.

7. While the attitude of Islam to the environment, the sources of life, and the resources of nature is based in part on prohibition of abuse, it is also based on construction and sustainable development. This integration of the development and conservation of natural resources is clear in the idea of bringing life to the land and causing it to flourish through agriculture, cultivation, and construction.

The approach of Islam toward the use and development of the earth's resources was put thus by 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, the fourth Caliph, to a man who had developed and reclaimed abandoned land: "Partake of it gladly, so long as you are a benefactor, not a despoiler; a cultivator, not a destroyer."

This positive attitude involves taking measures to improve all aspects of life: health, nutrition, and the psychological and spiritual dimensions, for man's benefit and the maintenance of his welfare, as well as for the betterment of life for all future generations."

After elaborating core aspects of Islamic attitude, Dr. Abubakr Ahmed Bagader and colleagues have put forth various Islamic teachings towards protection and conservation of the basic natural



resources viz. water, air, land, plants and animals. Apart from taking cognizance of God-made natural resources and their relationship with the man, they have put forth Islamic teachings dealing with the protection of man and the **environment** from the harmful impacts of man-made products and processes, viz.

1. Wastes, Exhausts, Cleansing Materials and Other Toxic and Harmful Substances
2. Pesticides
3. Radioactive Substances
4. Noise
5. Intoxicants and Other Drugs
6. Natural Catastrophes

In this connection they have pointed out that, "Damage of all forms and kinds is forbidden in Islam. One of the fundamental principles of Islamic law is the Prophetic declaration, "There shall be no damage and no infliction of damage."1 ' Prevention of damage and corruption before it occurs is better than treatment after it occurs.<sup>38</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

The Islamic teachings, being able to influence the heart, soul and mind of man, which happen to be the main sources of human behaviour, can activate the human being to behave in a manner conducive to the self, family, society and the universe, because all these factors are interwoven in the thread of faith in God. Islamic teachings formulate a peculiar paradigm related with the present life and the life hereafter, which have got influence over the attitudes of its followers. The spiritual directives regarding various economic, social and human factors and a sound, comprehensive, harmonious and integrated institutional base to implement the directives of Golden Mean of Matter and Spirit in practice has resulted into the establishment of an Islamic



economy in history; giving due weightage to human side of economics.

Dr. Shrikant Jichkar, the renowned scholar, in his foreword to the book entitled Islamic Economics, of Mr. Bokare has stated that the forces of materialistic consumption would have lost their values of life in the next century. Spirituality will overtake the history of economic thought. To him Holy Quran becomes relevant in this realm because it teaches restraints in consumption, non-possessiveness of gold and ornaments and help for the poor brethren. He came to conclusion that, Islam is peace for mankind and Islamic economy ought to possess the property of peace in economic life.<sup>39</sup>

Likewise, the US President George W. Bush, while appearing at a Muslim Centre at Washington has stressed that, Islam has a rich and peaceful history and that many Muslims live in the United States and make contributions throughout society. Has also warmly praised Muslims for a “Spirit of Tolerance”. According to him Islam affirms God’s justice and insists on man’s moral responsibility. Acknowledging the acts of kindness and generosity by Muslims during Ramzans to people in need as inspiration for building a “Culture of Service” among people of all faiths in the country.<sup>40</sup>

What Mr. Claes Nobel of the United Earth Movement had opined regarding peace which represents the totality of peace in four specific areas:

1. Peaceful existence with ourselves.
2. Peaceful existence with others.
3. Peaceful existence with nature and
2. Peaceful existence with the universe.<sup>41</sup>

From whatever has been stated in the foregoing paragraphs, it can be concluded that, Islamic social structure integrates, co-



ordinates, navigates and controls all the above mentioned aspects and factors related therewith into one holistic perspective by binding man with his self, fellow men and other objects of creations around him. As such Islamic structure based upon Islamic ideology is able to establish peace in all spheres of life. However, peace is not an isolated issued related with a particular caste, community or the religion. It is the outcome of the inter-personal, inter-religion and international relations which are subject to change as per the prevalent socio-economic, political and cultural sentiments at the individual and institutional levels. Hence for an objective analysis of the matter of peace on earth, despite concluding the paper from ideological point of view, it is felt necessary to cast a glance over some historical aspects governing interfaith relationships specifically the relationship between Islam and the West.

#### **A CURSORY GLANCE OVER THE RELATIONSHIP OF ISLAM & THE WEST**

Islam is the extended version of Abrahamic religions; therefore, it is imperative to see post-Islamic historical repercussions. This is essential for evaluating impact of those factors on the ground realities affecting contemporary international relations, peace and solidarity.

In this context it is pertinent to consider the contents of a research paper written by Ali Unal, a renowned Turkish scholar who brilliantly tackled with multidimensional issues related with the world peace. He has pointed out that, “Muslims and the West have struggled with each **other** for almost fourteen centuries. From the Western perspective, **Islam** has threatened Western doors and opened many of them, facts that have not been forgotten.” Ali Unal has tried to represent the Muslim perspective by referring Graham Fuller and Ian O. Lesser who have acknowledged, (Kusatılanlar-**Islam** ve Batı'nın Jeopolitigi (trans.),



Istanbul: 1996, p. 41-2), in the last century alone, far more Muslims have been killed by Western powers than all of the Christians killed by Muslims throughout history. Many Muslims tend to produce more comprehensive results from this. They believe that Western policies are intentionally designed to weaken Muslim power. Christendom's historical portrayal of **Islam** also contributes to this. For centuries, Christians were told that **Islam** was a crude and distorted version of Judaism and Christianity. For a very long time the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace, was considered an imposter. This historical experience leads even educated and conscious Muslims to believe that the West is continuing its thousand-year-old systematic aggression against **Islam** and, even worse, that it is doing so now with much more subtle and sophisticated methods. They approach the Church's call for dialogue from the same perspective.”

According to Ali Unal, “This leads Muslims to oppose and resent the West.” “However,” he argues, “modern modes of transportation and mass communication have turned the world into a global village in which every **relationship** is interactive. The West cannot wipe out **Islam** or its territory, and Muslim armies can no longer march on the West. Moreover, as this world is becoming even more global, both sides feel the need for a give-and-take **relationship**. **Islam**, as represented by the Holy Book and the *Sunna* of the Prophet, has retained the freshness of its beliefs, spiritual essence, good works, and morality as it has unfolded over the last fourteen centuries. In addition, it has the potential to blow spirit and life into Muslims who have been numbed for centuries, as well as into many **other** peoples drowned in the swamp of materialism. Just as religion has not yet escaped the onslaught of unbelief based on science and philosophy, no one can guarantee that this storm will not blow even stronger in the future. These and **other** factors do not allow Muslims to view and



present **Islam** purely as a political ideology or an economic system.”

Looking at some positive aspects in between the Christians and the Muslims, Ali Unal has highlighted that, “In the West, some changes are observed in the attitudes of some intellectuals and clerics toward **Islam**...the late Massignon, who referred to **Islam** by the expression: "The faith of Abraham revived with Muhammad." He believed that **Islam** has a positive, almost prophetic mission in the post-Christian world, for: "**Islam** is the religion of faith. It is not a religion of natural faith in the God of the philosophers, but faith in the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Ishmael, faith in our God. **Islam** is a great mystery of Divine Will." Together with Christian clerics and men of religion, many Western thinkers besides Massignon, like Charles J. Ledit, Y. Moubarac, Irene-M. Dalmis, L. Gardet, Norman Daniel, Michel Lelong, H. Maurier, Olivier Lacombe, and Thomas Merton express warmth for both **Islam** and for our Prophet.”

Ali Unal has affirmed that, “As Muslims, we accept all Prophets and Books sent to different peoples throughout history, and regard belief in them as an essential principle of being Muslim. A Muslim is a true follower of Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and all **other** Prophets, upon them be peace. Not believing in one Prophet or Book means that one is not a Muslim. Thus we acknowledge the oneness and basic unity of religion, which is a symphony of God's blessings and mercy, and the universality of belief in religion. So, religion is a system of belief that embraces all races and all beliefs, a road that brings everyone together in brotherhood.”

Ali Unal cited Qur'an in which God says: "This is the Book wherein there is no doubt; a guidance to those who fear God" (2:2). Later it is explained that these pious ones are those: "Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of



what We have provided for them; and who believe in what is sent to you and what was sent before you, and (in their hearts) have the reassurance of the Hereafter" (2:3-4). At the very outset, using a very soft and slightly oblique style, the Qur'an calls people to accept the former Prophets and their Books. Having such a condition at the very beginning of the Qur'an seems very important to me when it comes to getting into contact with the followers of **other religions**."

Ali Unal has quoted The Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, who defined a true Muslim as one who harms no one with his/her words and actions, and who is the most trustworthy representative of universal peace.

He has quoted other verses of God which commands: "And discuss you not with the People of the Book, except with means better (than mere disputation)" (29:46). In this verse, the Qur'an describes what method, approach, and manner should be used. In Sura Mumtahana, it is stated: "God 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 God loves those who are just" (60:8).

**According to** Ali Unal, "**Islam** reconciles opposites that seem to be mutually exclusive: religion–science, this world–the next world, nature– Divine Books, the material–the spiritual, and spirit–body. Religion can erect a defense against the destruction caused by scientific materialism, put science in its proper place, and end long-standing conflicts among nations and peoples. The natural sciences, which should act as steps of light leading people to God, have become a cause of unbelief on a previously unknown scale. As the West has become the main base for this unbelief, and because Christianity has been the religion most influenced by it, dialogue between Muslims and Christians appears to be indispensable."



While finding a common thread in between Divine Religions, Ali Unal has argued that, “God-revealed religions strongly oppose disorder, treachery, conflict, and oppression. **Islam** literally means "peace," "security," and "well-being." Naturally based on peace, security, and world harmony, it sees war and conflict as aberrations to be brought under control. **Islam** has always breathed peace and goodness. It considers war an accident, and has established rules to balance and limit it. For example, it takes justice and world peace as a basis, as in the verse: "Let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from Justice" (5:8). **Islam** developed a line of defense based on certain principles that protect religion, life, property, the mind, and reproduction. The modern legal system also has done this. **Islam** teaches that those who want to reform the world must first reform themselves. In order to bring others to the path of traveling to a better world, they must purify their inner worlds of hatred, rancor, and jealousy, and adorn their outer worlds with all kinds of virtues. Those who are far removed from self-control and self-discipline, who have failed to refine their feelings, may seem attractive and insightful at first. However, they will not be able to inspire others in any permanent way, and the sentiments they arouse will soon disappear.”

In his endeavour to amalgamate the contribution of the World Religions in fostering various values essential for the sustenance of the human beings and the humanity, he has stated that, “Regardless of how their adherents implement their faith in their daily lives, such generally accepted values as love, respect, tolerance, forgiveness, mercy, human rights, peace, brotherhood, and freedom are all values exalted by religion. Most of these values are accorded the highest precedence in the messages brought by Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, upon them be peace.”





Lastly, Ali Unal has expressed hoped that, “Goodness, beauty, truthfulness, and being virtuous are the essence of the world and humanity. Whatever happens, the world will one day find this essence. No one can prevent this.”<sup>42</sup>

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