

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH  
MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL

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## **The Ground-setting and the Contemporary Western Lifestyle**

**Dr. Mohammad Nasir<sup>1</sup>**

### ***Abstract***

Several lifestyles have been prevalent in the recent decades in various parts of continents viz. Africa, America, Asia, Australia, and Europe. The empirical evidence indicates that in number of western countries where income has risen, but surprisingly the level of happiness of people has fallen. This revealing fact guides the western thinkers, economists, sociologists, medical scientists towards exploration of the root causes of such inverse relationship viz. between income and happiness. One possible interpretation in the Divine Economic Model is that the prevalence of the ethical attributes among individuals, families, and communities due to diverse engagements induced by higher income causes happiness to fall. The present paper in Part I reviews the relationship of happiness with religious, ethical and spiritual factors. In Part II, various lifestyles in western countries have been discussed in relation with ethics and happiness. In Part III, the lifestyles of Islam which shall be the lifestyle in the post-

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appearance era is discussed. In this part, deviation from Islamic lifestyles and also its adoption in European communities is analyzed, especially with reference to ethical systems. The paper argues that the post-appearance lifestyle, if promoted in rational manner, can gain rapid popularity in Europe due to several reasons. Among these reasons, an important parameter would be closeness to the human nature. Some strategies to achieve this objective have also been suggested.

**Keywords:** lifestyles, ethics, values, post-appearance era, happiness, divine economics, social relationships and interactions, free time.

### *Introduction*

Several lifestyles have been prevalent in the recent decades in various parts of continents viz. Africa, America, Asia, Australia, and Europe. Majority of the community in American, Australian, and European continents follows a pertinent lifestyle, which is, in general, known as *western lifestyle*. This lifestyle is also prevalent in other continents though the intensity varies from one country to another. However, the vast majority of Muslim population across the globe follows another lifestyle, which is called an *Islamic lifestyle*. In pre-appearance era of the Holy Imam Al-Mahdi [ajj.] reasonable differences exist between both of these lifestyles, whereas some similarities can also be seen. There is a dire need that Muslims leaders, scholars, and researchers address the western populations to minimize these differences. It is also need of the time that special efforts would be made to strengthen the similarities between the western and Islamic lifestyles. These endeavors may be proved ground-setting for the appearance of the Holy Imam Al-Mahdi [ajj.].

### *Review of Literature*

A brief review of literature is provided in the following

paragraphs. A particular emphasis is given to the relationship of human happiness, and religious, ethical / spiritual factors.

### **Western Lifestyles and Human Happiness**

Seven major UK lifestyle areas have been studied in four countries of Great Britain for forty years. These include smoking; drinking; households, families and people; housing and consumer durables; marriage and cohabitation; pensions; and general health. The data has been collected on several aspects of lifestyles through surveys. These surveys present a picture of families and people living in Great Britain. A tabular output is provided in the result and discussion section to summarize the British lifestyle on a range of core issues. These include demographic information, housing related issues, consumer durables, employment, education, use of health services, smoking, drinking, marriages and cohabitation and income / expenditure (General Lifestyle Survey Overview Report, 2011).

The empirical evidence indicates that in number of western countries where income has risen, but surprisingly the long-term average happiness of people has not increased despite of the fact that increased income is positively related with the happiness, and the empirical literature has found considerable evidence in favour of it. Recent papers which have supported the fact include Clark (1999), Di Tella et al. (2003), Burchardt (2005), Grund and Sliwka (2007) and Di Tella et al. (2007). Di Tella et al. (2003) showed that the happiness effects of a rise in GDP per capita disappeared after two years. Di Tella et al. (2007), using the German Socio-Economic Panel estimated that two thirds of initial effect of income on happiness was lost after four years. The evidence of these recent studies is consistent with earlier literature using individual assessments of what constituted a "sufficient" level of income. The amount of money that

people regard as "sufficient" or "required" turns out to grow in proportion with the respondents own income (Layard 2005).

The adaptation mechanism, on the other hand, suggests that income distribution is of no consequence to individual happiness. Fayard (2005) pointed that there existed a negative externality to income-generating activities. The gain in happiness that is experienced when a group earned more was accompanied by a loss in happiness of those in the comparison group.

There has been a considerable degree of consensus in literature that which variables affect happiness the most. Health, marital status and employment status were found to have the largest effect on happiness. Whereas age, education, religious attitudes and income also play sizeable roles.

This revealing fact guides the western thinkers, economists, sociologists, medical scientists towards exploration of the root causes of such inverse relationship viz. between income and happiness. One possible interpretation in the Divine Economic Model is that the prevalence of the ethical attributes among individuals, families, and communities due to diverse engagements induced by higher income causes happiness to fall.

### **An Overview of Different Lifestyles**

Mainly, there have been not many lifestyles prevalent in the world. A vast majority of devotee (true followers) of two Divine Religions (e.g. Christian, and Jews) follow peculiar lifestyles in many countries of the world. Moreover, other non-divine religions followers also follow atypical lifestyles of their-own as suggested by their religions. These non-divine religions include Hindu, Buddhist, Shikhs, and some other small populations of relatively unknown religions. The lifestyles of these communities are not in the scope of this paper. This paper

would address two types of lifestyles (Islamic and western) since these have been followed around 60-70 percent of the world population.

Muslim communities across the globe have almost a typical lifestyle, which is known as Islamic Lifestyle (IL). Though there are certain degrees of variation due to geographic, socio-economic, and political circumstances in some countries. For example, there has been adjustment made in Norway (Europe) due to its geographic position in the globe. Similarly, minor adaptations have also been made by Muslim community of North American part of USA.

Western Lifestyle (WL) is another lifestyle adapted by a vast majority of population in many countries of the world. This lifestyle is followed by a fair majority of Christian, Jews, Hindus, Sheikhs', Buddhists', Atheists', and a small section of Muslim population also. This paper will focus, and deliberate on the contemporary Western Lifestyle of United Kingdom. An effort will also be made to compare it with Islamic Lifestyle.

### **Western / UK Lifestyles Features**

Western Lifestyle (WL) has been followed by major section of the western / UK residents, though other lifestyles have also been practiced there. A small fraction of other religion groups also follow their own modern lifestyles among western population. However, migrated and native Muslims practice adapted Islamic Lifestyle (IL) in these western countries. Western Lifestyle mainly promotes free society, and derived heavily from secular political systems of these countries. Some important features of WL are given in following paragraphs:

In any society, some values are universally practices by a reasonable majority since these have been transferred from generation to generation. Though these values have not been directly derived from any particular religion, yet these have a close relationship with religion, and practiced in many

parts of the worlds. Some values are considered good or bad in both lifestyles viz. Western, and Islamic Lifestyles. The examples of universally good values include honesty, non-violence, search for truth, respect and love for human / mankind / nature / environment, dignity, equality, freedom from tyranny, fear, and torture etc. Whereas universally bad values across both lifestyles are murder / genocide, theft, dishonesty, hypocrisy, cannibalism, physical torture, corruption, wife-beating, child abuse, slavery etc.

However, Western and Islamic lifestyles also greatly differ in many aspects of their lifestyles. This is due to relaxed nature of the WL, which is also acceptable among their vast majority of the population. For example, these include marriage, sexual orientation, and relationships; family formation and its structure; alcohol drinking; gambling; and drug use etc.

Islamic Lifestyle has strict and pre-defined boundaries for all Muslims, and faith desires them to lead their lives accordingly. However, the communities living in the western countries (including UK) share some important common theoretical religious concepts, either they follow the Western or Islamic Lifestyle. For example, the population who have some religious understanding (of Islam or Christianity) do believe in Allah (i.e. relation between Human Nature and Religion), belief in Angels (Angels of Allah), belief in Divine Books (Quran, Bible, Tora), belief in the Messengers of Allah (Moses, Jesus, Muhammad pbuh), belief in Hereafter (The Day of Judgment), and belief in Divine Destiny (i.e. 'Qadaa and Qadar'). However, their understanding of these concepts is shallow, and not clear to majority of them. Contrary to this, major sections of Muslim community have clear-cut and deep understanding about these religious concepts.

Wilson (1991) has also cited bad and good common values between Western, and Islamic Lifestyles. He has stated that murder, theft, dishonesty, and hypocrisy are

considered major sins in both lifestyles. Furthermore he has concluded that principles of Justice, Compassion, and Forgiveness have also been founded universal in the Western, and Islamic Lifestyles.

Another list of common values in Western, and Islamic lifestyles is \_\_ treating others respect and compassion, virtues of truthfulness, justice for all, personal responsibility, self-discipline, and faith. Hanley (1989) has created this list through informal search for recurrent themes found in Quran and Bible.

### **The Intended Islamic Lifestyle**

A careful review of the Divine Books clearly provide a good understanding, and possibility of a common play ground for both communities who fallow Western, and Islamic lifestyles. However, there is a dire need to work on universally common areas initially, and create more harmony that exists at present. Some segments from both communities would put determined efforts to obtain the goal of harmony. A peculiar plan of work is required by Muslims communities to remove the gaps between the two lifestyles. This would facilitate and assist the Western population to understand the intended Islamic Lifestyle.

### **Will the Mahdavi lifestyle be different from Islamic Lifestyles?**

I would like to cite a few important references, whose authenticity all Muslims agree. As reported in *Sahih Tirmidhi* (V2, P86, V9, P74-75) Holy Prophet has said:

"Even if the entire duration of the world's existence has already been exhausted and only one day is left before Doomsday, Allah will expand that day to such a length of time, as to accommodate the kingdom of a person out of my Ahlul-Bayt who will be called by my name. He will then fill out the earth with peace and justice as it will have been full of injustice and tyranny before then". This text informs that Divine promises will take place on a pre-determined day, as

most Shi'ite and Sunnit sources refer.

As evident, the re-appearance of Holy Imam Al-Mahdi [ajj.] is a vital part of Muslims belief. The confusion exists among the followers of other Divine Religions though the concept of the savoir has been noted. It is also a common impression among Muslim scholars that a fair majority of Muslims do not have crystal clear concept about the Islamic Lifestyle just before and after the Mahdavi period. This poses many questions to the Muslims minds in the present time. One of the essential questions is "Will the Mahdavi lifestyle be different from current Islamic Lifestyles?" If related Islamic literature is consulted on this aspect, it can be safely derived that the present day Islamic Lifestyle will not lose its essential components though it would be improved in many aspects, levels, and dimensions. As narrated in religious literature, simplicity, and human dignity would be prime features in Islamic Lifestyle of post Mahdavi period. There will be security, survival, and happiness due to the adoption of intended Islamic Lifestyle, and the earth will be filled with peace and justice as promised by our last Prophet pbuh.

### ***Research Methodology***

A review of related documents was carried out, and mainly secondary sources of data have been used for this concept paper. The list of these sources is provided in References / Bibliography. The secondary source information has been further explored through personal observation, one to one interaction, and focused group discussions.

### ***Results and Discussions***

Seven major UK lifestyle areas have been studied in four countries of Great Britain for forty years. These include smoking; drinking; households, families and people;

housing and consumer durables; marriage and cohabitation; pensions; and general health. The data has been collected on several aspects of lifestyles through formal surveys. These surveys present a picture of families and people living in Great Britain. A tabular output is provided to summarize the British lifestyle on a range of core issues. These include demographic information, housing related issues, consumer durables, employment, education, use of health services, smoking, drinking, marriages and cohabitation and income / expenditure (General Lifestyle Survey Overview Report, 2011). Some of these are given below:

-The household size has decreased over time. This may be an indicator dis-integration of family unit.

-The institution of marriage has been weakened. The proportion of couples living together without the wedlock. This indicates that the previous moral standards have been compromised at the cost of free society.

-Drinking habits of female segment have increased, which indicate pressures and worries of this group.

-The availability of modern computer technology is on the increase in the society.

Facts about UK Lifestyle	Trends over 40 years [increase or decrease etc.]
Household Size	Declined from 2.91 persons to 2.35
Adults Living Alone	Increased two-fold (from 9% to 16%). Increased five times (from 2% to 10%) for age ranging 25-44 years.
Marriages (with and without wedlock)	proportion of married women decreased from 74% to 47% (1979 to 2011) Couples living together without wedlock has tripled (i.e. 11% in 1979 to 34% in 2011)
Smoking Habits	Cigarette smoking decreased from 45% (in 1974) to 20% (in 2011)
Drinking Habits	Drinking (>5 days per week) decreased. (Men=23% to 16% from 1998 to 2011 (Women=13% to 9% from 1998 to 2011 Women older than 45 years drink >5 days per week than younger people
Transport / Mobility	Three-fold increased in household access to vehicles from 52% (in 1942) to 76% (in 2011). Proportion of households with access to multiple cars has trebled from 9% (in 1972) to and 32% (in 2011).

Computer Use	Increased HH access to home computer from 9% to 80% between 1984 to 2011,
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Source: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ghs/general-lifestyle-survey/2011/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/ghs/general-lifestyle-survey/2011/index.html)

### ***Concluding Remarks***

An important conclusion is that human safety, security, survival, happiness and wellbeing can be achieved with adoption of simple but dignified lifestyle. Similar is an intended lifestyle in Islamic faith system. This would be the style of humans after the appearance of the Holy Imam Al-Mahdi [ajj.] as narrated in religious literature.

The study finds that existing lifestyle in UK / European countries includes only characteristics of the Islamic intended lifestyle, and mostly people are far away from that. However, they have the potential to adopt such style if it is promoted among them in a rational and organized manner. There may be several reasons behind this argument among which one is very important, that is, they love to be close to the human nature.

Another conclusion is that there is dire need to initiate a virtual forum to discuss, and create awareness in regard with the appearance of the Holy Imam Al-Mahdi [ajj.] among Muslims, as well as other faith communities.

### ***Strategies for Promotion of Ground-Setting Lifestyles***

One possible strategy for promotion of Islamic intended lifestyle which is also the Mahdavi lifestyle can be promoted through:

- a) Virtual discussion classes for Muslims and other Divine religions.
- b) Seminars, online free coaching to the young populations.
- c) Launching a joint web portal of all Muslims sects.
- d) Religious information would be included in school / college curriculum.

Secondly,

i. Character building of Muslim youth as suggested in Islamic Lifestyle.

ii. Advance training of Muslim students in scientific fields such as nanotechnology, advanced mathematics, computer robotics, molecular engineering etc.

iii. Steps should be taken to increase / improve Muslim image around the world.

iv. Mutual tolerance of other Divine Religions

v. inter-faith discussion groups, and dialogue about the Mahadism Doctrine.

Above all, it is vital to demonstrate Muslim role model (simple and dignified way of life) to Muslim youth, and other communities.

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## **Ethics, Human Interdependence and Future Lifestyles: A divine Economics Approach**

**Dr. Syed Nisar Hussain Hamdani<sup>1</sup>**

### ***Abstract:***

Religious literature shows that in the era of the last saavoir of the mankind [Imam Al-Mahdi ajj.], the interdependence among people shall overwhelm the individualism. One of the factors of this optimality shall be the rise in level of ethical living under which utility of one individual is also utility-bearing for another individual in contrast to the conventional economics theory which emphasises upon the individual's protection of self-interest. Another factor may be the reduction in cost and increase in reward of genuine relationships having economics, social, intellectual and other benefits for relating people because of the Mahdavi teachings. The Interdependent utility can be understood by an assumption on individual preferences under which the subjective welfare of an individual consumer or economic agent depends on few measure of welfare/wellbeing of other consumers. As many religions encourage cooperation, patronage, bounteousness, altruism, generosity, volunteering and other forms of contributing in others lives, it is a claim of Divine Economics that people with more Divine Capital

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i.e. religiosity, spirituality, ethics and the infrastructures which re-enforce divinely attributes are more influenced by interdependent nature of own utility. Benefiting mainly from Islamic ethical philosophy, this paper develops the theoretical justification for enhanced interdependence when agents are more ethical. This study will answer scientifically that whether religiosity intensifies interdependent utility or not? Do more ethical people are more interdependent? “How this interdependence is relevant to economic behaviour of an ethical person” and, How far such interdependence affects lifestyles? This is expected that religiosity, spirituality or ethical attributes usually enhance the interconnectedness of individuals or groups psychologically, economically, and sometimes this relation is so deeper that makes them accountable to each other. The paper is a contribution towards Mahdism doctrine in the field of economics and ethics.

### *1.1. Background*

Despite the technological advancement, physical infrastructure, economic progress, educational opportunities etc. have increased manifolds during last few decades, yet the problems humanity has faced have also increased. Unfortunately, even with visible increase in incomes of people on one side and on the other side, their happiness level is falling day by day. The instruments, training and manpower deployment for peace keeping has also been increased but human life on earth has become rapidly insecure. These and other problems of the today's world call for a paradigm shift in economics, education, social management, and governance.

Some people would believe that this situation is aggravating because human in present are moving towards a least ethical lifestyle. Other may relate this peak of cruelty and injustice as predicted phenomenon indicating the

nearness of establishment of kingdom of God on earth. Some others would say that establishment of Kingdom of God cannot be near if at least some people on earth do not display a welcoming behaviour for that Kingdom i.e. they become highly expert in worldly skills, acquire depth of piety, dispose height of ethics and think futuristically in favour of environment and all living things in this environment.

This situation puts a responsibility on shoulder of researchers and scholars to present alternative theoretical and practical models for a lifestyle that may reduce the problems mentioned above.

This paper presents a socio-economic approach as a small contribution towards understanding of alternative lifestyles. Specifically, the paper highlights the lifestyle based on individualism which significantly emerged in the recent history of Western world versus the collective-interdependent lifestyle as created in human nature and also propagated by religions. With this understanding interdependence among people we may identify on rational grounds what could be the lifestyle in the era of Imam Mahdi a.j. and how far it shall overwhelm the individualism.

Economics presents a model of 'optimality' that without harming to the utility or welfare of one individual, the utility of other individual or society should increase. In the context of Mahdism doctrine, it means that a lifestyle which possesses at least two characteristics can be considered as optimal;

That it safeguards one's own satisfaction or welfare

Without harming someone else's welfare it increases total satisfaction or welfare in the society.

Such optimality can be imagined about an ethical living under which, utility of one individual is gained from serving one's own interest and also by making others happy and satisfied i.e. utility of one individual is interdependent on

utility of others. This is in contrast to the conventional economics theory which emphasises upon the individual's protection of self-interest. This is still dependent on other's wellbeing even if they don't openly confess and/or practice it. For example a manufacturer of car can only sell the car if other people are earning enough (producing and selling more) to buy it. The Mahdavi lifestyle as mentioned in religious literature fulfils this requirement of optimality because under Mahdavi era, people will live a life of justice, benevolence, honesty, truthfulness and cooperation. Moreover, their cost of living shall reduce because of simplicity, reciprocity and enhanced sincere mutual relationships bearing economics, social, intellectual and other benefits.

The present study will answer scientifically that

- How the utility function of economic agents are interdependent and interrelated with each other.
- Whether or not religiosity intensifies interdependent utility?
- Are more ethical people more interdependent?
- How this interdependence is relevant to economic behaviour of an ethical person
- How far such interdependence affects economic or social lifestyles?
- What strategies can promote ethical lifestyles and Mahdavi attributes to create a dignified, prosperous, peaceful, just and cooperating society on earth?

### ***1.2 Interdependence and World Religions***

The Interdependent utility can be understood by an assumption on individual preferences under which the subjective welfare of an individual depends on few measure of welfare/wellbeing of other consumers.

As many religions encourage cooperation, patronage, bounteousness, altruism, generosity, volunteering and other forms of contributing in others lives, it is a claim of Divine

Economics that people with more Divine Capital i.e. religiosity, spirituality, ethics and the infrastructures which re-enforce divinely attributes are more influenced by interdependent nature of own utility. Benefiting mainly from Islamic ethical philosophy, this paper develops the theoretical justification for enhanced interdependence when agents are more ethical.

### *1.3 Concept of Interdependence in Economics*

The notion of interdependence can be derived from natural science where each organism in an ecosystem depends on another organism for its survival. There are both indirect and direct relationships. Interdependence builds the multifaceted feeding relationships in an ecosystem. Likewise Divine Economics broaden this concept of interdependence of individuals on each other for deriving utility. According to this theory, there are at least four areas human living which intensify this type of interdependence. These are; religiosity, spirituality, ethics and the infrastructures which re-enforce human relationships. These combined are given the name Divine Capital. Like other forms of capital,[financial, human, physical], the Divine Capital is claimed to have effects on process as well as outcomes of production, consumption, altruism and other human activities. One of the effects of Divine Capital is the enhancement in human interdependence. The present paper, although touches all of them, yet puts more focus on one of its elements i.e. ethical attributes of the individual.

Ethics effects interdependence by negative as well as positive ways. Hence the main emphasis on the idea that more ethical people are more interdependent remains relevant in both cases. A simple case is that suppose the utility of person 'A' depends on the consumption of person 'B' and if the person B's utility depends on person A's utility as well than utilities become repeatedly defined. For

instance if person A is a short tempered man and his anger leads to change in his utility function, this anger negatively effects the utility of person B. We examine how social link between agents is customized when they consider themselves connect with others.

Similarly in consumer theory, we assume that the satisfaction or Utility level of an economic agent A depends on few characteristics of another economic agent B. For instance, if consumer A gives donation to the consumer B, the utility function of consumer A could positively and directly depend income level or Utility level of B. And Consumer B derives satisfaction from this act of altruism. Furthermore, there are positive externalities associated with consumption for example, the utility level of wife can go into the utility function of her husband selflessly and altruistically (Becker, 1981). But if person A dislikes person C then any consumption which makes person C well off makes person worse off. This variation in interdependent utility function is none other than Jealousy that Professor Childs wrote that “You got it, I want it; consequently I am worse off. So, it is someone else’ responsibility to brighten me up.

#### ***1.4 Ethics and Economics***

Ethics is all about merits and values. A value is a good which is targeted to be attained or a standard of right to be tracked, while a merit is virtue which is a characteristic that helps us to achieve right and avoid wrong. Ethical dilemma and issues are interrelated with economic concerns. For instance we can take the example of cost-benefit analysis, while making decision about dollar 1000 whether to spend it for a night in the city, or donate it to the charity? Its utility level which makes you decide whether to spend a night on the city or charity will increase your happiness/utility. The charity may lead to prosperity of another human and gives

you satisfaction in the long term. We will weigh our choices by assessing their estimated costs and anticipated benefits against each other. Economists indirectly adopt a value outline when commencement a cost-benefit analysis. Different value obligations may result in alike thing, being deliberated a benefit from one outlook and a cost from another.

## ***2. Review of Literature:***

Since the Prophet of Islam Muhammad (SAWA) said: "Your comrades whom Allah has positioned in your care; Let him who has made guardian of his comrade by Allah nourish him out of what he himself feeds, dressed him from what he garments himself, and enforce not on him duty that will overcome him".

The most striking characteristic of Islamic ideology is that here rights and duties complement each other and are independent. It is obligation on every individual (in Islam) to understand the rights of other individuals in every possible way. If we follow this rule than society would be ideal society. When individuals are consciously involve in fulfillment of their rights. The Vienna Declaration approved at the International Conference on Human Rights (June 1993) indicated: "All human rights are world-wide, united, interdependent and interconnected." Imam Jaffar Sadeq (A.S.) said "No life is more magnificent than owning commendable moral values and ethics. (Qur'an 2:177) "... Accomplish the agreements which you have committed, and to be stable and enduring, in suffering (or pain) and misfortune, and during the course of all stages of fright. Such are the people of verity, the God-fearing." It is further said that "The gems and treasure of sustenance are veiled in creditable and ethical standards! The Reverent Amir (A.S).

Irene Van Staver (2007) discussed deontological ethics. He figured out that in analysis of Ethics in economics

deontology comes before utilitarianism; having its own downsides. And these downsides and shortcomings lead to the need of another theory of ethics for economics, say virtue ethics, which highlights the interconnectedness of consumers and compulsion to the merits/values more than institutionally implemented rules of society.

Matjaž Mulej et al., (2000) explained interdependence of Specialists he discussed that interdependence is a result of jointly different specializations which results in conflicts and complementarities. He said that they don't educate us about ethics and morals of interdisciplinary cooperation Specialists with more of these abilities generate even more advantage. There is less chance of errors and they develop more holistic opinion. There are number of methods which support interdisciplinary cooperation, including Dialectical Network thinking, Dialectical Systems Theory, Decision Making Standardization, etc.

Boxall, et al., (2005) formulated a theory of interdependent utility functions in investigating congestion in recreation demand equilibria. He offered Modelling Congestion as a sort of Interdependence in the Random Utility models. The idea is inspected empirically through the development of congestion forecasting functions which individuals use to arrange themselves among a set of recreation sites. They used revealed preference information. An attractive conclusion of this work out is that leisure site quality changes, which are predictable to give up utility, may create negative utility if the impacts of the change on overcrowding are mutually considered.

Karyn lai (2006) formulated a theory of interdependent selfhood in the two idealistic civilizations by learning from Chinese Philosophies" employs Confucian and Taoist philosophies in innovative relationship, Karyn Lai illustrated the exclusive insights of the two philosophies to deal with current arguments on community, ethics, morals and government. The problems comprise queries on culture,

selfhood, tradition, attachment, ethical development, government and feminist questions about dualism in Ethics.

Boxall, Peter C. et al., (2005) endeavoured with the courageous efforts by the marginal-utility economists of the turn of the century to set a study design for the equalization of and with the well along extension of this study by A. P. Lerner. It further explained the refutations of traditional antagonists. He summarized three more latest efforts, under the titles of interdependent utility function, by putting the limits on the field of inequality and latest theory of Justice by John Rawls in universal ethics, but ended up on a skeptical note.

Hajime Hori (2009) discussed the interdependent behavior of selfless individuals. So utility functions signifying non paternalistic altruism can be taken from the social relation and communication among the altruist agents. He came up with following results. First, non-paternalistic altruism has a propensity to unite Utility functions. Second, we can determine the degree to which the association can continue, by linearly extrapolating a known structure of altruistic Interactions,. Third, the amalgamation shows the minimization of the range of Conflicting choices but the direction of unification is deficient in ethical values. Fourth, the conditions utilitarianism enforced on the structure of altruistic connections are distinguished.

## **2.1 Ethical Theories**

Ethical theories are the basics of ethical exploration because they are the vantage point from which we can achieve assistance along the trail to the decisions. Each and every Ethical theory lay emphasis on diverse ideas e.g., in order to get desirable ethical right decision these theories help us to predict the results and interdependence of individuals in terms of duties and responsibilities. For the sake of simplification, we categorize ethical theories in three type e.g., deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics.

Deontology meaning 'responsibilities' or 'liability' which deals with the concept that performance of right deeds or wrong doings is not totally rely on the goodness or evilness of their outcomes (University of Aberdeen, 2007).

The theory stresses on the notion that people should stick to the duties and responsibilities which are assigned to them while analysing an ethical dilemma. This theory relates with the fact that good or right acts which an individual performs effects the lives of other individuals as well. Utilitarianism makes economic agents to have ethical partialities and to act for the favor of others in order to give them benefits, which leads to the generation o f Net (satisfaction) utility gain for the consumer (Becker 1996). According to Rainbow (2002) Virtue theory is nothing but an approach to morals and ethics which stresses that the chief element of ethical thinking is character not rubrics or outcomes. Virtue theory values a person by his character (modesty, chastity, virtuousness) instead of any act that may lost from his usual conduct. The more virtuous person would get acknowledgment and praise in the society, his beliefs and acts lead to benefits of other people in his society. Hence this act of virtue strongly intensify interdependent utility function.

## **2.2 Types of People, Values and Interdependence**

People are never alike; they differ in their approaches, outlook, behaviours and values. People may be hypocrites, dual faced and charlatans, or they may be immaculate, fair and faithful having their values predefined and meaningful. Although there are numerous types of people and their values, yet we are classifying them into two broad types and many sub-types as under;

1. Universal values
2. Contextual values

Universal Values represents those values which prevail almost everywhere, at all times regardless of race, religion,

culture and other affiliations. The contextual values, however, are 'values in a context'. There may be other ways to see the types of values; moral, material, aesthetic, intrinsic, extrinsic, group values etc.

Now it's worth comparing the beliefs of different religions and school of thoughts about ethical values. Annexure 01 shows what different religions and school of thoughts say about certain ethical values. From the Annexure showing Kinner's short list of values, we can note that people can be classified into types and the ethical theories too. Broadly, Consequentialists and Deontologist theories are about the conduct of people and Aristotelian is about their character. Other theories such as Divine Command theory is about the conduct or character as ordained by God.

### **2.3 Empirical Evidence about People's Perception of Ethical and Universal Values**

A group of psychologists lead by Schwartz investigated the existence of universal and ethical values, His work was based on a sequence of literature that comprised interviews and surveys of approximately 25,000 people in 44 countries. He postulated that universal values relate to three basic kind of human needs: e.g., i. organic needs, ii. social co-ordination needs, and iii. welfare and survival needs. According to empirical evidence from diverse ethnic types, Schwartz founded that there are about fifty-six definite universal values and out of which ten kinds of universal value are power, achievements, Hedonism, Stimulation or temptation, Self-direction, Universalism (tolerance; wisdom, equality, harmony), Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, Security. Since these values prevail among people in different intensities, there interdependence with other people will also be affected by some level.

### **2.4 Islamic Ethical Philosophy and Interdependence**

Abundant literature exists on Islamic ethical philosophy. A

detailed review of such literature shows that ethical attributes among people are beneficial for themselves and also for the others around them including the environment in which they live. This fact helps in developing theoretical justification for enhanced interdependence when individuals/agents are more ethical. The Islamic literature also shows that people's interdependence in consumption affects wellbeing level of each other in positive or negative manner. Hence, in this relationship, members may be mentally, economically, emotionally and morally dependent on and accountable to each other.

### **2.5 Balancing the Faculties of Soul - If Balanced will have Different Interdependence than if not;**

According to Naraaqi, there are four faculties of soul and their balance is what we called Justice. Any extreme lead to the undesirable results and socially unacceptable traits. The balance in these faculties cause different independence as shown in diagram below

Intellect	Imagination
Wisdom	Justice
Courage	Chastity
Anger	Passion

These ethical faculties has a strong impact on the interdependent utility function. For instance the more wise a person will the more decisive he will be to take those decision which give him maximum utility in this world and hereafter. He will be honest and more hospitable to his guests so when he will visit them they will return the same hospitality. He will be there through thick and thin of his neighbors so they will help him out in his difficult times. Likewise, the more courageous person he will be the more acknowledgment and trust he will enjoy from his community.

### *3. Divine Economics and Ethical Interdependence*

#### **3.1 What is Divine Economics, How it Views Interdependence of Consumers?**

Divine Economics deals with the study of Religions and Economics in each other perspectives by using scientific process. It is based on the rational choice theory like the conventional economics does. According to the conventional school of thought, economics is the study of human behaviour where consumer and producer are concerned to the management of utility and profit on the basis of their self interest rather societal or common welfare. The framework of divine school of thought is following the same base like the conventional economics but unlike the conventional economics the common interests/societal welfare is equally important for him to maximize his/her own utility or profit. To study the consumer behaviour very closely the factor of is worth mentioning because more than 60% of the population is the believers of any organized religion so that why their economic decision making is affected by their religious obligations in one or in other way.

The core theme of Divine Economics is less peculiar and more for communal welfare. Since the priorities and behaviour of a divine consumer is predefined. Whatever he does there is an element of accountability and reward after death on the back of his mind. For example, He gives a hand to his falling companion or charity to poor not only because he will get a favour in return but because he is accustomed to it and this act of behaviour is mandatory to him under his religious values. That is why we claim that a religious person is more ethical and his interdependence is much great as compare to a non religious person.

#### **3.1 A Framework for Analysis of Economic Problem and**

## Interdependence under Divine Economics<sup>1</sup>

The scope of this study is to outline a technical framework for estimating the direction and magnitude of interrelationships among socio-economic and ethical variables considering the human interdependence. We propose that the ethical variables, which we call 'Divine Capital', play a role of capital in the similar way as other forms of capital [financial capital, physical capital, human capital] in economic process and outcomes. As mentioned that religions usually encourage the values such as care, cooperation, patronage, bounteousness, altruism, generosity, volunteering, sacrifice, and other forms of contributing in others lives, therefore, it is a claim of Divine Economics that people with more Divine Capital i.e. religiosity, spirituality, ethics and the infrastructures which re-enforce divinely attributes are more influenced by interdependent nature of own utility.

In conventional economics, individual A's utility function is usually considered as independent of the consumption of consumer individual B, therefore there is no concept of obligatory charity or donations. In accordance with the Divine Economics the ethical-man derives more utility if he spends his wealth on other people as well e.g., the happiness and sense of satisfaction an individual gets while spending on needy in the form of charity, donation etc lead to more utility of an individual but also bring the welfare in economy due to this type of interdependence. The proposed framework is as under;

The main goal of an individual is to maximize his Utility and minimize his cost or expenditures cost. Now if the consumer attempts to resolve his issue e.g., by maximizing

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1. The formulation of Interdependent utility functions dates back to the publication of Veblen's seminal theory of conspicuous consumption. Moreover 'An individual's obvious consumption psychologically depends not only upon the definite level of expenditure, but also depends on the degree of his expenditure, as compared to the expenditure of other individuals' (James Duesenberry 1949)

his utility, his consumer behaviour will be entirely different from the consumer who is the follower of any religion and vice Versa. Since the main problem of a consumers are:

**Choose:** the total time allocated to the market activities, hobbies and rest, personal care, household accomplishments, religious and social doings. For example an individual spends his time in such a way that he also consider the expected level of utility which he will obtain in his/her perceived after world.

**To maximize:** the level of utility from the achievements of goals and targets related to not only body but also soul. Concerning to the previous example he maximizes the two streams of utility; one in this world and the other expected for an after world ( $U = UW + UA$ ).

**Subject to:** Assets and total time budget Constraints. A utility maximizing consumer who is also a believer will consider many other constraints rather than budget constraint while maximizing his utility. He will think about the religious obligations and other moral values as well.

Now his preferences will become changed and his desired consumption bundle will come to change which will affect the forces of demand and supply in the market. In other words this divine consumer response to non-monetary constraints rather than monetary constrains and most of the time these non-monetary constraints dominate the monetary constraints for sake of maximizing his present and expected future (after world) utility.

So his utility function also gets affected by his religious as well as ethical/moral values. Now the specific research question to be answered is “Do ethics intensify interdependent utility function or not?”

Since utility function under Conventional Approach:  $U = f(X, Y)$  which means utility is derived from consuming good ‘X’ and good ‘Y’ and the utility function under Divine Economics Approach is :

$$U = ff(X, Y)W, (X, Y)a) \text{ subject to a total income 'M'}$$

where the function shows that utility can be derived from worldly goods, services or activities denoted with superscript 'w' and after worldly goods, services and activities 'a'. The 'w' and 'a' can further incorporate a series of activities through which an individual can achieve utility. All these activities are utility bearing for the consumer. Under Divine Model, the total  $M$  is earned through allocation of time to market related activities where the market time is total time [24 hours] minus time used for other activities such as leisure ( $L$ ), volunteering ( $V$ ), and religion ( $R$ ). Moreover, the individual allocates total  $M$  into consumption for self ( $C$ ) and consumption of others through his donations ( $D$ ), therefore, the utility function may be written as;

$$U = f(C, D, L, V, R)$$

As mentioned earlier that ( $U = U^W + U^A$ ), hence the above U-function may be written as;

$$U^W = f(C^W, D^W, L^W, V^W, R^W)$$

$$U^A = f(C^A, D^A, L^A, V^A, R^A)$$

where

$C$  = Total Yearly spending (in rupees) minus charity and societal expenditures.

$D$  = Monetary value yearly spending (in rupees) as donations to needy individuals people and organizations.

$L$  = Total time allocation [yearly] for leisure (rest, sleep and privacy).

$V$  = Total time allocated [yearly] to voluntary acts.

$R$  = Number of hours [yearly] assigned to religious activities (e.g., worship, knowledge, preaching etc.).

The activities  $C, D, L, V, R$  are further series of activities. For example  $c_1, c_2 \dots c_n$  for worldly and after worldly activities. One may be surprised how 'R' can be worldly religious activities? The answer is that individuals sometimes perform religious activities with a view to obtain some explicit or implicit worldly motives. This framework

provides the foundation for faith-based economics. The above discussion can be further extended towards interdependence analysis.

Layard (2002) specifies that there are seven factors which affect happiness, satisfaction and domestic relationship i.e. health, personal liberty, monetary situation, work, community, Individual values). From science of ethics we know that there are four degrees of self e.g., Organic Self (Nafs-e- Nabaatiya), Animalistic Self (Nafs-e-Haiwaaniya), Humanist Self (Nafs-e- Insaaniya), Divine Self (Nafs-e-Qudsia). Desire is the basic difference between organic and animalistic selves. The human-self makes the human to think about welfare of others beside themselves. The Divine self is even higher than the human self and is purified, sacrificing and extensively others-regarding. In economic literature, the interdependent utility function to represent such others regarding individuals can be represented as

$$U^A = f (C^A) \dots \dots \dots > \text{self-regarding individual A}$$

$$U^B = f (C^B, C^A) \dots \dots \dots > \text{others' regarding individual B}$$

Where

U is utility of individual A and B respectively. CA is consumption by individual 'A' on himself and CB is consumption by others (through gifts, donations, charity). The indicators' set in our model can be many; the economic desirables which we want to have because of self-passionate basis of human nature such as income, consumption, and economic as well as non-economic desirables which we are willing to give to others due to 'others-passionate' basis such as religious and other donations (*Zakat*, charity etc.), volunteerism, care of others. These ethical desirables can be measured in a form of index, we call it 'Divine Capital Index'. The following propositions are presented which may be tested by the help of empirical evidence;

**Proposition - 1:** *Other things held constant, the higher the*

value of Divine Capital Index, it is likely that the individual will be more interdependent with others.

**Proposition - 2:** *Other things held constant, the higher the value of Divine Capital Index, it is likely that the individual will get more satisfaction by spending on others.*

Since under conventional economics, the key objective of a rational individual is to attain maximum level of utility [by serving the self], but Divine Economics recognises the other types of individuals who maximize their own utility by serving the interest of 'self' as well of 'others'. They value the association with others sometimes so deeply that makes them accountable to each other; hence, they go beyond to merely spending for each other.

Since Self-Satisfaction (Utility level)<sup>1</sup> is assumed here as function of economic and non-economic factors including ethical attributes [index], then the self-satisfaction of individual shall depend on economic factors such as per capita income and consumption, spending on altruistic purposes such as Zakat/Khums, time allocation and spending for others' satisfaction, and alike other factors.<sup>2</sup> Taking SS [self reported satisfaction] as a proxy of 'Utility', the Empirical model therefore, may take the following general form;

$$SS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Legitimate income}) + \beta_2 (\text{self-oriented consumption}) + \beta_3 (\text{Religious givings e.g Zakat /Khums}) + \beta_4 (\text{Other spending on help of others}) + \beta_5 (\text{Index value of})$$

1. Imam Jaffar al Sadiq said that "God, the superlative, in His superlative justice, has linked with pleasure and wellbeing with inevitability and serenity e.g., submission to Lord's will and attached grief and discomfort with disbelief and anger (w.r.t Divine will). Hence, faithful individuals believe that the set of values and ethics originating from such teachings can lead to satisfaction or success in both worlds.

2. According to Islamic literature there are some principles of consumption. Islam encourages spending of wealth within the range of these limits and goals. It declares consumption as one of the basic attributes of the believers and spending may take the following forms; spending on the daily needs of self, family and dependants, spending for the pleasure of Allah [this includes obligatory charity in the form of Zakat, Khums, Kuffara, Fitrah etc. and non-obligatory spending on the needy in the form of Sadaqah, donations etc.

ethical or Divine Capital attributes) +  $\beta_6$  (Religiosity Index) + u

Where SS is Self-Satisfaction as self-perceived self-reported status of individual; legitimate income is total income minus illegitimate income,<sup>1</sup> consumption, and religious giving and other spending is measured for a period of one year;  $\beta_0$  is intercept and  $\beta_i$ 's are coefficients of independent variables. The Divine Capital Index can be prepared on the basis of important ethical attributes which affect human's self-regarding or others-regarding behaviours.

The estimation of the exact relationships among socioeconomic variables and ethical interdependence can be done by collecting data on the above variables with the help of questionnaire and the analysis can be done by using simple OLS technique. A more advance analysis can be done using AMOS to estimate the relationships among unobservable variables such as religiosity and Divine Capital attributes.

For the development of microeconomic foundations of the above described model, keep in mind that the variable under Divine Economics can be identified and insights can be derived from the religious commandments [such as *ahkaam* in Islamic terms]. *Ahkam* are the fundamentals of any religion but in conventional economics we usually perform analysis through observations and experiments.

If such model is estimated for intensity of determining the diverse relationships, it may show the nature and magnitude of human interdependence that the spending wealth to fulfil one's own as well as others' needs have positive and significant effect on individual's own self-satisfaction and

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1. Illegitimate income may be calculated as self-reported total income and subtracting a self-reported part of income which is not fully legal or within the religious boundaries. Although, estimation of legitimate income is difficult but is not impossible. With skillfully developed questions and interactively conducted interviews, one can get this data.

the strength of this relationship shall depend on the value of Divine Capital Index.

#### **4. Concluding Remarks**

This paper attempted to illuminate the strengthening and intensification of inter-dependent utilities by using Divine Economics approach in order to pave the ground for economic analysis in Mahdism doctrine. Justice and other ethical value shall prevail on earth in the era of Imam Mahdi a.j. and will be the most distinguishing aspect of the Mahdavi governance on earth as compared to all past and contemporary models of governance. Thus it is important to promote understanding about the interrelationships among economic and ethical factors affecting economic, social, aesthetic and spiritual well being of people. The framework presented above can help in estimating how religiosity or ethical attributes usually enhance the interconnectedness of individuals or groups psychologically, economically. The underlying propositions include *the higher the value of Divine Capital Index will cause more interdependent with others and more self-satisfaction by spending own wealth on others.*

From the preceding discussion and a tentative modelling, we conclude utility function of economic agents are interdependent and interrelated with each other. Their religiosity level is likely to intensifies such interdependence and that more ethical people are likely to be more interdependent. It has been shown that the ethical values are likely to systematically affect individuals satisfaction in an interdependent manner. Once we recognize the interdependent nature of utility function of society, the economists can discover the degree to which the utility function of economic agents are interrelated with each other under diverse ethical lifestyles. This approach and practice would result in better understanding at macro level, about the alternative lifestyles of people through economic

policies, income redistribution and people's performance in growth-inducing process. Also at micro level, it may be observed how the ethical patterns systematically affect humans day to day behaviours leading them towards regarding others' preferences. Through the effects of ethics on different fields of life such as in professions, research, intellectual creativity, competition, marketing, media, and in economic performance of manpower, would help in leading the whole society to justice, peace and prosperity. Although the notion of interdependent utilities has been discussed in economic literature, the present paper is yet a contribution towards Mahdism doctrine in the field of economics and ethics.

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#### Annexure - 01: Kinner's Short list of Universal Values

[Source: Kinner at.al (2000), *A short list of Universal Values, Counseling and Values*, Vol. 45]

Sr.No	Values List	Source	Description	Reference
1	Commitment to something greater than oneself	Judaism	To love the Lord your God and to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments, and to hold fast to Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and soul.	Joshua 22:5
			Happy are those who act justly, who do right at all times.	Psalm 106:3
		Christianity	You will know the Truth and the Truth will set you free.	John 8:32
			Love the Lord your God with all heart and with all your soul, and with your mind.	Mathew 22:37
		Islam	Adore your Lord who created you, as He did those before you.	Quran 2:21
			Do not confuse the truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth knowingly.	Quran 2:42
		Hinduism	Truth alone prevails. The way of the God,..proceed to the Highest Abode of the True.	Mundaka Upanishad, III.i.5
			For He, the Supreme Self, is not born, nor having come into phenomenal existence, will He	Bhagavad Gita 2.20

			ever cease to exist.	
		Taoism	Hold to the Truth.	Tao Te Ching 8
		Confucianism	Gentlemen set their hearts on moral force.	Analects IV.11
			Be ready to die for Good way.	Analects IV.13
		Buddhism	And should one live a hundred years not seeing the immortal state; better still is one day lived of one who sees the immortal state.	Dhamma pada 8:16
		Humanism	The goal of Humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperates for the common good.	Humanist Manifesto II.p.3
			Each person's future is in some way linked to all.	Humanist Manifesto II.p.3
		Atheism	The goal of Atheism is freedom of mind.	Introduction American Atheist p.2
			There is no divine guardian of truth, goodness...man must defend them or they will perish from the earth.	Atheism Teaches That's, P.1
		United Nations	Whereas the recognition of inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.	U.N declaration of Human Rights Preamble, P.1

Sr. No	Value	Source	Description	Reference
2	Self respect, humility, self discipline, and acceptance of personal responsibility.	Judaism	Yea, man is bowed, and mortal brought low; bought low is the pride of the haughty.	Isaiah 5:15
			Pride goes before ruin, arrogance before failure, better to be humble and among the lowly than to share spoils with the proud.	Proverb 16:18
		Christianity	From inside, from the human heart, come evil thoughts, acts of formulation, theft murder adultery, agreed, and malice; fraud, indecency, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly; all these evil	Marks 7:22,23

	things come from within, and they are what defile a person.	
	Whoever exalts himself will be humbled; and whoever humbles will be exalted.	Matthew 23:12
Islam	If you give alms openly, it is well, but if you do it secretly and give it to the poor, that is better.	Quran 2:271
	And those who are mindful of their moral obligations; they will live in gardens of honor.	Quran 70:32-35
Hinduism	Whoever, giving up all selfish desires, goes free from craving, he is free of egotisms and self interest, and he attains true peace.	Bhagavad Gita 2.71
	Hypocrisy, arrogance, egotistical pride, anger, violence of speech, and ignorance- these are the characteristic of one who is born to the demonic way of life.	Bhagavad Gita 16.4
Taoism	Live for your center, not your sense.	Tao Te Ching 12
	The sage remains sensitive avoiding extreme, avoiding extravagance, avoiding excess.	Tao Te Ching 29
	A man who boasts of his achievements has no merit, a man who brags will not endure.	Tao Te Ching 24
Confucianism	A gentleman .....must remove all trace of violence or arrogance.	Analects VIII.4
	The gentleman is dignified. But never haughty.	Analects VIII.26
Buddhism	Themselves the wise does tame.	Dhammapada 6:5
	Whoever dwells seeing the pleasurable, in senses unrestrained, immoderate in food, indolent, inferior of enterprise, over him indeed, Mara prevails, like the wind over a weak tree.	Dhammapada 1:7
Humanism	The preciousness and dignity of the individual persona is a central humanist value.	Humanist Manifesto II, P.4
	Individuals should be encouraged to contribute to their own betterment.	Humanist Manifesto II, P.5

		Atheism	Man can and must create his own destiny.	Atheist Aims and Purpose, P.1
			We must face the consequences of our acts.	Atheism Teaches That. P.1
3	Respect and caring for other individuals (i.e. the Golden Rules)	Judaism	Love your fellow as yourself.	Leviticus 19:18
		Christianity	Always treat to others as you would have them to treat you.	Matthew 7:12
			If someone asks you to go a mile with him, go two.	Matthew 5:41
		Islam	Do not take a life, which God has forbidden, except in a just cause.	Quran 17:33
			He who fabricates lies is doomed to failure.	Quran 20:61
		Hinduism	Do not kill.	Bhagavad Gita 16:2
			Do not lie.	Bhagavad Gita 16:2
		Taoism	In dealing with others. Be gentle and kind in speech, be true in ruling, be just.	Tao Te Ching 8
			The sage takes care of all men and abandons no one.	Tao Te Ching 27
		Confucianism	Never do to others what you would not like them to do to you.	Analects 15.23
			Keep promises.	Analects 1.8
		Buddhism	What are the four vices of action that he gives up ? they are injury to life Taking what is not given, base conduct in sexual matters , and false speech.	Digha Nikaya
		Humanism	The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperates for the common good.	Humanist Manifesto I, P.2
Atheism	The Cooperation of man is the only hope of the world.	Atheist Teaches That, P.1		
United Nations	All human beings, should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.	U.N declaration of Human Rights Preamble, P.1		

Sr. No	Value	Source	Description	Reference
4	Caring for other living things and the environment	Judaism	The Lord God took the man, and places him into the Garden of Eden to till it and tend it	Genesis 2:15
			A righteous man knows the needs of his beasts.	Proverbs 12:10
		Christianity	What man shall there be among you, that have one sheep, and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath day, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?	Matthew 12:11
		Islam	His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not.	Quran 2:255
		Hinduism	Not rejecting any creature, always friendly and compassionate (Characterization of the Yogi).	Bhagavad Gita 12.13
		Taoism	Love the world as yourself, and you'll be able to care for it properly.	Tao Te Ching 13
		Buddhism	One who is harmless to all living beings is called noble.	Dhammapada 19:15
		Humanism	The planet earth must be considered a single ecosystem .....the cultivation and conservation of nature is a moral value. We should perceive ourselves as integral to the sources of our being in nature.	Humanist Manifesto II, P.6
		Atheism	We..... Affirm that life is precious and that the ecological balance of our planet must be conserved.	Atheist Manifesto, P.1
United Nations	Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible U.N conference on Environment and Development.	U.N. Conference on Environment and Development. Principle 25,p.5		

Web Sources: Prepared with major inputs by Atique Farrukh from [www.trinity.edu/cbrown/intro/ethical\\_theories.html](http://www.trinity.edu/cbrown/intro/ethical_theories.html)

Ethical Attributes/Acts/both	Nature of Ethical Interdependence	Remarks on Intensity of Interdependence
Always first in salutation to others	Salutation (salam) leads to more intensity because the one who offered salaam was only admirable (Mustahab in Islam) for him but not obligatory but to reply it becomes obligatory (Wajib) on the other person.	Salutation (Salam) strongly intensify mutual response/relationships. "Being cordial and sociable with people brings compassion and friendship" Imam Mohammad Baqir a.s.

<p><b>Helping others</b></p>	<p>Helping others does intensify interdependence because the one who helps others derives satisfaction from his voluntary work and the one who is getting help gets involved.</p>	<p>Helping others strongly intensify because interdependence when he comes to now that helping others will give him 10 times more reward for this act in life hereafter. "Being jovial and gregarious with people is half of wisdom by itself" Imam Jafar a.s.</p>
<p><b>To keep clothing 'clean'</b></p>	<p>Self -hygiene is the ethical value liked and appreciated by everyone. Since Islam claims "Hygiene/cleanliness is the half Faith (Imaan)" thus making it obligatory for Muslims. The neat and clean person not only maximizes his own utility but also gives a positive oomph to the person he meets.</p>	<p>Cleanliness sturdily intensifies interdependent utility function "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" Romans 12:1</p>
<p><b>To be personally involved while serving guests/ neighbors</b></p>	<p>It leads to more intensity because the one who personally involved while serving his guests derives utility from his own act besides giving utility to his guest. Islam places great importance on the treatment and hospitality of neighbors. Prophet Muhammad said: "Jibril kept mentioning to treat neighbors with gentleness until I thought he would allocate a portion of inheritance for neighbour." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)</p>	<p>This act strongly intensifies mutual relationship. "Let the believer in Allah and Day of Judgment either speak good or keep silent. Let the believer in Allah and Day of Judgment respects his guests. Let the believer in Allah and the Day of Judgment respect his guest."(Prophet Muhammad PBHA)</p>
<p><b>To be just in all dealings</b></p>	<p>Justice is the ethical value which intensifies the interdependence utility of both individual the one who is just in all his acts and the one who gets benefits because of his justice. "Provide full measure when You measure, and balance with a balance that is straight. That is fairer and reasonable in the final determination." (Qur'an 17:35) "So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance." (Qur'an 55:9)</p>	<p>This act strongly intensify the interdependent utility function "O you who believe! Stand out steadfastly for Allah, as spectators to just dealing, and don't let the animosity of others to make you deviate to immoral and move off from justice. Be fair: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-familiar with all that you practice." (Qur'an 5:8)</p>
<p><b>To be kind to servants</b></p>	<p>Being kind is the ethical value which gives utility to kind person as well as the one who derives utility from the kind person's act of kindness.</p>	<p>Kindness strongly intensifies mutual response. Prophet Muhammad SAWW said: "Allah says, 'there are three persons whom I will be against on the Day of Judgment: 1. One who makes an agreement in My</p>

		Name, but he proves unfaithful; 2. One who vends a free person (as a slave) and enjoys the price; and 3. One who hires a labourer and does not give him his full wage after taking full work done.” (Al-Bukhari 3:430)
<b>To return loan on promise/schedule</b>	The one who returns loan on schedule gains other’s trust. As a result he fulfills his promises and both maximize their utility. “Abu Hurairah t narrated that Allah’s Messenger said: “If I own a gold equivalent to the mountains of Uhud, it would not please me that anything of it should remain with me after three nights excluding what I possess for reimbursing debts.”(Al-Bukhari Vol. 8 Hadith 452)	This act strongly intensify the mutual rapport. “If the borrower is in a trouble, give him time till it is easy for him to reimburse. On the other hand if you remit it for the purpose of donation, that is finest for you, if you only knew. And fear the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then shall every soul be paid what it earned, and none shall be dealt with unjustly.” (Qur’an 22:280-281)
<b>To maintain discipline in expenses</b>	“O believers! Make not illegal the good stuffs which God has made legal for you, but refrain yourself to excess: for God loves not those particular to surplus.” (Qur’an 5:87). This cause sustainable consumption hence high utility especially when income is low.	Moderation/Wise Spending and Avoidance of Extravagance and Extremes strongly intensify the interdependent utility. “No doubt, squanderers are brothers of the Wicked Ones; and the Wicked One is to his Rab ( the Sustainer) (Himself) thankless.” (Qur’an 17:27)
<b>To patiently behave when others don’t.</b>	Patience is the ethical value which makes a person “Be static in the presence of the God, and wait tolerantly for Him to act. No need to worry about wicked people who flourish or fuss about their wicked arrangements. Refrain yourselves from being annoyed! Turn from your anger! No need to lose your temper, it only brings destruction. For the evil will be devastated, but those who put faith in the Lord will own the land” [Psalm]	Patience strongly intensify interdependent utility function. As “Cheerfulness and a good nature purges hatred and rancour” Imam Musa Kazem Similarly Bible quotes “A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel. (NIV), Proverb 15:18

Annexure -02: Ethical attributes and nature of interdependence

Source: Prepared by the author with major contribution by Misbah H. Qureshi

## Social Preferences and Religiosity: An Experimental Analysis

Dr. Anwar Shah<sup>1</sup>

### *Abstract*

Economic theory assumes that individuals are selfish. Laboratory experiments however show that most, if not all, individuals are other-regarding. This however does not mean that the selfish behavior is “dead”. Studies show that the other-regarding individuals use information asymmetry for their own selfish gains. It is widely believed that religion can constrain selfishness and foster pro-social other-regarding behavior. The primary aim of this study is to investigate whether individuals behave significantly different when controlled for religiosity. The study examines the behavior of proposers in a modified ultimatum game after priming their religious identity. Using prime instrument of a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), we find that proposers mostly make equitable offers to responders. This is in spite of the fact that the proposers could use informational asymmetry regarding the

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size of the pie for maximizing private gains. The study suggests promoting universal values based on the true teaching of Holy Quran and the narrations of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Higher is the effort for the propagation of such values higher is the probability to see the era of Hazrat Mahdi (Ajj.) which the literature suggest to be the era of prosperity and Justice.

### *Introduction*

The role of religion in decision-making has long been debated in economics and other disciplines. The link has been rationalized in a number of ways. Adam Smith (1872) states that religion give sacredness to moral rules by regarding it as commands from God. Putnam (2000) considers religion as part of social capital and argues that religious affiliations and participation promote social interaction, cooperation, and economic growth. Anthropologists believe that the performance of collective rituals in religious organizations promotes cooperation and cohesiveness (e.g., Sosis and Ruffle (2003). Tan (2006) asserts that if religious doctrine reinforces pro-social behavior, we should expect altruism to increase with religiosity.

In a survey paper on the economics of religion, Iannaccone (1998) describes the evidence linking religious adherence by individuals to a wide range of phenomena, including improved mental and physical health, marital stability, reduced incidence of criminal and delinquent activity, and lower rates of alcohol and drug abuse. Barro and McCleary (2003) report that religious beliefs (e.g., the afterlife belief) within a country are related to greater economic growth. Lipford et al. (1993) argue that promotion and adherence to ethics by organized religion benefit the economy at large as it induces reduction in crime by declaring it immoral and save public expenditure on

policing etc.

The evidence from experimental studies on the link between religiosity and other-regarding behavior is mixed. Whereas studies by Tan and Vogel (2005), Johansson-Stenman, Mahmud, Martinsson (2005), Tan (2006) and Anderson (2007) found no support on the link, Ruffle and Sosis (2003, 2007), Eckel and Grossman (2003) and Ahmad (2008) found the opposite. These studies capture different dimensions of religiosity (including belief on God, belief in the life hereafter, rituals, salvation, religious experiences etc) in a wide variety of games including variants of the *dictator*, *ultimatum*, *trustandpublic good* games.

Most of the literature that studies the impact of religiosity on decision making in laboratory experiments simply compare payoffs of two groups differentiated on the basis of self-reported level of religiosity. Since there are other factors that might affect the decisions of individuals in the two groups. Hence, simple “levels” comparison is not appropriate as there is no pre-defined “religious norm” in levels and there is nothing religiously wrong with choosing a low or high ‘level’. Hence, we aim to analyse the impact of religiosity in a situation having a pre-defined “religious norm”. For this we manipulate the experimental design of Kagel, Kim and Moser, hence forth KKM, (1996).

It is pertinent to mention that KKM (1996) designed an experiment to know whether consistent deviation from sub-game perfect equilibrium in the ultimatum game is due to true or strategic fairness. For this they modified the ultimatum game. They gave player 1 (the proposer) 100 chips which he/she had to divide among him/herself and another player (the responder).<sup>1</sup> These chips were converted to \$ at different rates for proposers and responders. In symmetric form of the game, both players had information

1. “Chips” and “Experimental Monetary Units (EMU)” is used identically in this study. In addition, Chip’s price or Chips’s conversion rate and exchange rate of EMU convey the same meaning.

about their own payoffs and that of the other (as chips conversion rates is a common knowledge). In an asymmetric form of the game one player (the proposer) knew the conversion rates, and the other player (the responder) only knew about his/her conversion rate. In all cases players knew their own payoff. Their hypothesis was

*“If the strong deviations from the subgame perfect equilibrium outcome in ultimatum games is rooted in an altruistic impulse (“trying to be fair”) then when player 1s have relatively higher payoffs, and they are the only ones fully informed, chip offers to player 2s should approach the equal dollar-split value. On the other hand, if an altruistic fairness norm is modified by concern for maximizing social surplus, then the underlying money offers, while favoring player 1s when they have relatively higher payoffs, should favor player 2s when the payoff advantage is reversed”.*

The results did not support these hypothesis as in case of information asymmetry i.e when only the proposers were fully informed and had relatively higher payoffs (the proposers' chips were converted to \$ at a rate three times that of the responder), they offered roughly an equal split of chips (resulting in unequal money splits), and offered very unequal chips (resulting in roughly equal money splits) when the responders had relatively higher payoff (the responders' chips were converted to \$ at a rate three times that of the proposer). They view this behavior of the proposer to be motivated by self-serving notions of fairness while taking strategic considerations “seem fair than be fair” into account, since lower chip offers are more likely to be rejected. Camerer and Thaler (1995) believe this to be an important reminder that self-interested behavior is still alive.

The KKM study does not tell us whether the proposers consider the “seeming fair than be fair” as an unfair move in itself. A recent study by Bicchieri and Alex (2009) finds that they actually consider it unfair. They ran an ultimatum game with three treatments. In their experiment, endowed

with 10 \$, proposers had to offer (5,5) or (8,2) to the responder or let a coin flip decide one of the two offers. In the first treatment, information was a common knowledge as responders knew all the options available to the proposers. In the second treatment, information was private, as responders were unaware of the coin flip option. In the third treatment information, was limited as responder knew about the coin flip but did not know whether the selected offers were due to a coin flip or otherwise. Perception about what is a fair behavior in each of these treatments was elicited through incentive compatible questions that measured their normative expectations. The questionnaire asked whether the responder found each of the three treatment options fair. The questionnaire was aimed at assessing whether there was an agreement in the Responders' normative expectations, an indicator of the existence of a social norm. Similarly, Proposers were informed about the questions being asked from responders and were asked to guess about the percentage of Responders who have indicated the (5,5), (8,2) and coin flip, respectively, as a fair option. The questionnaires were designed to 1) make fairness norms more salient, and 2) test for an agreement between the Responders' normative expectations and the Proposers' beliefs about them. Almost all Responders considered the (5,5) split to be fair in all information conditions, and a majority of them also thought that the coin split was fair. A remarkable degree of agreement was found between the Responders' and Proposers' beliefs about the normative expectations of Responders.

Their results show that in full information and private information cases agents mostly observed norm compliance and chose either a coin flip or an even split. But in the limited information case norm evasion was observed, as agent knew what is fair, but 31(58.5%). subject out of 53 deviated from it by choosing (8,2).

The KKM experiment shows that agents use information asymmetry for their own selfish gains. Cristina and Chavez (2009) shows that proposers consider selfish gains from information asymmetry as unfair but still choose to be unfair. The primary aim of this study is to investigate whether these results are robust when control for religiosity of individuals whose religion deem the selfish gains from information asymmetry as unfair. We assume the design of the KKM with one exception that proposer endogenously choose conversion rate of the chips from a given list. We assume that an individual loaded with religious values is likely to give sacredness to their religious norms, as believed by Adam Smith. Hence, avoid using information asymmetry for selfish gains.

Even though we are not controlling for the other-than-religiosity factors in our experiment, information asymmetry of the sort proposed in this study greatly minimize its impact. The logic goes as follow. Whereas there is nothing religiously wrong with choosing low or high “levels” when chips’ prices are known to all, (as it does not involve any deceiving), choosing relatively unfair conversion rates have moral issues when it is not known to the other party as it carries the intention of tricking the respondent to accept unfair offers made by the proposer. It is therefore reasonable to expect religious individuals to choose own conversion rates equal or closer to those of the responder. Thus this study can better capture the effect of religiosity, while alienating the impact of other factors in a convenient way. We find that priming religious identities of the proposers lead them to offer equal chips and a fair level of conversion rate, thus supporting our conjecture. The study suggests promoting values which are equally valued in the world regardless of discrimination caused by religion, culture, ethnicity or other prejudices such as justice, honesty, truth, care, respect, peace, freedom, and human dignity etc. It is obvious that any individual or society

exerting effort for the ground setting of early appearance of Imam Mahdi has the prime responsibility in this regard.

The rest of the paper is organized as follow. Section 2 gives literature review. Section 3 explains religiosity indicators while Section 4 discusses the experimental design and procedural details. Section 5 provides details about hypothesis. Section 6 discusses the results and section 7 concludes.

### *Literature Review*

A comparatively small number of studies in experimental economics have analyzed religion as a determinant of behavior, as part of the growing use of laboratory experiments to look at the impact of variable like culture, nationality, and gender on individual behaviors (e.g., Henrich, J., 2000; Chuah et al. 2007, Chaudhuri, A., Gangadharan, L. 2007). Some of the papers that study the impact of religion on choices in laboratory experiments are summarized below.

Eckel and Grossman (2003) test the framing effect of subsidy on charities in the *dictator game*,<sup>1</sup> and include religiosity as a dummy variable in their analysis. Subjects make a series of 12 allocative decisions, dividing endowment 40, 60, 75 and 100 (each token is worth \$0.10) between themselves and a charity, selected from a list of ten. Subjects receive subsidy on positive giving to charity in the form of a rebate or a match. In the ‘rebate treatment’ tokens allocated to the charities are refunded at the rate of 20, 25 and 50 percent, while in the ‘matching treatment’ tokens allocated to the charities are matched at the rate of 25, 33 and 100 percent by the experimenter depending on the token size. They estimate charitable contributions as a function of the endowment size (\$ value of the tokens), the

1. In the dictator game, an individual A is given a certain amount of money with the option of sharing it with another player B in any proportion. In the game A is the dictator and B is a passive recipient.

price of giving \$1 to a charity and a vector of individual characteristics including age, sex and religiosity. Religiosity is captured through a self reported respondents' frequency of attending religious services. Their results show that regular attendance at religious services increases charitable contributions while controlling for the endowment amount, the presence of subsidies and subject age and sex. To test whether the generosity of religious individuals is specific to church-based institutions or is general, Eckel and Grossman (2004) examine the donating behaviour of both religious and non-religious participants using the Eckel and Grossman (2003) data. Their results show that the religious subjects respond more strongly to changes in endowments than the nonreligious, but contributions by both groups are equally responsive to subsidies.

Tan (2006) examines the role of religiosity in the dictator and ultimatum games.<sup>1</sup> Religiosity is measured through a multi-item questionnaire from German students. The questionnaire had questions regarding different dimensions of religiosity, namely, Belief (belief on God, Bible, Jesus etc.), Ritual (attending services, membership of church, giving tithe), Spirituality (feeling close to God), Salvation (feeling from repent), and Participation (participating in church related groups or activities). None of the five dimensions of religiosity had a significant effect on offers in the ultimatum game. Offers in the dictator game, however, were positively influenced by "religious belief", but negatively influenced by "religious participation". Minimum acceptable offers in the ultimatum game were significantly lower with "ritual" and "salvation" and significantly higher with "spirituality." Tan interpret these results as evidence that religiosity as a whole has no effect

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1. In the ultimatum game, an individual A is given a certain amount of money with the option of sharing it with another player B. Player B is given the power to accept (in which case both keep the proposed amount) or reject the offer (in which case both get zero). In the game A is referred to as the proposer and B as the responder.

on other-regarding behavior because independent religiosity dimensions produce counter effects, cancelling the effect of each other.

In a trust game by Tan and Vogel (2008), “trustors” were provided information on the degree of religiosity of the “trustee.” Information was in form of cards showing the degree of religiosity ranging from one (weak) to five (strong).<sup>1</sup> Results show that the sender’s amounts were positively and significantly related to the receiver’s degree of religiosity. Likewise general religiosity had positive and significant effect on the proportion returned back by the receiver. Using a multi-dimensional religiosity model, their study shows that this positive effect is attributable to Belief.

Anderson et al. (2007) examines whether religious affiliation and participation are associated with decision making in a bilateral trust game and a public goods game played by adult subjects.<sup>2</sup> US subjects over the age of 50 were asked to self-identify themselves as Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, some other religion, or no religion. Religious participation is captured through questions related to the frequency at which participants took part in organised religious services in a typical month. The study found no evidence of any link between frequent attendance at religious services and subjects’ decisions. The subjects’ religious affiliation however influenced their contributions in the public goods game. Among religious subjects, Protestants made significantly larger average contributions to the group account compared to Catholics

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1. In the Trust game, Proposer (the first mover, i.e., the potential “truster”) has to decide how much money to send to Responder (the second mover, i.e., the potential “trustee”). For each monetary unit Proposer sends, Responder receives three. Responder then decides how much money to send back to Proposer
  2. In the public good game a group of agents are given some endowments. They have to make a decision concerning how much they wish to contribute to a public account and how much they wish to retain in their own account. Contribution to a public account is added and multiplied with some constants and divided equally among the participants.

and other religions. Furthermore, among all subjects, the decline in group account contributions over the repeated game was significantly smaller among Protestants than those who reported no affiliation.

Two experimental studies explore whether religion promotes in-group cooperation. Ruffle and Sosis (2003, 2007), examine the behavior among religious subjects, in a manner somewhat different from Tan (2006) and Anderson et al. (2007). They designed a common-pool resource game in which members of the religious and secular Israeli kibbutz were paired with anonymous members from their own kibbutz.<sup>1</sup> Religiosity was elicited through a question asking about the frequency of religious rituals attendance. Testing the hypothesis that religious rituals promote in-group cooperation, the study shows that religious men were more cooperative than religious women. The religious men's level of cooperation was more than the cooperation of any other in-group, including religious women, secular men, secular women and even those religious men who attended synagogue less frequently. However, Johansson-Stenman, Mahmud, Martinsson (2005), while testing for the in-group cooperation hypothesis, found no support in a trust game. They studied the behavior of Hindu and Muslim subjects from Bangladesh. Some subjects were matched with a partner of their own religious affiliation while others were matched with a partner of different religious orientation. Neither the amount sent nor the proportion returned was significantly affected by the player's religion or by religious differences between partners.

Ahmad (2008) played a public good game and a dictator

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1. In the common-pool resource game a group of agents independently decide how much to remove from a public pool fund for himself. If the sum of the amounts of money removed exceeds total pool, then all players receive zero and the game is over. If the sum of the amounts removed is less than or equal to the total pool, then each player keeps the respective amount that he removes. In addition, whatever money is leftover in the pool is multiplied by some constant and divided equally among the players.

game on pupils from religious school and nonreligious school of India. In both games, the number of positive contributions from the pupils of religious schools is more than the pupil of nonreligious schools, however there is no statistical difference in the amount of their non-zero donation. Less than 3 percent of the religious and 15 percent of non-religious student keep all the money given to them in the public good game, and 24 percent of the religious student and 48 percent of non-religious student donate nothing in the dictator game.

The aforementioned studies expect different behavior from religious individual as compared to non-religious individuals. However, it is less obvious that why this should be the case. A religious individual is likely to behave differently than non-religious individuals provided that the immoral aspect of a decision in the game is vivid to them. It is not necessary that what the experimenters consider to be immoral is also immoral for religiously loaded individuals. For example, in Tan (2006) low offer is not necessarily to be un-ethical. Likewise, in Johansson-Stenman, Mahmud, Martinsson (2005) if a religious individual do not trust others, there is nothing immoral from religious point of view for doing so. Hence, we take into account this aspect of immorality while designing the game. We test whether religious individuals behave differently than what we find in the study of KKM. We hypothesize that an individual who possesses higher Mahdivi attributes such as generosity is likely to behave differently than what we have found in the study of KKM

### *Religiosity Indicator*

Literature capture religiosity through indicators that highlight different aspects of religious affiliations (Joseph E. Faulkner et al. 1966; Gordon F. et al. 1976; Marie Cornwall, et al. 1986). Some of the important dimensions are i) belief,

ii) religious experience, iii) religious practices, vi) individual moral consequences, v) religious knowledge and iv) social consequences. Only a detailed survey would give insight into these different dimensions of religiosity. Most studies do so and use questionnaire to elicit religiosity. Conducting detailed survey has the advantage of capturing most of the dimensions of religiosity, but whether it makes religious identity salient is not known. In addition in a survey participants have no incentive for giving true answers, and therefore is not incentive compatible. Hence, instead of using a questionnaire we use priming, where religious identity of an individual is made salient, to examine the impact of religiosity on behavior.

We utilize insights from the psychological theory of self-categorization for priming (James, 1890; Turner, 1985). According to self-categorization theory, priming one's religious identity temporarily increases the strength of one's affiliation with that identity category. This causes one's behavior to shift towards the category's norms. Psychologists have tested the category salience mechanism by priming social categories with norms that are believed to be known and confirming that choices shift towards these norms. For example, LeBoeuf, Shafir, and Bayuk (2010) find that undergraduate subjects are more likely to prefer highbrow periodicals and films when their "scholar" social category is primed than when their "socialite" social category is primed. Chinese-American subjects make more collectivist choices when their Chinese social category is primed rather than their American social category. If subjects make a choice while one social category is salient, they are subsequently more dissatisfied with that choice if a different social category is salient at the time of post-choice evaluation than if the same social category remains salient. Reicher and Levine (1994) find that undergraduate science majors express more favorable attitudes towards practices such as animal vivisection when their scientist

identity category is made salient. Forehand, Deshpandé, and Reed (2001) find that making subjects' ethnicity salient causes them to evaluate a same-ethnicity spokesperson more favorably.

### **The Priming Instrument**

Our priming instrument is a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). We ask proposers to fill in a short questionnaire containing 4 questions. In one of the questions we give them a saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and ask whether they know regarding the reference it has been taken from. We provide these questions in the start of instruction specifically made for the proposers (see instructions for proposer in the Appendix). Our priming instrument is in line with what researchers use. For example, Benjamen et al. (2010) use sentence-unscrambling task. They ask subjects to drop the irrelevant word in a five-word group and rearrange the remainder to form a four-word sentence. For example, "yesterday it finished track he" becomes "he finished it yesterday." Each subject unscrambles ten sentences. They include religious content for religion-salient subjects such as "give thanks to God,". While, there was no religious contents for the subjects in the control treatment.

### ***Experimental Design***

The experiment has two players. Player 1 is called proposer while Player 2 is called responder. The Proposer's role is at the offer stage while the responder role is at the acceptance or rejection stage. Complete details of each stage are given below.

**Offer Stage:** Here the proposer is given 500 EMU. He/She have to propose a division of these 500 EMU by making an offer to the Responder. The proposer's offer can be any integer from 0 to 500 (inclusive). After the proposer decide on how to divide these 500 EMU, he/she has to made a

decision regarding the exchange rate at which EMU will be converted to PKR both for themselves and the responder. For this they have to select one of the exchange rates combinations (A to K) from the following table.

P = the exchange rate at which Proposer's EMU will be converted to PKR

R = the exchange rate at which the Responder's EMU will be converted to PKR

ER Combination	P	R
A	1.0	0.0
B	0.9	0.1
C	0.8	0.2
D	0.7	0.3
E	0.6	0.4
F	0.5	0.5
G	0.4	0.6
H	0.3	0.7
I	0.2	0.8
J	0.1	0.9
K	0.0	1.0

The Proposer's earnings	=	P multiplied by the number of EMU the proposer's keep for himself/herself
The Responder's earning	=	R multiplied by the number of EMU the Proposer offer to the responder

The proposer is fully informed as he/she knows total endowment and exchange rate of own and responder EMU, while responder is partially informed as he/she only knows total endowment and exchange rate of own EMU. Proposer knows that the responder will be conveyed offer in EMU and the exchange rate of their EMU only.

Acceptance or Rejection Stage: The responder has two options. He has either to accept or reject the offer. If the offer is accepted, the suggested division will be implemented. If the offer is rejected, both the proposer and the responder will receive 0.

Each decision is made only once. Responder knows the total endowment of 500 EMU and exchange rate of own EMU only. They are completely unaware about the exchange rate of EMU of the proposer. Responders are

also uninformed about the sum of the exchange rates of both EMUs. Once the responder takes a decision, the game concludes.

### **Procedural Details**

Experiments were conducted with students in the School of Economics at Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad, Pakistan. In total 67 students participated in the experiment. The experiment completed in two stages.

### **Proposer's Stage**

We invited students to the experimental laboratory (class rooms). After proper sitting, we provided them general instructions. After reading the general instructions and answering the control questions, we gave them instructions made exclusively for proposers. In addition, we gave them an envelope containing a decision sheet (please see Appendix A for complete instructions set). All proposers have enough time for reading the instructions. Once all participants completed reading the instructions and answering the control questions, we asked them to open the envelopes containing a decision sheet. It is pertinent to mention that each proposer has to make two decisions on the decision sheet. The first was regarding the offer in EMU and the second was regarding listing the name of the exchange rate combination (A to K). We collected the envelope from proposers after they took their decisions. The proposer stage concluded with the collection of envelopes from proposers.

We took the envelope to another room. We opened all envelopes to insert the conversion rate of EMU for responders. We wrote numerical value of the exchange rate for responders on each decision sheet. During this exercise we find that seven proposers did a mistake. They also took a decision on behalf of responder by making a tick on the option "I accept the offer". Hence, decision sheets of 7 proposers were cancelled. In net we had data of 30

proposers

### **Responder Stage**

On the following day, we invited 30 students to the same experimental room. After proper seating arrangements, they were provided the general instructions. It is to be noted that general instruction were the same both for the proposers and responder. Once all responders completed reading the general instructions and answer the control questions, we provided the specific instruction made for the responders. They turned the instructions upside down, which signaled that they completed reading the instructions and have no queries. Once all responders turn the instructions upside down, we provided them the same envelope containing decision sheet from proposers, randomly. They took the decision regarding accepting or rejecting the offer. We paid them cash one by one by inviting them to the desk of experimenter.

### **Payment to the Responder**

After paying to the responder on the spot, we put the money in the envelope a proposer earned. The same envelopes were provided to the proposers the following day. Every responder had put a code on the envelope and the decision sheet. This enables us to return to them the same envelope which belonged to them. After the delivery of the envelope, they were asked to collect their money and return the envelope to the experimenter. They were also asked to write a brief note regarding what motivated them for taking their decisions. After noting a brief answer, all envelopes were received to the experimenter and the experiment ended.

It is pertinent to mention that the proposers were from MSc Economics final semester while the responders were from BS final semester. On average each participants earn PKR 150, which is enough for doing a good lunch at the

university.

### ***Research Hypotheses***

Literature shows that institutions increase or decrease transaction cost of a private decision (North, 1990) for agents. Hence, values and social norms play a role of informal institutions as it increases the transaction cost of a decision which is not at par with social interest. In other words, social norms create a balance between self-interest and social interest. However, the question is that why a rational individual, who aims to maximise private interest, would adhere to a norm that requires sacrifice for others. Here comes the role of faith. Chapra (1991) discusses that faith help motivate an individual to sacrifice private interest for social interest by giving self-interest a long term perspective. It extends the horizon from the life in this world which is finite to the life in hereafter which is infinite. Hence, a believer know that self-interest may be served in this world by being selfish and not fulfilling the obligations towards others, however, self-interest in the hereafter cannot be served except by fulfilling all these obligations. The author further mentions that it is this longer-term perspective of self-interest, along with the individual's accountability before the Supreme Being and the reward and punishment in the Hereafter, which has the potential of motivating individuals to faithfully fulfil their obligations even when this tends to hurt their short-term self-interest.

Priming makes the religious identity salient to individuals. As mentioned earlier that we use a saying of the Holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for priming the religious identity. It is worth mentioning that the authority of the Holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is well established for all Muslims. Hence, a saying of the holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) will make the religious identity much salient. The

saying urges individual to like for other what does an individual like for him/herself. Therefore an individual is likely to feel transaction cost in terms of remorse and irritation for violating what the Holy prophet wish from him/her. While, unfair offer and exchange rate selection is likely in the presence of full information, an unfair offer and exchange rate selection is less likely in the presence of information asymmetry due to the attachment of immorality with it. In the light of the above discussion, this study will test the following hypothesis

**Hypothesis 1:** *“The primed proposers will make identical offers in EMU”*

This follows from many studies that in symmetric information ultimatum game standard offer ranges between 40 to 50 percent of the endowment (Chuah et al., 2007; Guth et al., 1982; Roth et al., 1991; Prasnikar and Roth, 1992). As information regarding total endowment of EMU is symmetric, following Tan (2006) result, therefore we do not expect much violation of these standard results.

**Hypothesis 2A:** *“The primed proposer will choose identical exchange rate ( $P=R$ ) of EMU as compared to the standard result in the KKM experiment, at the same level of EMU offers.”*

**Hypothesis2B:** *“The primed proposer will choose relatively less high exchange rate for the EMU h/she keep for themselves as compared to the standard result in the KKM experiment, at the same level of EMU offer”*

Hypothesis2A is meant to test whether religiously primed individuals consider gains from information asymmetry as completely unfair in practice and select identical exchange rate at which EMU will be converted to PKR both for themselves and the responder. And since strict adherence to religious ideals may vary across individuals with religious affiliations, we test a somewhat weaker version of the hypothesis which is stated in Hypothesis2B.

### *Experimental Results*

In this section, we present the results. First, we provide an overview of the offers and exchange rate combination by proposers and whether those offers are accepted or rejected by responders. Next, we discuss the behavior of proposer and responder in details.

#### **1. Overview of the Experimental Findings**

Table 1 shows summary of the exchange rate combination and the level of offers by proposers. The table also shows whether an offer is accepted or rejected. The level of offers made by proposers provides support to hypothesis 1. We can see that most of offers are fair and revolves around 250 EMU. In addition, the exchange rate combination is mostly F, which means that proposer is offering a fair exchange rate as F means the same monetary value of an EMU both for the proposer and responder.

Table 1. Overview of the Experimental Findings

Combination of ER	Proposer ER	Responder ER	Frequency	Offer in EMU	Offer in PKR	Accept	Reject
A	1	0	1	375	0	0	1
B	0.9	0.1	3	350	35	3	0
C	0.8	0.2	1	150	30	1	0
D	0.7	0.3	1	70	21	0	1
E	0.6	0.4	4	152	60.8	4	0
F	0.5	0.5	13	277	138.5	13	0
G	0.4	0.6	4	280	168	4	0
H	0.3	0.7	1	300	210	1	0
I	0.2	0.8	1	300	240	1	0
J	0.1	0.9			0		
K	0	1	1	500	500	1	0

#### **2. Proposer Behavior**

The distribution of the offers is shown in Figures 1, below. It is clear from the figure that the modal offer is 250

EMU. The findings do not seem to be different from the results commonly observed in the Ultimatum game with complete information. However, the findings are in sharp contrast with the findings of studies conducted under asymmetric information conditions. For example in the study of KKM the findings show that when proposer knows both payoffs and receives 3 times higher exchange rate, then trying to be fair out of a sense of altruism calls for offering 75 chips. However, mean offers always remain below than 75 chips. The study finds that the average offer is 46.9 chips over all periods. In contrast, we find an average offer of 270 EMU. It is to be remembered that an offer of 250 EMU ensure equitable distribution of EMU.

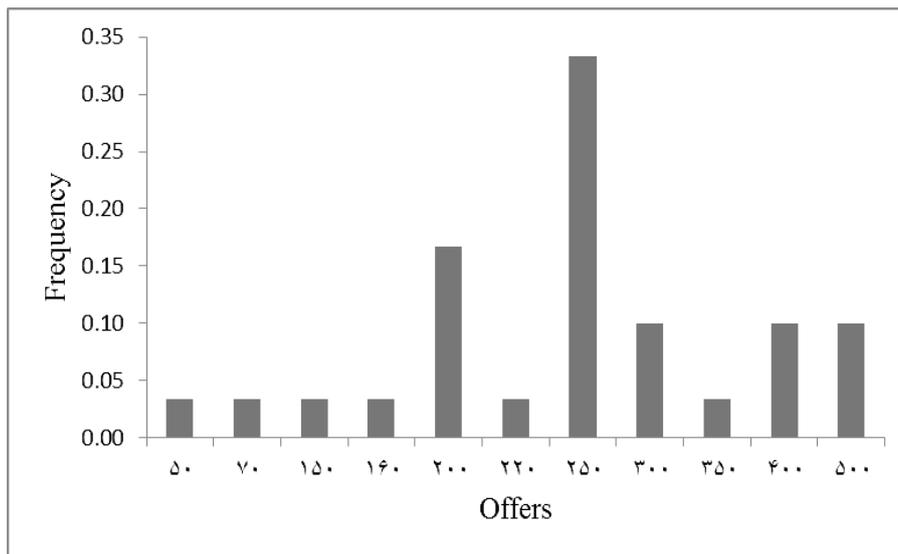


Figure 1. Distribution of offers

Here a question arises that what if offer is fair but the chosen exchange rate is unfair. It is worth mentioning that a proposer in our experimental game made two decisions. A decision regarding offer and a decision regarding choosing an exchange rate combination. In other words exchange rate combination is determined endogenously. This is in contrast

to the study of KKM who set exchange rate combination exogenously. We provide answer of the above question in Figure 2. The figure shows the distribution of exchange rate combination. The modal exchange rate is F. The frequency of exchange rate combination more than F is 7 while the frequency of exchange rate less than F is 10. These findings show that priming the Islamic identity of an individual make him/her more egalitarian.

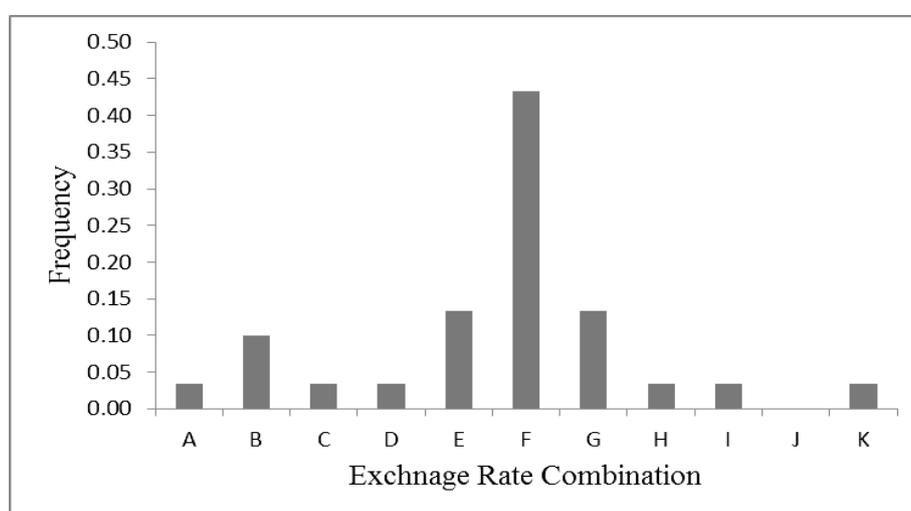


Figure 2. Distribution of Exchange Rate Combination

The above discussion misses a dimension of the proposers' decision. Whether the proposers who offer fair EMU also offer fair exchange rate combination? In other words proposers who offer 250 EMU also choose the exchange rate combination of F?

Figure 3 provides answer. The figure shows the distribution of offers and exchange rate combination simultaneously. We can observe from the figure that the offer of 250 EMU is associated with the exchange rate combination of F. The findings support hypothesis 2. We find that 13 proposers chose the exchange rate of combination of F. The average offer of the same 13

proposers is 277 EMU (55% of the total EMU). Further analysis of these 13 proposer shows that 10 proposer offer 250 EMU. The offer of 200, 400 and 500 is made one time only.

The number of participants who choose exchange rate combination more than F is 7 while the number of participants who choose exchange rate combination less than F is 10. It is interesting that the proposers who chose a combination of ER more than F also offer on average more than 250 EMU (345) while the proposer who chose a combination of ER less than F on average offer less than 250 EMU (224).

How much is the income difference between proposer and responder. Monetary earnings on average remain the same. We do not find significant difference in the earnings of proposer and responder. The equal money splits offered appear to result due to priming the subjects. Otherwise, what KKM shows that individual appears to be fair while trying to maximise their selfish gains. In our study the subjects do not maximise selfish gains. As they could earn between PKR 225 to PKR 270 by offering 200 EMU to 250 EMU and the exchange rate combination of B (0.1). Hence, our findings (in contrast to the findings of KKM) show that proposers are showing true fairness instead of trying to be fair to themselves.

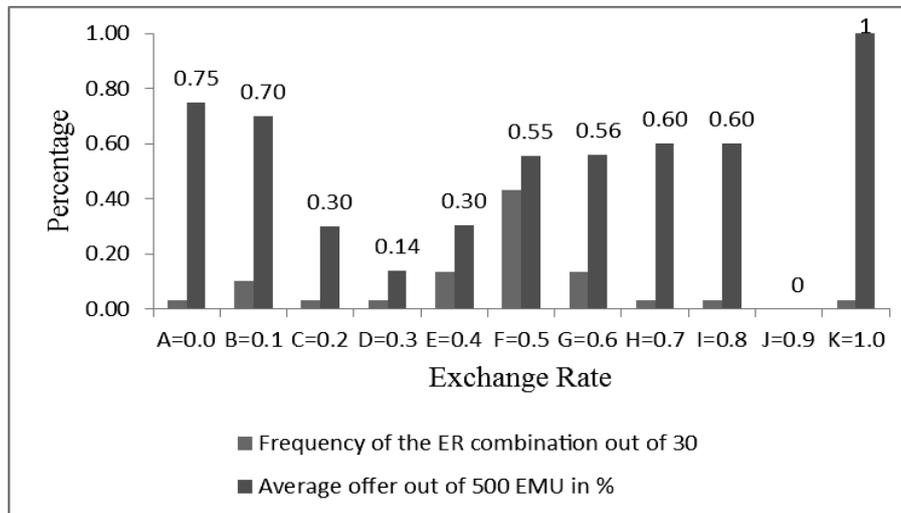


Figure 3. Simultaneous Distribution of offers and Exchange Rate Combination

To summarize, the examination of the behavior of religiously primed Proposers do not show any similarity with the findings of KKM or with the sub-game perfect Nash equilibrium outcome. In fact, within player comparisons almost conclude that Proposer behavior is more in line with the religious teachings when primed.

### 3. Responder Behavior

Figure 4 shows the acceptance rates in the game. The acceptance rates are much higher. In other words, it may be that the more generous offers explain the higher acceptance rates. We observe only two rejections. One rejection is where proposer offers 400 EMU at zero exchange rate combination. The other rejection is where proposers offer 70 EMU at 0.3 exchange rate. The rest all offers are accepted. It appears that responders are happy from the proposed offer, hence accept rate is 93%. The acceptance rate is to some extent similar to the findings of KKM, where they find 8% rejection.

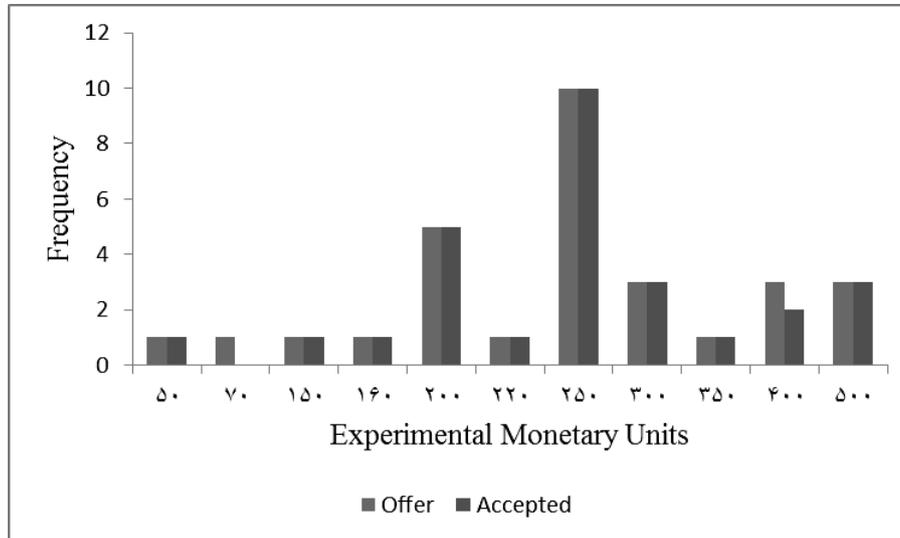


Figure 3. The ratio of acceptance of offers

Finally, note that the rejection rates are substantially lower than even the rejection rates commonly reported in ultimatum games with full information. For example, Roth *et al.* (1991) in

their USA data report average rejection rates of 28% in ultimatum games with \$10 and \$30 to be divided between the players. In Roth *et al.*, Proposer offered at least 40% of the money 90% of the time in period 1 and 86% of the time in period 10. In our game, the offer in terms of EMU is mostly fair. This suggests that with unknown money payoffs, player 2s were willing to give player 1s some benefit of the doubt regarding the equity of the underlying money payoffs.

### Conclusion

This study examines whether religiously primed individuals use informational advantage for selfish gains. The study reports data from the ultimatum game designed by KKM. In the game, information about the exchange rate of experimental monetary units is only known to the

proposers. In addition s/he set the exchange rate both for the responder and herself. The responder only knows about the amount of offer and the exchange rate for converting the offer into money terms.

We find many studies examining the role of religion on behaviours. However, most of such literature studies the role of religion in different games with different focus such as altruism, cooperation, trust and trustworthiness. With the exception of Tan (2006), there is no study that explores its impact on offers in the ultimatum game. While KKM and Cristina and Chavez (2009) found a significant effect of information asymmetry on offers for general subjects, our contribution is to see how far asymmetry affects fair offers in the ultimatum game for religiously primed subjects. Our findings come out to be contrary to what KKM has found.

The KKM study give us information about whether an agent exploit asymmetry in information regarding payoff for selfish gain, but does not tell us level (more vs. less) of this selfishness. This study let the proposer choose his/her own conversion rate (P) and that of the responder (R) as well. The farther P away from R, the more selfish and less other regarding the proposer is. We find that priming the religious identity of proposer decrease the level of selfishness.

Our study is based on data from a controlled environment. Hence, one needs to be careful when generalizing the results to subject of faith other than Islam. Nevertheless, we believe that the findings make a contribution to the faith based literature, not only from an academic perspective but also from a policy perspective. In fact our finding that individual show more other regarding preferences suggests using religious teaching for solving our day to day economic issues. For example, the gap between poor and rich is increasing and by encouraging rich to help poor can to decrease this gap.

The study suggests promoting values of universal nature to enhance the welfare of a society. It is claimed that

Mahdavi values are universal human values. Hence, the education of such values is likely to serve as ground setting for the establishment of Kingdom of God on earth. Teaching such values will help humanity achieving prosperity for the people in general and Muslims in Particular. When values and virtues dominate over vices, there will be a universal alignment of everything with nature and the incidences of storms and earthquakes, drought and hunger will disappear.

In our study proposers do not know about the type of respondents. Whether this behavior will prevail when proposers are informed that responder are from faith other than Islam. Future research can examine the impact of priming on giving to subjects of other faith.

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## **Appendix A**

### **General Instructions**

You are now taking part in an economic experiment. The instructions which we have distributed to you are for your private information. Please do not communicate with the other participants during the experiment. Should you have any questions please raise your hand and one of us will come to assist you. The amount of money you earn from this experiment depends on your decisions and of those made by the others. It is therefore important that you take your time to understand the instructions.

During the experiment we shall not speak of PKR (Pakistani Rupees), but of Experimental Monetary Units (EMU). Your earnings will be calculated in EMU and will be exchanged to PKR at the end of the experiment. You will be informed about the exchange rate when the experiment starts.

In addition to your earning from the experiment each participant will receive a one-off lump sum payment of 50 PKR. The show-up fee and your earning from the experiment will be paid to you in private at the end of experiment. None of the other participants will know how much money you earned during the experiment.

### **The Experiment**

There are two roles in this experiment: the Proposer and the Responder. You will be randomly assign these roles.

The Proposer will be given 500 EMU. He/She will then have to propose a division of these 500 EMU by making an offer to the Responder. The Proposer's offer can be any integer from 0 to 500. That is the Proposer will be able to offer 0, 1, 2, 3.....500.

The Responder will be informed about the Proposer's offer and will have to decide whether or not to accept the offer.

If the offer is accepted, the suggested division will be implemented.

If the Responder rejects the offer, both the Proposer and the Responder will receive 0. Each decision will be made only once.

Your earning from the experiment will be paid to you in private at the end of experiment. None of the other participants will know how much money you earned during the experiment.

If you have any questions please raise your hand to attract the attention of one of the experimenters. Otherwise, please proceed to answer the below questions

### **Control Questions for General Instructions**

These questions are not meant to test your mathematical ability. They are simply aimed at helping you understand the experiment. Please tick the correct answer only and after finishing raise your hand to attract the attention of the experimenter.

1. What is the role of the Proposer in the experiment?
  - a. Accept/reject the offer
  - b. Make an offer
2. Responder receives an offer of 400 EMU, which he/she accepts. How much his/her experimental earnings in PKR will be if exchange rate is  $0.2 = 1$  EMU?
  - a. 80 PKR
  - b. 90 PKR
  - c. 100 PKR

3. Let Proposer make an offer of 200 EMU and is accepted by the responder. What will be the experimental earnings in PKR of the proposer and the responder?

- Proposer will get 8 PKR and responder will get 2 PKR
- Proposer will get 2 PKR and responder will get 8 PKR
- Without knowing exchange rate, the earnings of both cannot be calculated

4. If the Responder rejects the offer, what amount the proposer and the responder will receive at the end of the experiment?

a. The proposer and the responder, each will receive show up fee of 50 PKR only

b. The proposer and the responder, each will receive zero

Instructions for the Proposer

Please fill in the following brief survey before reading the detailed instructions.

1) How old are you.-----

2) What main subjects did you study before getting admission in this department?-----

3) Where have you come from-----

*Read the following for answering question 4*

عن أنس رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: " لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يحب لأخيه ما يحب لنفسه" ((متفق عليه)).

Anas (May Allah be pleased with him) reported:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "No one of you becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself". (Agreed upon)

4) Do you know what does "agreed upon" ((متفق عليه)) means: Just tick (YES/NO)

### **Details of the Instructions for the Proposer**

You have been randomly allocated the role of the proposer. The Responder will not receive this part of the instructions. She/he will only receive the general instructions.

**What you have to do as a Proposer:** You have to take two decisions.

**The First decision**

You have received an endowment of 500 EMU. Before you decide on how you wish to divide these 500 EMU between you and the Responder, you need to make a decision regarding the exchange rate at which EMU will be exchanged to PKR both for you and the Responder. For this you will have to select one of the exchange rates combinations (A to K) from the following.

P = the exchange rate at which your EMU will be converted to PKR

R = the exchange rate at which the Responder's EMU will be converted to PKR

	P	R
A	1.0	0.0
B	0.9	0.1
C	0.8	0.2
D	0.7	0.3
E	0.6	0.4
F	0.5	0.5
G	0.4	0.6
H	0.3	0.7
I	0.2	0.8
J	0.1	0.9
K	0.0	1.0
Your earnings	=	P multiplied by the number of EMU you keep for yourself
The Responder's earning	=	R multiplied by the number of EMU you offer to the responder

Note that the Responder does not know that you will be determining the exchange rate. The Responder will be informed about his/her own exchange rate (which is the R selected by you, at the same time he/she will be informed about your offer). He/she will have NO information about your exchange rate, which means he/she will not know

about your exact earnings.

### **Second Decision**

After you decide exchange rate of EMU both for yourself and the responder, you will have to make an offer to the Responder (i.e. how many EMU you want to give to the responder). The offer could be any integer from 0 to 500 EMU

After you make both decisions, the following information will be passed on to the responder

- The exchange rate R (that you selected), and
- The number of EMU that you offer

Remember that if your offer is accepted, the suggested division will be implemented. However, if the responder rejects your offer, both you and the Responder will receive 0. Also note that can make the decision only once.

If you have any questions please raise your hand to attract the attention of one of the experimenters. Otherwise, please proceed to answer the following questions

### **Control Questions**

These questions are not meant to test your mathematical ability. They are simply aimed at helping you understand the experiment. Please give the correct answer and after finishing raise your hand to attract the attention of the experimenter.

1. Calculate proposed earnings for yourself and the Responder, if exchange rate combination is A and offer is 500 EMU.

- a. Your earning will be-----
- b. The Responder's earning will be-----

2. If offer is 400 EMU, which the Responder accepts. How much will be the earnings in case exchange rate combination is G.

- a. Your earnings will be-----
  - b. The Responder earnings will be-----
  - 3. What information is passed on to the Responder?
    - a. Own exchange rate and the offer quantity of EMU
    - b. Proposer's exchange rate and his/her earning
  - 4. What the Responder does not know?
    - a. The information that who determines the exchange rate and that what is the proposer's EMU exchange rate
    - b. Total amount of EMU
- Instructions for the Responders

### **The Experiment**

You have been randomly assigned the role of responder.

The Proposer has been given 500 EMU. He/She will then have to propose a division of these 100 EMU by making an offer to you. The Proposer's offer can be any integer from 0 to 100. That is the Proposer will be able to offer 0, 1, 2, 3.....500.

You will be informed about the Proposer's offer and the exchange rate at which your earnings will be exchanged to PKR. You will then decide whether to accept or reject the offer.

If you accept the offer, the suggested division will be implemented.

If you reject the offer, both the Proposer and you will receive 0. Each decision will be made only once.

Your earning from the experiment will be paid to you in private at the end of experiment. None of the other participants will know how much money you earned during the experiment.

If you have any questions please raise your hand to attract the attention of one of the experimenters. Otherwise, please proceed to answer the below questions

### Control Questions

These questions are not meant to test your mathematical ability. They are simply aimed at helping you understand the experiment. Please tick the correct answer only and after finishing raise your hand to attract the attention of the experimenter.

1. What is the role of the Proposer in the experiment?
  - a. Accept/reject the offer
  - b. Make an offer
2. You receive an offer of 400 EMU, which you accept. How much will be your earnings in PKR if the exchange rate is  $0.2 = 1$  EMU?
  - a. 80 PKR
  - b. 90 PKR
  - c. 100 PKR
3. Let Proposer make an offer of 200 EMU and you accept the offer. What will your experimental earnings in PKR and that of the proposer?
  - a. Proposer will get 8 PKR and you get 2 PKR
  - b. Proposer will get 2 PKR and you will get 8 PKR
  - c. Without knowing exchange rate your earning and that of the proposer earnings cannot be calculated
4. If you reject the offer, what amount the proposer and you will receive at the end of the experiment?
  - a. The proposer and you, each will receive show up fee of 50 PKR only
  - b. The proposer and you will receive zero



## **Within Mahdiology's Different Types of Human Just Societies: The Different Life-Styles and their Classes According to the Holy Qur'an**

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### ***Abstract***

It is unclear that aside of the Holy Qur'an, there is another text that has dealt with the different styles of human societies from the worldview of its leadership. In this paper I intend to introduce the different life-styles of various classes of a special just society according to the Qur'an. For a long time many thinkers, as well as Muslim laymen, held the assumption that as long as a society was led by a divinely perfected leader, the said society was logically led to a definitely bright future. In the present article, we have discussed the existence of different classes within such a society, and it is far from strange to accept that these kinds of societies are not guaranteed glorious futures, unless the majority of their members have espoused the ideals and values of their just leaders. The more devout they are to their belief, and the more decisive they are in reaching their objectives, the closer these societies come to achieving their divine goals and reaching the peak of perfection.

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### **Introduction**

The late Sayyid M. B. As-Sadr (as) has discussed one type of human society which he referred to as an oppressive or phara'onic society, during the lectures which he delivered in the final year of his noble life. He (as) spoke in this respect while he was expounding the relationship between human beings (i.e. the relationship between human beings and their fellow brothers and likewise the relationship between human beings and nature) after he had spoken of exalted perfect examples as opposed to lower degraded examples for mankind.

It can be observed in his speech that he wanted to express the gloomy reality of the time, place and circumstances that were surrounding him during the late seventies, at which it was recorded and printed after being literally transcribed. These lectures were subsequently re-produced in a book named: "An Introduction to the explanation of the holy Qur'an (*al-Muqadimah fi Tafsir al-Mauduyi lil Qur'an al-Karim*)". They were also re-printed with an analysis in the form of another book entitled "Substantive Interpretation and the Social philosophy in the Qur'anic school (*al-Tafseer al-Mauduyi wa falsafah al-Ijtima'iyah fil Madrasah al-Qur'aniyah*)".<sup>1</sup> Probably he (ra) could have presented more

1. Consequently this may be the cause of error or of some people not understanding his ideas because he did not elaborate on his honourable view. Let us now take a look at the words of those who have commented:

Sayyid Shaheed (as) said about an oppressive society at the beginning of his lecture: "for the fact that the pharaoh societies throughout history are disruptive and dispersive and always aimed at disrupting the energy of that society, dispersing its groups and disturbing its potential, when governing, and ruining the relationship between a human being and his fellow brother. And it is very clear that this dispersing, disorder, disintegration and division did not give individuals within the society the opportunity to mobilize its real power in order to control nature."

Then the annotator says: "Naturally this issue did not contradict the observation of the upper hand of contemporary civilization (i.e. western civilization) as possessing the full control over nature, hence when this dominant and predominating governance is perceived through its ethical criteria the clear repugnant picture of domination is observed, and what dreadful power human



creative description of the different types, much more than what was actually delivered, if he (ra) had wished to deal with all types of societies from a qur'anic perspective.

We have no doubt that he focused on the phara'onic type of human society only due to the dictatorship regime and authoritarian conditions that encircled him. Consequently, this issue expounds the reason for generality in this perspective because Sayyid As-Sadr's (ra) aimed objective was solely to explain the reality to the group of believers in the audience in order for them to confront the existing system whose oppressing groups they had to deal with. Naturally, this issue does not deny the existence of other

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beings are seen to obtain, being a clear example of ugly domination.”.

This annotation as we see cannot justify the contradiction between Sayyid Sahid's (ra) claim and the development of predominance over nature with respect to relationships between human beings and nature according to what we understand from his Statement; that all these societies are oppressive societies or pharaoh societies. Consequently this issue expounds the reason for generality in this perspective because Sayyid Shahid's (as) aim and objectives were to explain the reality to the society that he had lived in, and remind the group of believers in order to confront the ruling authoritarian system that has to deal with oppressed youth, all of that according to the perspective of the holy Qur'an. Naturally this issue does not deny the existence of other types of groups in society according to a Qur'anic perspective; therefore we shall try through this present course of study to elaborate that there is another form of relatively unjust society, although we are going to examine the other type and classes of human just society according to the Qur'anic perspective.

It is possible to have differences in society, which are dependent on the individual leader and the nature of the way in which the community is living; differences also depend on the extent of the impact of the leader and the relationship with the concept of heavenly perfection and efforts to implement it on earth; in this respect it is possible to divide societies' foundations into four types:

The first type is the absolutely just society; the second type is the relatively just society.

These two types of society are led by a just leader. What we mean here by just is the accomplishment of applying the heavenly message, thereby attempting to implement pure justice on earth.

The third type of society is the absolutely unjust society, and the fourth type of society is the relatively unjust society.

These two types of society are led by an unjust leader. What we mean here by unjust is failure to follow the heavenly message; the consequence of this is an attempt to reject its implementation or to distance its name from reality by any means.

group types in a different society according to a Qur'anic perspective. Consequently, through this paper, we shall try to examine the life-styles of other types of human societies and their classes according to Qur'anic perspectives.

It is possible to have differences in society, which are dependent on the individual leader and the nature of the way in which the community is living; differences also depend on the extent of the impact of the leader and the relationship with the concept of heavenly perfection and efforts to implement it on earth; in this respect it is possible to divide societies' foundations into four types:

The first type is 'the absolutely just society'; the second is the 'relatively just society'.

These two types of society are led by a just leader. What we mean here by just is the accomplishment of applying the heavenly message, thereby attempting to implement pure Divine justice on earth. The reason for their different levels (absolute and relative just societies) is solely due to their level of progress and aspiration towards perfection and/or their achievements.

The third type of society is the 'absolutely unjust society', and the fourth type is the 'relatively unjust society'. These two types of society are led by an unjust leader. What we mean here by the unjust leader is one who fails to follow the heavenly message; the consequence of which is an attempt to reject its implementation or to distance its name from reality by any means.

In our present article we shall be considering neither the absolutely unjust nor the absolutely just society. Sayyid Shahid S. M. Baqir As-Sadr (ra) has expounded on the first when referring to a phara<sup>o</sup>nic society in the course of his lecture, and we are not going to repeat it. Likewise we do not wish to study the details of the absolutely just society, as it was sufficiently discussed on the written work of the second Shahid Sadr (ra) in his book "al-Yaum al-mau'ud" when he had referred to it as "The Infallible Society", this

being discussed from part four till the end of the book.

Our discussion will focus specifically on one of the two types of just society, i.e. the second type which is the ‘relatively just society’, while the fourth type of the relatively unjust society, will be subsequently ignored. We shall try to establish the characteristics, historical customs and the classes of that type of a just society and its lifestyles. The reason should be obvious, as this type of society is the type which presumably could be ruling over many parts of the Muslim World prior to the appearance of the promised Al-Mahdi (ajt).

***The First Type of Just Societies: The Relatively Just Society:***

We have previously mentioned that the leader of such a society must be just and could be infallible in the same way as the infallibility of the prophets and the Imams (as), which is represented by the Prophet (sawas). Our interpretation of ‘just’ here is in its denotation according to the legal terminology in the chapters of “Ijtihad and Taqlid”, (to follow with awareness an expert in religious affairs) and not its extensive humanitarian meaning which may encompass a just person even though s/he is not a Muslim; this latter would mean that he is following the ethical law of good and evil and does not breach this or transgress and oppress others.

In accordance with this, it is possible to refer to this society (relatively just society) as the society of way-farers, or a journeying and travelling society, this expression being derived from a verse of Surah Taha from the holy Qur’an, as follows:

وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي فَاصْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَا تَخَافُ دَرَكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ

“And We had inspired to Moses, "Travel by night with My servants and strike for them a dry path through the sea; you will not fear being overtaken [by Pharaoh] nor be afraid

[of drowning]." Qur'an, C. 20: V. 77

Alternatively we can refer to it as a migrated society which corresponds better with Islamic cultural terminology, for the clearest aspect of this society is the "Medinah" society to which the Muslims migrated, even though it is comprised of the groups of the Immigrants and the Helpers; this formation became clearly crystallized and likewise its features and classes became distinct after the migration of the holy Prophet (sawas) and his companions and followers to the holy city of Medina.

Similarly it is compulsory for the majority of relatively just societies to be formed by migrated groups as for example in the case of the Medina society or the Israelites who crossed the Red Sea with the prophet Musa (as) in order to commence a new beginning with the new community after the migration. However we have not referred to it in that form because it is not always the case; we have chosen the term considered the most appropriate.

Even though this society, as mentioned in our first example, is represented by the leader of the prophets and messengers, like the honourable Prophet (sawas), nevertheless, such a society cannot be infallible or automatically transformed into being an absolutely just society; thus, we selected the 'relatively just society'. In this type of society, there would be classes of hypocrisy, deviation and straying from the path of Allah the most High; however its wise, believing and just leader would try to lead his people safely to the shore in order to save them from being misguided or from falling into the hands of the approaching enemy. In this case, the characteristics of an infallible society are not obtained because justice has not penetrated all classes of the society.

***Justification of the Existence of Classes in a Relatively Just Society:***

We know that a pharaoh exercises the art of splitting or separating society into factions and classes; meanwhile the holy Qur'an has indicated this:

In this respect it has become incumbent upon us to observe these factions and classes as the natural outcome of the segregation carried out by the pharaohs; however this is a type of society which is supposedly led by a good leader who wants to unite society and to put all his effort into this. One may, therefore, ask:

Why do these classes exist?

Why is there segregation, and separate formations within these groups and factions?

Does the holy Qur'an ever call for the unity of groups and the mobilization of potential towards one aim and objective?

There are justifications that expound the reason behind the formulation of these classes and we will present them henceforth as follows:

**The first justification:** Many of these classes are inherited from the past, i.e. the good and just leaders took over the society in this condition of division and segregation, or it had already crystallized into separate factions.

However, it is proper to ask oneself:

Why did these leaders not try to revoke this core and to put all these factions into one melting-pot?

The answer to this question is that it is not possible to deal with these factions as one deals with iron and a furnace because, sometimes, the course of justice and wise politics demand dealing with these occurrences with the spirit of clemency and leniency, for politics which are not lenient can lead to negative and dangerous results, which are distasteful to any wise and just leader.

**The second justification:** The natural atmosphere of a society living in a state of mobilization or confrontation and war with a foreign enemy is going to include secrecy and the emergence of groups and factions. Prisoners of war are an example of this type of group.

**The third justification:** The origin of the formation of this society, as we have mentioned, is the result of the migration

and merging of a group of people with those from another society, and consequently the crystallization of two classes, the society of immigrants and the original dwellers, becomes definite and real.

Even though there is no direct link in this respect with our course of discussion it is a formation which one cannot completely ignore as it is a very real one.

**The fourth justification:** A society which is in a state of transition and change from darkness to light needs to abstain from ineffectual issues, and there are many good things which can be encouraged through the advice and admonitions of the leader. Indeed, good will divide the nation into two groups, and thus a group will support this movement while the other will work against it.

In addition, the difference in the talents and potential of the people, and their diversity regarding their dispositions and skills will inevitable allow grades to differ.

It is however possible to say that they can form grades under one class, although this is an explanation for the manifestation of differences in grade and not a justification for the initiation of classes.

#### *The Classes of a Relatively Just Society*

We shall now attempt to study the classes of the immigrant society and it is necessary to point out that one can divide up any society by considering the individual origins of its people; secondly one can do so by considering religious inclination and thirdly one can consider their economic situation, and so on. As regards dividing society into the two groups of immigrants and the indigenous population, those that were referred to as the helpers in Medina are important but we shall not examine these two factions now except within the framework of the remaining classes for two reasons:

**One:** Indeed the holy Prophet (sawas), when he entered the

holy city of Medina, tried to put an end to differences between the two groups by initiating brotherhood; consequently the immigrants and the helpers created the brotherhood and became as children from one family, and consequently they inherited and distributed their property among themselves. We can therefore disregard the existence of these two types of classes.

**Two:** This did not relate much to the topic of discussion because during the division we did not consider geographical situations or tribal origins but rather considered the closeness to or distance from the message upheld by the leader.

Likewise, as we have mentioned, this society is in a continuous stage of change and, in this respect, it is possible for some of these classes not to exist for some period of time or to be annihilated.

**Indeed it may be said** that the holy Qur'an has mentioned various groups and classes; why, then, shouldn't we discuss these groups in the following paragraphs?

The answer is that these groups must fall into the categories we will already discuss, because they include those who worship Almighty Allah with their words. Meanwhile it is incumbent to incite those people falling under the category of hypocrites because a feature of the hypocrite is indecision. Al-Razi, when expounding this verse, said: "Beware that when Allah explained the condition of those who manifest polytheism and the disputatious, it is based on what we have mentioned. He proceeded to speak of the hypocrites and said: They are among people that worship Allah with their words".

**Those who would slow down the process of victory:** Those people are sometimes among the believers, and Almighty Allah has described them like that, and as such they will definitely be considered amongst the last class of believers.

**Or those that have rejected victory:** These types of people according to some of the Qur'anic commentators are ill-

wishers who did not want the Messenger of Allah (sawas) and the believers to become victorious. So this type of people must fall into the category of people of the Book if they were among the inhabitants of Medina, or be classified the polytheists of Mecca.

Allamah Tabatabai (as) said: "It is said that the meaning is what the polytheist are imagining, that Allah shall not assist His Prophet (sawas) in this world and the next world".

We have not mentioned a special class in the category of the "unbeliever" because in the relatively just society the existing unbelievers will doubtlessly not be manifesting their disbelief and atheism; for that reason there is no need for research.

**From here on**, we will firstly study the changing classes and those who could succeed towards the guided group, and then we will subsequently study the firm classes in their position. Now we will consider the two categories of changing classes only, these being:

**The class of captives:** Indeed it is inevitable that such a society in a state of war will include the class of captives.

Allamah Tabatabai (r.a) in the commentary to these two verses says: "It is those that you subdued and have taken ransom from and indeed if faith is firm in their heart and Allah is aware of that, He will give bountiful good to you for the ransom He has taken from you, and likewise Allah is more forgiving and more merciful. And if they wanted to deceive you and return to their former state of denial and corruption, definitely they have previously deceived Allah and Allah gives you the upper hand and power over them and definitely He is empowered to do that again".

Thus the truth of Almighty Allah in them wanted to enlighten them and tell them that guidance and a change of heart cannot take place in secret, and Almighty Allah is forgiving and merciful, but if they try to deceive another time then they will be admonished from the past. Hence Almighty Allah has power over them.

**The class of the immigrants to a society which is denied affiliation to it:** Indeed the most clear example of a group that ideologically has inclinations towards the relatively just society even though it is not a member of it are the individuals that migrated with the Muslims to the holy Prophet (sawas) after the reconciliation of Hudaibiyah and according to one of the bond of the reconciliation of Hudaibiyah it is incumbent upon the holy Prophet (sawas) to surrender them to the envoy of the Quraish if they demanded that of him. Likewise history shows us that the holy Prophet (sawas) surrendered the early immigrants among them to the Quraish envoy but he returned from the hands of the envoy after fighting him. They then ran into the mountains after hearing they would lose the protection of the holy Messenger (sawas) if they returned. As days passed and the numbers of Muslims fleeing increased, they formed a strong Muslim group and started attacking the groups of the polytheists [Mushrik]. When the Quraish's security became threatened due to those people's attacks and the Quraish had had enough, they demanded assistance of the holy Prophet (sawas) who answered that they were not part of Medinan society because they had denied any Muslim the right of refuge according to the treaty of the Hudaibiyah; therefore the Quraish relinquished and allowed them to mingle with the people of Medina.

*As for the firm classes in their positions of this society, they are:*

**The first class: The people of the book and polytheists**

The members of this group are not equal as they are not at the same level. Indeed the holy Qur'an states many times that they should be treated individually and it is not proper to judge these people in the same way. Then some verses of the holy Qur'an show that some fulfilled the trust that was bestowed upon them and some did not fulfil the trust bestowed upon them. Meanwhile the holy Qur'an stresses

the importance of their faith and the fact that faith is infinitely preferable for them.

Indeed the holy Qur'an praises them -in a general sense- when it indicates this with His saying:

إِن الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مِنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلُوا صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

‘Indeed, those who have believed [in Prophet Muhammad] and those [before Him] who were Jews or Sabeans or Christians - those [among them] who believed in Allah and the Last Day and did righteousness - no fear will there be concerning them, nor will they grieve.’ Qur’an, C. 5: V. 69

And it also praises them as a result of their faith for what has been revealed to the Muslims.

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَى أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

‘And you will find the nearest of them in affection to the believers those who say, "We are Christians." That is because among them are priests and monks and because they are not arrogant. And when they hear what has been revealed to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of what they have recognized of the truth. They say, "Our Lord, we have believed, so register us among the witnesses.’ Qur’an, C. 5: V. 83-84

Then He mentioned the inevitability of their faith in the Messiah (as) in other verses without any exaggeration, and likewise some of the narrations show the inevitability of this issue during the period of the great awaited proof (may Almighty Allah hasten his relief). Indeed the holy Qur'an has blamed them for their exaggeration saying:

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ

وَلَدَّ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا

‘O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of Allah and His word which He directed to Mary and a soul [created at a command] from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers. And do not say, "Three"; desist - it is better for you. Indeed, Allah is but one Allah. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs.’ Qur’an, C. 4: V. 171

Then it described them in another verse as disbelieving the verses of the holy Qur’an and dressing up the truth with falsehood. Therefore the holy Qur’an reported the words of some of them, showing their doubt and insecurity:

‘Never would the Messiah disdain to be a servant of Allah, nor would the angels near [to Him]. And whoever disdains worshipping Him and is arrogant - He will gather them to Himself all together. And as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, He will give them in full their rewards and grant them extra from His bounty. But as for those who disdained and were arrogant, He will punish them with a painful punishment, and they will not find for themselves besides Allah any protector or helper.’ Qur’an, C. 4: V. 173-174

Indeed Almighty Allah has put them on the same level as the unbelievers because of their hatred for the Muslims and for their not being bestowed with good.

Then He mentioned the (apostates) amongst Muslims who wanted to revert to disbelief after they had accepted faith.

What we have reported from the holy Qur’an about the description and attributes of the people of the Book (whether these be Jews, Christians or others like them) is enough for those who wished to be enlightened on this and we will not go into more explanation from the narrations as

that would distract from our discussion.

***The Second Class: The Hypocrites***

This class is the direct opposite of the last class because the last class represents the true faith while this class represents the false faith and hypocrisy. In the case of the unbeliever, although their unbelief is obvious they may be sincere with themselves and with other people; a person who is sincere may one day sincerely require the path of guidance. As for the hypocrite, however, he would manifest that which is contrary to what is in his mind and recite with the art of a chameleon, and it is very hard or impossible for this type of person to walk on the path of guidance. Indeed the holy Qur'an has talked about them in detail; hence Almighty Allah has said to them through addressing the holy Prophet (sawas):

اسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ  
ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

‘Ask forgiveness for them, [O Muhammad], or do not ask forgiveness for them. If you should ask forgiveness for them seventy times - never will Allah forgive them. That is because they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger, and Allah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people.’  
Qur'an, C. 9: V. 80.

This type of group as described by the holy Qur'an has become familiar with hypocrisy and has been trained in it. We will now briefly consider the major hypocrites as described in the holy Qur'an with pairs of inner and outer attributes, as follows:

1. Those that are sluggish in war: they are those that swear that they would come to battle if they could. Consequently, they would remain behind and are amongst those sitting at home. They are indeed pleased to be among those that act contrarily.

2. They call for conflict and they also reverse things.

3. They are not happy if the believers are bestowed with good and they are overjoyed if they are afflicted.

4. Non acceptance of their daily prayers because they only pray lazily; likewise their alms will not be accepted because they only spend with reluctance.

5. They have taken an oath to be among the believers but in reality they are not among them.

### *The Third Class: The Bedouin*

The holy Qur'an has described this type of class by saying:

'The bedouins are stronger in disbelief and hypocrisy and more likely not to know the limits of what [laws] Allah has revealed to His Messenger. And Allah is Knowing and Wise. And among the bedouins are some who consider what they spend as a loss and await for you turns of misfortune. Upon them will be a misfortune of evil. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.' Qur'an, C. 9: V. 97-98

In the 'Mufradat' of Ragib Isfahani, he said that the Arabs are the children of Ismail; A'rab (Bedouin) is the plural of the original word and later became the name of the dwellers of the village, and it seems the holy Qur'an made use of it in this meaning after an expansion was made and focused on the issue of ignorance of religious laws and deprivation through the effect of cultural and human civilization.

Based on this it is reported from the verdict of our jurists that it is not recommended to observe prayer behind an Imam who is an 'Arabi Bedouin'. Thus what is intended is not the plural of 'Arab'- as referring to the Arab as a race- in the racial sense that a lay man might think.

Al-Razi in his Tafsir says: "A Bedouin man is one of a thousand if he is in the village because he searches for rainfall and pasture whether he is from the Arabs or those that follow them, so the plural of A'rabi is A'rab and A'areeb; then if a Bedouin is called an Arab he rejoices while the Arab is annoyed if he is called a Bedouin. He who

has dwelt in an Arabian city is an Arab and he who remains in the village is a Bedouin”.

Allamah Tabatabai (as) says: “Almighty Allah is expounding the situation of the dwellers in the village, as being more disbelieving and hypocritical because of their distance from the city and civilization, and likewise their deprivation from human blessings like knowledge and culture, and what is distasteful is not to know the limit of what Almighty Allah has revealed from the true science and Islamic laws like the obligatory, the recommended act, the lawful and the prohibited act”.

There are believers among this type of group and those that mix good and splendid acts with evil acts, as we have mentioned among those of the first class; likewise there are hypocrites which we have just mentioned but here, according to the description of the holy Qur’an, they are stronger in disbelief and hypocrisy because they have combined the evil of everything in addition to their deviation, sin and their ignorance concerning the religious and Islamic laws, and have not contributed to the principle of culture and human civilization. That is why they are considered to be strong in disbelief and in hypocrisy.

**The fourth class:** They are the good leader, those closest to him and the believers among the immigrants, the helpers and the good Bedouin. Meanwhile, if a leader wants to be successful in leading society in any political way he practises, he must have concepts in which he believes; he must push these concepts forward and fight anything that stands in opposition to them.

Indeed the holy Qur’an has emphasized the necessity of following the Messenger (sawas) and how important it is in the holy verse.

فلا وربك لا يؤمنون حتى يحكموك فيما شجر بينهم ثم لا يجدوا في أنفسهم حرجا مما قضيت ويسلموا تسليما

‘But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, [O Muhammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within

themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission.’ Qur’an, C. 4: V. 65

Indeed the holy Qur’an indicates this class regularly and constantly in a positive manner. Allamah Tabatabai (as), commenting on the previous two verses, said: “When Almighty Allah blames the hypocrites in the previous two verses for the ease with which they sit down with those that contradict and those whose hearts have been poisoned, this is then perceived by the Prophet (sawas) along with those that believe in him. What is meant here is the true believers who have purified their hearts from the addresses of the hypocrite, for they were praised for their struggles regarding their wealth and soul in opposition to the hypocrite, for the believers are not pleased to join the hypocrites and their hearts are not poisoned; rather they gain the felicity of life and the divine light that guides them in their mission, as Almighty Allah says.”

The holy Qur’an also points out the former group with a good leader among the immigrants.

Al-Fakhr Razi in his commentary when discussing this verse of the holy Qur’an says: ‘Take note that He the most High is expounding that they were permitted to go to war because they were being oppressed’ and He expounds that by saying this. Therefore, Allah the Most High explains to them that their oppression has two aspects:

**One:** - That they were being evicted from their homes;

**Two:** - That they were being evicted because they said their Lord was Allah; and each of these two aspects shows tremendous oppression; the immigrants are referred to here because of what Allah the Most High says about the potentiality which refers to the earlier statement: “those that were ousted from their homes”.

As for the second group of helpers among the believers with a good leader, indeed there may be an illustration of them in the holy Qur’an with “those who believe in him, honour him and help him” and in Mukhtasar al-Mizan

“honour is assisted by dignity”, and it seems according to the sequence of these verses that what is meant are those among the Jews who believe in the Messenger (sawas).

For the clear verse with respect to the helpers in the second title, let's read the following:

‘And the first forerunners [in faith] among the Muhajirin and the Ansar and those who followed them with good conduct - Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.’ Qur'an, C. 9: V. 100

We can conclude that what is meant here are the helpers because of the contrary indication of the immigrants in both verses.

As for the third group: They are the believers among the Bedouin and the holy Qur'an referred to them thus:

ومن الأعراب من يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر ويتخذ ما ينفق قربات عند الله وصلوات الرسول، ألا إنها قربة لهم سيدخلهم الله في رحمته إن الله غفور رحيم.

‘But among the Bedouins are some who believe in Allah and the Last Day and consider what they spend as means of nearness to Allah and of [obtaining] invocations of the Messenger. Unquestionably, it is a means of nearness for them. Allah will admit them to His mercy. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.’ Qur'an, C. 9: V. 99

Thus, Allah the most High (swt) expounded that He found among the Bedouin those who spent all their resources for His sake in the form of giving charity. He has also explained that there are devout believers that strive and their sacrifice and giving charitable donations are for the sake of Allah the Almighty. He, the most High, has described this group as having two attributes:

**One:** They are believers in Almighty Allah and the Last Day, and what is meant here is to be aware that the entire act of obedience should be preceded by faith and the same

applies to striving to follow the ways of Allah.

**Two:** The fact that they spent all their resources on being close to Allah and praised the Messenger (sawas) means that whatever is spent is the path for attaining nearness to Almighty Allah and praising the Messenger (sawas) because He (swt) observes supplication and provides good, blessing and forgiveness for those who give alms.

Even though this group is from the Bedouin (who have been previously described negatively), these are true believers as opposed to the remaining majority of individual Bedouins whose image is largely negative; taking into consideration that some believe that the Bedouin are always distasteful and that their deeds will never be acceptable.

Thus Al-‘ayashi reported in his tafsir from the authority of Dawud bin al-Husain from Abi Abdullah (as), saying: “I enquired of him about the saying of Almighty Allah “Among the Bedouin are those that believe in Allah and the Last Day”, will they be rewarded? He said: yes”.

It is known that among this class (the group of believers) there is the possibility of having a difference in rank and in this respect we can think of the stages in this class; among them are the foremost ones and these are those brought near to Almighty Allah; among them are also the prominent ones. Many verses from the holy Qur’an have indicated this and it has been supported in narrations.

The Tafseer of al-Ayashi also narrates that Abi Amr al-Zubaidi quotes Abi Abdullah (as) as saying: ‘Indeed Almighty Allah has created competition between believers just like the competition between horses on a day of stakes; I said: inform me of what Allah has recommended for the believers in the faith to compete in, and he (as) said: Allah the most High has created competition in forgiveness to Almighty Allah and Paradise the width of which is like the width of heaven and the earth, that is prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messenger. He continued: The foremost ones are the ones brought near to Almighty Allah.

He also said: The foremost ones are among the immigrants and the helpers, and those that follow them are in a splendid aspect and Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Allah; so He commenced with the early immigrants based on the grade of their precedence, followed by the helpers and then those that followed them and ordered them to do good, and He has mentioned every group based on their grade and status.

He said in 'Mukhtasar Tafsir al-Mizan' that: 'the denotation of the verse does not mean that in all ways Allah will be pleased with the immigrant and the helper or those who follow them. He also said that there will never be annoyance in the future and that He has made forgiveness and Paradise a foregone conclusion in this respect whether one has done good or bad, and whether one has faith or is a hypocrite. Therefore this verse refers to faith and doing good, i.e. Almighty Allah is praising those among the immigrants, the helpers and those that follow them who are faithful and do good.'

It is possible to link this to the Bedouin who confessed to their sins. They are those that have committed both good and bad acts and indeed the holy Qur'an indicates this group when He says: "Others have confessed their sins; they have mixed good acts with other evil acts".

In al-Kafi through Musa bin Bakr, a man quoted Abu Ja'far (as) as saying: Those that have mixed good acts with evil are the believers that afflict their faith with sin, the sins that are hated and disliked by the believers, indeed those are the people to whom Allah may grant repentance.

Thus the believers are the most important and close members of a class to the Prophet (sawas) and his ideal values. However the most crucial and important amongst them are: '**the truthful.**' As they represent a whole life-style, which the holy Qur'an has praised with a special form of praise. This whole class has been summarized in a unique Qur'anic verse:

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَنْتَظِرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

“Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who [are truthful] has fulfilled his vow [to the death], and among them is he who awaits [his chance]. And they did not alter [the terms of their commitment] by any alteration.” Qur’an, C. 33: V. 23

So what does this Qur’anic verse refer to?

Can one perceive an Islamic life-style that is based on the above-mentioned verse?

So what is *Shahadat*?

Does it only apply to those who were killed during a military campaign, or it is so broadly perceived as to refer to a whole life-style?

Here the qur’anic verse speaks about an important Islamic concept that is ‘*Shahadat*’, i.e. martyrdom. Lexicographically the word ‘*Shahadat*’ is an Arabic word which could have various implications, and therefore is used referring to several different meanings: one of the meanings of which is martyrdom on the battlefield, and another meaning is witness to the truth, and the subject of our discussion is martyrdom at the battlefield for the sake of Allah, and we say that such a person has suffered martyrdom, that is to say, he is killed for the sake of Allah.

The qur’anic verse, number 169, from the Surrah Al-Imran says:<sup>1</sup>

و لا تحسبن الذين قتلوا فى سبيل الله امواتا بل احياء عند ربهم يرزقون

*and do not suppose that those who were slain in the way of Allah are dead, rather they are living and are provided for near their Lord"*

The verse says, you, human beings! Do not think, being indulged in your wild thoughts, that when someone is killed for the sake of Allah, he is dead. Almighty Allah (swt) says

1. The Holy Qur'an al-Imran 3-169.

they are not dead but in fact are alive, the martyrs are alive, and it is not clear about us whether we are alive or whether we are dead. When the Qur'anic verse says: "عند ربهم يرزقون" "they enjoy from the gifts of Allah", this means the sustenance of Allah constantly flows on them and never finishes. The translation of the narration that is quoted from the holy Prophet (sawas) is: 'Each good act and good deed that you perform, there is another good deed higher than it, but when someone is killed for the sake of Allah there is no good deed higher and superior than it.'

Here the holy Prophet (sawas) reminds us that surely it is my only wish and hope as your prophet to go to the battlefield and be killed for the sake of Allah and then be revived and killed a second time and be revived and again be killed, and again be killed for the third time. As you see, the holy Prophet repeats three times the word martyrdom, he does not mean that it is possible to be killed three times and be revived again but, in fact, here, with this repetition, the holy Prophet wants to explain the value of martyrdom to us. So, here we think that if someone suffered martyrdom for the sake of Allah, then what about his sins? The holy Prophet (sawas) wants to explain to us, O you that will suffer martyrdom for the sake of Allah, all of your sins will be forgiven except for one thing, and that thing in the explanation of the holy Prophet is "debt". Then you should never be heedless about the rights (debts) of people, you should pay and do your best to clear the debts of others. One should never take the wealth of others to spend for oneself. So, you should not think in this manner that I will go to the battlefield and I will suffer martyrdom if Allah willing! And that when I suffered martyrdom, all my sins will be forgiven, albeit within one exemption. That is debt that each and every single Muslim must think to clear before the time of their death arrives. When the Prophet (sawas) says:

"يغفر الله للشهيد كل ذنب الا الدين<sup>1</sup>"

This means you should not be a debtor to other people, i.e. to think about taking without giving back. So, we should not be affected with imagination and the matter should not be presented to us in this way that we lead to us astray and say that, as a result of martyrdom, all of our sins will be exempted and we will have no sins any longer. As you see, the matter is not in this way and the purpose of it is not encouraging us to carry on with our sins; the actual message and ultimate goal of these narrations is rather the indication that if one has occasionally committed sins or made a mistake, this martyrdom undertakes those things and one will be forgiven. We want to know what the exact meaning of this sentence is, as when some of the companions of Imam Hussain (as) say: He likes to be killed several times for the sake of Almighty Allah (swt). He, i.e. the holy Prophet (sawas) says: all of those who have performed good deeds in this world and have left this world to the other world, because the reward and remuneration of Allah has accrued to them, have no desire to turn back to this world but for one group, and this group, as the holy Prophet (sawas) quotes, is that of the martyrs. If it is said to all beneficent people who have left this world and have got to Allah's paradise, that if you come back to the earth we will give you all of it, they won't agree to return to this world because they have seen the majesty of Allah's paradise, and the only group that is eager to come back to this world is the group of martyrs. So, here we have one group of beneficent people that like to come back to this world; the martyrs. They like to return to this world to be killed again for the sake of Allah. As we said the martyr likes to come back to this world but such a love here means the wish and desire, because this turning is not possible. Therefore the martyr

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1. Kanz al-Ummal no.11110

wishes to come back to this world and be killed for the second time, but for what? The holy Prophet (sawas) has mentioned the reason: It is due to the fact that the martyr has achieved an elevated high position of martyrdom, and has thus understood the high grade of remuneration that Almighty Allah (swt) has granted him for his martyrdom. So, for this reason he wishes to come back to this world and be killed again, the martyrs see that when he goes to the battlefield, it takes no time for him when he is killed, but for this martyrdom that took place within few moments, he wins an elevated rank. Therefore, because of the great amount of remuneration and reward, he wishes to return to this world to be killed again.

Now we describe the position of a martyr from the view point of a person who has, himself, suffered martyrdom, not in the battlefield but at the altar, and this person is our leader Imam Ali (as). Now you see how Imam Ali (as) compares, with contempt, the position of a martyr in the battlefield with the position of a person who dies in bed. This narrative is from the book 'Irshad' where he says: if an enemy strikes you a thousand times on your head with a sword, while you fight for the sake of Allah, these strokes are nothing, and here, comparing martyrdom with the death in bed, he says: this kind of death (martyrdom) is easier than the death on bed.<sup>1</sup>

I do not know whether any of you has seen at close quarters a man who is on the point of death. I ask you, have you ever seen a man who is dying? We do not want to include here the person who dies when he is sleeping; we are talking about the normal dying of the self. It is quoted that when someone is dying, the first members of his body from where his soul is taken are his feet, and when the soul is caught from the feet, the man is no able to rise. So, as we understand, the catching of the soul begins with the feet and

1. Irshad, volume 1, page 238

comes up till it reaches the throat and then the man is not able to breathe. The state of a man that is killed in the battlefield is much better and his dying is easier than that of a man who is dying in bed. However, how high is the position of a martyr, while he has the least annoyance compared to the person who is dying naturally in the bed. Now we want to know who is reckoned to be a martyr. The holy Prophet (sawas) says:<sup>1</sup>

"من قتل دون مظلمة فهو شهيد"

Of those who are known as martyrs, one type is someone who defends his wealth, his reputation, his soul, his wife and his children before his house and in fact, because he is oppressed, if he is killed there, he is known as a martyr. Here the holy Prophet teaches us to defend our wealth and children and to never submit to aggressive bullying persons. The second person that we all like, on account of being the claimants of Shi'ah, is the one who dies in the path of love and affection to Muhammad and his holy household (as), as a martyr. Well, there are many narrations in this connection and one of them is written by the owner of the interpretation of 'The Keys of Hidden Treasure' (*Meftah-Alghaib*), the book written by FakhR Razi who is a famous learned man among the Sunnites. He has an interpretation of the Qur'anic verses in the same book and one of these narratives

"من مات على حب آل محمد مات شهيداً"<sup>2</sup>

Those who die in the path of love and affection to the household of the holy Prophet (sawas), they are as martyrs. You see that I didn't quote this narration from the mouth of the holy household or the sources of Shi'ah, the narrative that I quoted is also in the book Bihar-Al-'Anwar<sup>3</sup>, but I

1. Kanz al-Ummal , no. 11205.

2. Bihar al-Anwar v. 68, p.137, no.76.

3. Bihar Al-'Anwar, volume 68, page 137

didn't quote it from the book 'Bihar al-Anwar, I searched and found it in the sources of Sunnites, and as you know Fakhr Razi is one of the Sunnites. The next person who maybe hold true about many of us, is the one who lives in the hidden time of the guardian of the time Imam Zaman (aj), as Imam Zain-al-'Abedin says:

"من مات على مولاتنا في غيبة قائمنا أعطاه الله أجر ألف شهيد مثل شهداء بدرٍ وأحد"<sup>1</sup>

Those who die in the way of affection and love of us (imams), at the absence time of the Imam Zaman (aj) and do not succeed in seeing that holy imam, they have a remuneration equal to the remuneration of a thousand martyrs that have suffered martyrdom in the battles of Badr and Uhud. Therefore here we understand the value of the waiting Shi'ah and those who understand the meaning of waiting for Imam Zaman (aj).

In this direction we understand the Qur'anic verse is referring to the total annihilation of one's ego, to be able to sacrifice everything for the sake of Almighty (swt). One reads in the holy Qur'an:

'Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their properties [in exchange] for that they will have Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed. [It is] a true promise [binding] upon Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? So rejoice in your transaction which you have contracted. And it is that which is the great attainment.' Qur'an, C. 9: V. 111

Allah willing we expect that with the appearance of that elegant man, we become martyrs of his way, but those who do not succeed to see that Imam and are waiting for his appearance, and who yet are in love with him, they will be rewarded as martyrs, as Imam Zain al-'Abedin (as) says,

1. Ibid v.82, p.137, no.6.

their remuneration is equal to the remuneration of a thousand martyrs. We read in one of the narrations, to which the translation is that:

«من عشق فكنتم وعف فمات فهو شهيد»<sup>١</sup>

The one who falls in love with patience, but remained faithful and died in silence, he is considered a martyr.' As such the narration could refer to those who are in love with Imam Al-Mahdi (ajt). Also it may refer to two different groups: 1) If somebody dies while being in love for another person, let's say, a man who falls in love with a girl and hides this love as a secret and does not follow the unlawful way, i.e. remains chaste and has self-restraint and self-control, thus he has chastity and chooses patience, if he dies with this platonic love, he has the remuneration of a martyr, as someone who was killed for the sake of Allah (swt). As you know, the interpretation of this narrative is not necessarily referring to this matter. 2) The other supposition that is possible is when a man falls in love with a girl and he would realize when he is married to her, he finds no longer those rosy dreams, nor those imagined qualities, as he had expected or foreseen prior to the marriage. However now that he is married to her, he should control himself, comply with the reality as it is and live with chastity and never do unlawful acts. Such a person, if he dies, he is going to be rewarded as a martyr.

Having discussed about the various classes within these types of just society, one feels the necessity to elaborate on the historical customs when considering this type of a just society, and their possible outcome and future.

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1. Kanz al-Ummal no. 11203

### *Historical Customs When Considering the Relatively Just Society*

#### **Among the characteristics of this society are**

**Firstly:** The society is indeed in a transitional stage, which is the stage of changing from bad to good and likewise a stage of transferring from darkness to light, due to the fact that the divine leaders are calling towards truth and light. Allah the most High said:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ  
الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا  
خَالِدُونَ

‘Allah is the ally of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into the light. And those who disbelieve - their allies are Taghut. They take them out of the light into darkness. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.’ Qur’an, C. 2, V. 257

**Secondly:** The society as a natural result of the former conditions unsurprisingly exists in a situation of conflict and mobilization against a foreign enemy which is attempting to lead the good from their path, or at least attempting to encourage a pharaoh-like and oppressive life-style. The first situation exactly describes the Medinan society after the migration of the holy Prophet (sawas), and the second situation is represented by what the Israelites envisaged as a result of their being pursued by Pharaoh and his followers until they had crossed the Red Sea and were saved by a divine miracle.

**Thirdly:** This society is not living in stable circumstances or in adequately steady conditions. Therefore on the one hand it forms a new individual group among the strangers that have mingled with it and who have become part of it and have likewise become acclimatized to the individual nature of their land; furthermore there is a clear contradiction between the aims and objectives of its leader

that wishes to lead them towards an exalted ideal and the baseness of the ignorant society in which the majority are living, the aims of which are contrary to the aims and objectives of the divinely inclined men.

### **The future of the relatively just society**

Based on the above we arrive at a logical conclusion of the aforementioned three points which can be summarised as follows:

The outcome of this development and journey is unknown or at least its success is not guaranteed, for success must be linked to its causes, the nature of the facts and the stipulated conditions for success and those that in reality negate it.

The general rule for perfection and development of this society into an elevated form is solely related to the extent of devout belief of its members on the message and its interaction within daily life of the society according to its divine leader's aspiration, and how diligently they were listening to his commands and exactly complying to his advice and admonitions. Furthermore it is depending on how the relation between them, does assiduously comply to the Divine teachings and their level of adherence quantitatively and qualitatively.

Taking into consideration the historical institutions of human history, the death of this good leader and what he has represented in the life of the community is always considered to be the serious and sensitive part of humanitarian history in these societies. Indeed the holy Qur'an has also indicated this meaning most expressively in the following verse:

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَى  
أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ

“Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels [to unbelief]? And he

who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; but Allah will reward the grateful.” Qur’an, C. 4: V. 144

### **Conclusion**

The Human societies can be divided into just and unjust societies, while each of them can be either absolute or relative;

This article has dealt solely with the relatively just society, being a society that is led by a superior believer, a leader who had espoused the divinely revealed Message. This form of a society is to be named: ‘The Transformation society’, or the Migrating or ‘Way-farers Society, as it’s in constant struggle towards its peak values and elevated goals.

The importance of studying this type of a just society is due to necessity of preparing the ground for the – reappearance of the Awaited Saviour and how one should secure a bright future for those societies in case one is entrusted with such great tasks.

There are different classes of this type of human society and some of them represent stable and firm groups, while others are in tremulous changing positions.

The last class of the relatively just society is the closest one to the Divine Message and its appointed leadership, however amongst the chosen are those groups, who are named: ‘the truthful’ group, who are emphatically mentioned in the Qur’an as according to the Qur’anic verse: C. 33: V. 23.

This group’s members have their unique life-style that is based on the broad understanding of the concept of ‘Shahadat’, which means to be martyred for the sake of the Almighty, either in a battle field, or to fully annihilate one’s ego, due to diligently and assiduously adhering to the Divine commands and prohibitions. Their lives are dedicated to Almighty Allah (swt) in all possible aspects and human dimensions.

The outcome and achievement in reaching the elevated position of perfection is not a natural and secured ending, but rather its ending solely depends on its devout members and their total reliance on the Almighty Allah (swt) and adopting His Divine teachings in their daily life. The more they comply in completely conquering their egos for the sake of the Almighty, the closer they would be to the Divine goal and ultimate aim of human perfection.



## **Principles and Goals of Islamic Morality (Ethics) with a Focus on Imamate**

**Syed Manzoor Hussain Gillani<sup>1</sup>**

This paper provides a discussion on ethics and morality in different religions including Islam. Examples of ethical and moral values from Quran and Sunnah which are related to performance of institutions are also discussed. In this context Selflessness, integrity, accountability, honesty, objectivity, openness, transparency, equity, non discrimination, reliability, responsibility, clarity, adaptability, efficiency, simplicity, respect of human dignity, tolerance, truth, humility, devotion, courtesy, professionalism are important. After an analysis of the role of ethics and morality in improving institutional management, the paper outlines the situation in the contemporary world that has been filled by immorality, injustice, corruption and mismanagement of institutions. This shall be compared with a promised situation of the world after the appearance of the last savior of the world, Imam Al-Mahdi whose appearance has been clearly

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1. (Retd.) Acting Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Azad Jammu & Kashmir.

mentioned in divine books like Bible and the Holy Qur'an and other religious literature. In his era, Law of Almighty would be the rule of law for all; the hidden resources shall be open, prosperity would be visible everywhere - all because the ethics and moral laws shall prevail the society.

The present paper is expected to provoke some thoughts about ethical ground setting responsibilities. The paper suggests a set of universal values need to be identified that is commonly acceptable for followers of all religions and even non-believers so that a fundamental common ground of institutional development could be founded for early appearance of the Holy savior of the mankind.

### *Introduction*

Islam has laid down for humanity universal fundamental rights that are to be observed and respected under all circumstances. So that these rights can be realized in one's daily and social life, Islam provides both legal safeguards and a very effective moral system. In brief, whatever adds to the well-being of an individual or a society is morally good, and whatever harms this well-being is morally bad. Islam attaches so much importance to one's love for God and love for fellow human beings that it discourages excessive formalism. We read in the Qur'an:

“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in God and the Last Day, and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers, to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves, to be steadfast in prayers, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which you made; and to be firm and patient in pain (or suffering) and adversity and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing.”  
(2:177)

We are given a beautiful description of the righteous and the religiously committed individual in these verses. He should obey salutary regulations but fix his gaze on the love of God and the love of humanity. An individual's faith should be true and sincere. We must be prepared to show it in deeds of charity to other people and by living as good citizens and supporters of social organizations.

Finally, our own individual faith must remain firm and unshaken in all circumstances. This is the standard by which a particular mode of conduct can be classified as either good or bad. It also provides the nucleus around which an individual's as well as society's moral code should revolve. Before laying down any moral injunctions, Islam seeks to implant firmly in man's heart the conviction that his dealings are with God, who sees him at all times and in all places. While he may hide himself from others or deceive them, he cannot do so with God.

Islam teaches that the objective of one's life is to live a life that is pleasing to God. To make such a goal possible, Islam has provided mankind with the highest possible standard of morality. This moral code, which is both straightforward and practical, provides the individual with innumerable ways to embark upon and then continue the path of moral evolution. By making divine revelation the primary source of knowledge, moral standards are made permanent and stable. This does not make them inflexible, however, for there is room for reasonable adjustment and adaptation when needed. The danger of moral relativism, so widespread in many societies now, is thereby avoided. Another benefit is the gradual internalization of these moral standards, for one seeks to obey them voluntarily to please God, not because some government or people tell him to do so. An individual's belief in God, when added to his belief in the Day of Judgment, is a powerful motivating factor for him to live a high moral life.

Islam does not provide any novel moral virtues, nor does

it seek to minimize the importance of traditional and commonly accepted moral norms or give exaggerated importance to some and neglect others. The Islamic moral code incorporates all of the commonly accepted moral virtues and then endows them with a sense of balance and proportion by assigning each one a suitable place and function in the total scheme of life. It widens the scope of man's individual and collective life by dealing with his domestic associations, his civic conduct, and his activities in the political, economic, legal, educational, and social realms. It covers his life from home to the society, from the dining table to the battlefield and peace conferences-in short, from the cradle to the grave-for no sphere of life is exempt from the universal and comprehensive application of the moral principles of Islam. It makes morality reign supreme and ensures that the affairs of life are regulated by moral norms and not dominated by selfish desires and petty interests.

A major goal of Islam is to provide mankind with a practical and realistic system of life based on good by which he can conduct his life. It calls upon mankind not only to practice virtue but to establish it and to eradicate all that is harmful. It seeks the supremacy of one's conscience in all matters, so that what is harmful cannot gain the upper hand in either an individual's or a society's life. Those who respond to this call are known as Muslims, which literally means those who have submitted to God. The sole object of the resulting community of Muslims (the ummah) is the undertaking of an organized effort to establish what is good and to fight and eradicate what is evil and harmful. Here are some of the Several of Islam's basic moral teachings are given below. They cover the broad spectrum of a Muslim's personal moral conduct as well as his social responsibilities.

### *God-Consciousness*

The Qur'an mentions God-consciousness as the highest quality of a Muslim: "The most honorable among you in the sight of God is the one who is most God-conscious". (49:13) Humility modesty control of passions and desires, truthfulness, integrity, patience, steadfastness, and fulfilling one's promises-all of these are moral values that are mentioned many times in the Qur'an: "And God loves those who are firm and steadfast" (3:14Q. The Qur'an also tells Muslims:

"And march forth toward forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious. Those who spend (in the way of God) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon people; verily, God loves the doers of the good deeds." (Quran 3:133)

"And turn not your face away from people (with pride), nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, God likes not each arrogant boaster. And be moderate (or show no insolence) in your walking, and lower your voice. Verily, the harshest of all voices is the voice (braying) of the ass." (Quran 31:18-19)

### *Social Responsibilities*

The teachings of Islam concerning social responsibilities are based on kindness and consideration for others. So that these broad injections will not be ignored in specific situations, Islam stresses specific acts of kindness and defines the responsibilities and rights that belong to various relationships. Our first obligation is to our immediate family parents, spouse, and children, then to other relatives, neighbors, friends and acquaintances, orphans and widows, the needy of the community, our fellow Muslims, our fellow human beings and animals.

### *Parents*

Respect and care for parents is a very important part of a Muslims expression of faith.

“Your Sustainer has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life-time, do not say to them a word of contempt nor repel them, but address them in terms of honor and, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility and say: My Sustainer! Bestow on them Your mercy, even as they cherished me in childhood”. (17:23-24)

### *Other Relatives*

“And render to the relatives their due rights, as (also) to those in need, and to the traveler; and do not squander your wealth in the manner of a spendthrift”. (7:26)

### *Neighbors:*

The Prophet said: "He is not a believer who eats his fill when his neighbor beside him is hungry" and "He does not believe whose neighbors are not safe from his injurious conduct." Actually, according to the Qur'an and example of the Prophet (P.B.U.H), a Muslim has to discharge his moral responsibility not only to his parents, relatives, and neighbors but to all mankind, animals, and useful trees and plants. For example, the hunting of birds and animals for sport is not permitted. Similarly, cutting trees and plants that yield fruit is forbidden unless there is a very pressing need for one to do so.

Thus, on the basic moral plane, Islam provides mankind with a higher system of morality that can be used by an individual to realize his greatest potential. Islam purifies the soul of self-seeking egotism, tyranny, wantonness, and lack of discipline. It creates God fearing men who are devoted to their ideals, motivated by piety, abstinence, and discipline, and unable to make any compromise with falsehood. It

induces feelings of moral responsibility and fosters the capacity for self-control. Islam generates kindness, generosity, mercy, sympathy, peace, disinterested goodwill, scrupulous fairness, and truthfulness towards all creation in all situations. It nourishes noble qualities from which only good may be expected.

***Righteousness and some other Values***

God sums up righteousness in verse 177 of Surat Al Baqarah:

"It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness (the quality of) the one who believes in God and the Last Day and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; who spends of his wealth, in spite of love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, to the needy, to the wayfarer, to those who ask and for the freeing of slaves; and who is steadfast in prayers, and gives Zakah (Alms); and those who fulfill their covenants which they made; and who are patient and perseverant in poverty and ailment and throughout all periods of fighting. Such are the people of truth, the pious."

This verse teaches us that righteousness and piety is based before all else on a true and sincere faith. The key to virtue and good conduct is a strong relation with God, who sees all, at all times and everywhere. He knows the secrets of the hearts and the intentions behind all actions. Therefore, a Muslim must be moral in all circumstances; God is aware of each one when no one else is. If we deceive everyone, we cannot deceive Him. We can flee from anyone, but not from Him. The love and continuous awareness of God and the Day of Judgment enables man to be moral in conduct and sincere in intentions, with devotion and dedication: "Indeed, the most honorable among you in the sight of God is the most pious." (Quran 49:13)

Then come deeds of charity to others, especially giving

things we love. This, like acts of worship, prayers and Zakah (mandatory alms), is an integral part of worship. A righteous person must be reliable and trustworthy. Finally, their faith must be firm and should not wane when faced with adversity. Morality must be strong to vanquish corruption:

"And God loves those who are firm and steadfast."

Patience is often hardest and most beautiful when it's against one's own desires or anger:

"And march forth toward forgiveness from your Lord, and or Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious. Those who spend (in the way of God) in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon people; verily, God loves the doers of the good deeds." (Quran 3:133)

These three acts are among the hardest things for most people, but they are also the key to forgiveness and to paradise. Are they not the best, those who are able to exercise charity when they are in need themselves, control when they are angry and forgiveness when they are wronged? This is the standard by which actions are judged as good or bad. By making pleasing God the objective of every Muslim, Islam has set the highest possible standard of morality.

Morality in Islam addresses every aspect of a Muslim's life, from greetings to international relations. It is universal in its scope and in its applicability. Morality reigns in selfish desires, vanity and bad habits. Muslims must not only be virtuous, but they must also enjoin virtue. They must not only refrain from evil and vice, but they must also forbid them. In other words, they must not only be morally healthy, but they must also contribute to the moral health of society as a whole.

"You are the best of the nations raised up for (the benefit of) men; you enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong and believe in God; and if the followers of the Book had

believed it would have been better for them; of them (some) are believers and most of them are transgressors." (Quran: 3:110)

The Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, summarized the conduct of a Muslim when he said:

"My Sustainer has given me nine commands: to remain conscious of God, whether in private or in public; to speak justly, whether angry or pleased; to show moderation both when poor and when rich, to reunite friendship with those who have broken off with me; to give to him who refuses me; that my silence should be occupied with thought; that my looking should be an admonition; and that I should command what is right."

#### ***Morality and Ethics:***

Morality is uniquely a human attribute and central to Islam. Angels can't sin and Satan and evil spirits always tempt to do evil only, while the human have the ability to choose good and to avoid bad. So human are made in the image of God and, the image includes the moral and intellectual capability. (God offered the trust to the heavens, the earth, the mountains they were afraid and refused. Only humans were willing to accept it). So human conduct is accountable and none else's.

Morality and ethics seem blended but are disjunctive in nature, though supplement each other. Ethics is the body of principles used to decide what behaviors are right, good and proper, while morality is generally accepted standards of behavior within the society at any point of time. Ethical principle change very little, while morality undergoes changes with the changing times, advent of science and technology, world politics and diplomacy etc. Ethical principles are more personal attributes, while morality is a general behavior of the society.

There exists a set of moral principle in Islam to

differentiate between wrong and right. All human actions fall in the realm of permissibility, preference, neutrality, dislike or outright prohibition of particular action. The code of ethics and conduct has to be in line with it.

Every human action has moral significance. Do good and forbid evil is guiding light for human. The moral actions are those which perpetuate justice. In doing them faith and work has to coexist which are to be preceded by good intentions, that means, trio of heart, tongue and deed must exist. Means must go through proper set of rules to achieve the ends and extremes should be avoided by following the middle path, the way of balance.

Above, besides all other virtues have to be guided by the Quran, Sunnah and in their light by opinion of Iamma Mujtahideen last of whome is Mahdi-al-Messiah.

#### *Emergence of Mahdi:*

Emergence of Mahdi, the prophesized redeemer in Islam is a matter of faith to both Shia and Sunni schools of Islamic Thought, The Mahdi is 12th Imam. Mohammad –al-Mahdi, (son of 11th Imam), whose return from occultation will be the return of Mahdi. It is a central and powerful religious idea and article of faith in Shia Islam. While Sunni view, the Mahdi as the successor of Mohammad (P.B.U.H), from his progeny with the same name for him and his father. He is to reestablish the caliphate and righteousness before the end of th world and the day of judgment. He is to rule, according to different interpretation, for 7 , 9, or 19 years, before the day of judgment. His emergence is to coincide with the reoccurring of Esa, (Jesus Christ) who will assist Mahdi against the Masih-al-Dajjal, where Jesus will slay Dajjal and unite mankind.

Although some renowned Islamic scholars reject Mahdi doctrine, Such as Allama Tamanna Imadi, Allama Habib-ur-rehman Khandalbi, Javed Ahmad Ghamdi, but predominant

majority of Islamic scholars believe in Mahdism. Shykhis express impossibility of his having survived for hundred of years with his physical body. (Hamid Tabashi). Similarly several persons claimed Mahdiship around the world but were rejected. Sin qua non of the emergence of Mahdi is the preexistence of Dajjal, whereby there will be prevalent invasion of the earth by wicked, the overpowering of knowledge by unaware, loss of intelligence. The Mahdi will come to wipe it off, to be followed by the recurring of Esa. Unless all the three incidents coincide, anybody claiming to be Mahdi, will be Mahdi-ul-Dajjal.

My belief is, that until all resources on, under and above the earth and skies created for the exploration and use of mankind are exhausted, the world will not end. The abundance of resources and prosperity will be our climax after the emergence of Mahdi, till the end of the world. My belief derives strength from verse 65 of Sura Al Hajj, 20 of Sura Luqman and 13 of Sura Jasia of The Holy Quran which are quoted as under:

“Seest thou not that Allah has made subject to you [men] all that is on the earth, and the ships that sail through the sea by His Command? He withholds the sky [rain] from falling on the earth except by His leave: for Allah is Most Kind and Most Merciful to man.” (22: 65)

“Do ye not see that Allah has subjected to your [use] all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made his bounties flow to you in exceeding measure, [both] seen and unseen? Yet there are among men those who dispute about Allah, without knowledge and without guidance, and without a Book to enlighten them! (31:20)

“And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: Behold, in that are Signs indeed for those who reflect.” (45:13)

In other words, coincidence of these events is concomitant with the exhaustion of all resources before the end of the world.

***Relationship of Moral Principles with Doctrine of Mahdism:***

It may never be agreed by scholars of all schools of Islamic thought that Mahdism is superior to Prophethood in any degree as Dr. Sayyed Razi Mousavi Gilani, in his article titled “The Doctrine of Mahdism and its Impact from the Standpoint of Anthropology and Sociology” has propounded as under:

“It is noteworthy to mention that one of the features of Mahdism makes it even superior to the Prophethood”.

It is an un-rebutted fact that all moral principles and values, remain mere philosophical concepts until and unless they are embodied practically in a human role model. This is where the doctrine of Mahdism is necessitated to its highest degree. Imam Mahdi (R.A) as a role model and as a teacher, guides or a universal leader, will establish all moral principles on this plane at his arrival and appearance, by assimilating them all to their perfection, in a true sense for all practical purposes. This is why his appearance needs hasty grounds setting for the reasons that his early appearance will surly prove as a solution for all immoral concepts and activities on this earth worldwide.

Appearance of Mahdi, coinciding with the appearing of Jesus to eliminate the evils, vices and disruption in the world order, is the ultimate reality of Islam in which lies the solvation of mankind around the world.

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## **Implications of Globalization on Muslim Youth Morality: The Certainty of the Role of Imam Mahdi**

**Wa Ode Zainab Z.T<sup>1</sup>**

### ***Introduction***

Human being is manifestation of God who has the properties of God (*asma*). In fact, many human beings have not implemented the '*asma* of God in daily life. Whereas, there is one of *ayat* in the Holy Qur'an that emphasizes on human's character (morality) should be referred to the character of God.

There are many factors that influence its consequences, but there is the factor influences systematically, that is globalization. There is no doubt that the term globalization counts as one of the commonest terms of the present decade, and the process of globalization is indeed a serious one at present.

The term of globalization has been defined in different ways. For example, in their simple definitions, some people view globalization as the free circulation of information,

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wealth and workforce. Others see the term as describing a process through which global economy, political forces, and cultural influences speedily affect the earth, creating a global market as well as international and intercultural political organizations. So, globalization is an undeniable phenomenon in today's world. It holds that the actual nature of this phenomenon is "Western", at the heart of which lie exploitation, authoritarianism, and new imperialism.

The numerous advanced achievements and the positive aspects of globalization cannot be ignored. Then, it implicates on man's ever-increasing advances, especially in this area of science, technology, information, communication, transportation, etc., the world is moving towards the gradual realization of this goal. However, one cannot lose sight of its undeniable negative and destructive consequences for mankind and for the whole world too.

Therefore, the globalization has big implication to young people as the agent of change in the world. Unfortunately, they change the world through the material paradigm. It is not concern on spiritual growth that related to morality (ethics).

The bad consequences also influence Muslim youth. Actually, Muslim youth can change the world will be better refers to Islamic doctrine. In fact, divine religions in general, Islam in particular, have global views. Reformers of mankind have also thought globally. Similarly, Qur'anic teachings and Islamic traditions as well as sermons have been presented with a universal scope. But, unfortunately, Muslim youth just focus on material aspect; even mostly they can't do anything to make development in Islamic society.

The most dangerous thing that influences Muslim youth is moral degradation which related to character. Youths are singled out as being susceptible to the 'moral intrusion' of the West due to their tendency to imitate current trends and ideas made popular in Western pop culture and

entertainment.

Furthermore, youth Muslim is able to access western culture from media with ease. It realized because mostly Muslim society does not provide them with the adequate resources needed to negotiate their increased exposure to 'Western' or global ideas concerning the relationship among Muslim youth.

In other words, the realization of Western globalization entails numerous negative effects and consequences. In its Western form, globalization is an imposition and an intrusion upon the world. It draws upon capitalist and neo-liberalist principles to publicize an American life-style, to Westernize people and to promote the culture of consumption and capitalism.

Finally, there are many negative consequences are the decline of moral crisis (the degradation of morality), such as the disintegration of families, lack of social justice, lack of affection and intimate relationships, the off-limits spread of sexual misbehavior and the meaningless of life. They get degradation of morality which is not related in Islamic values, such as free sex, drugs, drunk, game addict, etc. The phenomenon indicates that Muslim youth lost their identity.

Generally speaking, the current globalization process, led by capitalist states and pioneered by the United States is aimed at nothing but unifying the world into a global market. This is a market in which all components of social life such as political, economic and cultural aspects are translated into the language of exploitation and benefit. This is what can ultimately lead to the unquestionable superiority and dominance of the Western culture and to the rule of wealthy countries over poor ones.

In addition, globalization essentially calls for the Westernization of the world and is a pretext or cover for the rule of capitalism. Generally speaking, critics argue that globalization entails the distortion and demolition of local customs and manners, the constant dependence of poor

countries on rich ones, the destruction of the environment and the assimilation of cultures and life-style. It seeks to introduce the culture of the west as the superior culture with the slogan of freedom. The consequences implicated to Muslim youth in Islamic country, they call the third world, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, etc.

Based on the background above indicates that globalization, as a symbol of cultural Westernization is the biggest threats facing Muslim youths today, especially toward moral degradation. I am as one of Muslim youth believes in Moral value in Islamic doctrines can solve this problem. Morality is related to “The Right” as the purpose of Islamic Ethics, so that we must refer to Rasulullah and twelve Imams as God’s proof (Hujjah) who is the pillar of the Universe, the gate through whom God is approached. So, the idea of Imam Mahdi’s government and his globalization is the world’s ideal ultimate strategy. It is man’s single panacea for his ills, frustrations, numerous, strangleholds, and hardships.

### *The Formulation of Problems*

The main question in this paper is “What is the solution to solve the moral degradation of Muslim youth on philosophical and theological approach?”

The next questions are:

1. What is the role of morality (ethics) to Muslim youth in the globalization era?
2. What is the best figure of morality (ethics) to Muslim youth in this era based on Islamic doctrine?
3. How Muslim Youth to implement of the figure’s doctrine on Islamic Ethics in the globalization era?

### *Objectives*

The purpose of this paper is to change of Muslim youth

paradigm which is based on the consciousness of Mahdaviat to solve morality problems in the globalization era.

### *Benefits*

- Providing depth understanding, especially for personal authors and readers generally
- Inspiring for the young generation
- Developing Mahdaviat's discourse

### *Methods*

Methods: Qualitative Method based on *library research* and Descriptive-Analytic Methods.

Approach: Philosophical and Theological Approach

### *Contents*

#### **1. The Role of Morality (Ethics) to Muslim Youth in the Globalization Era**

Every human being that is born in this world, regardless of its individual or social circumstances, aspires to its own perfection in accordance with its innate nature and its inborn intellect. They overcome every hindrance that they encounter in its way, avoid everything that they consider as harmful, and advance towards their instinctive goals.

The goal makes us understand that the universe, of which we find ourselves to be a small member, is moral and conscious, and that there exists a great consciousness and intellect behind all things. That is sufficient to convince us that life is something great and glorious, and it is here that we can at least prepare ourselves to cooperate and go along with the world's conscious spirit, knowing that opposing it is harmful for our life.<sup>1</sup>

Human must regulate the dimensions of his being in different directions in such a manner that would enable him

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1. Encyclopedia Britannica.

to meet all his material and spiritual demands. Then, human must build an orderly society free from conflict, injustice, aggression, ignorance, sin, in which human beings can attain purity, light and intellectual sublimity and reach the high peaks of humanity.

One of the most significant factors underlying the success and failure of societies is the moral whose decisive role in the lives of nation is so evident and conscious that no one can deny it. In Islamic teachings, morality is related to spirituality.

Spirituality and morality are very important aspect in Islamic doctrines since childhood. Imam Ali said to his son: "A young heart is like virgin soil which accepts whatever kind of seeds is sown in it. My son, I took the opportunity offered by your childhood years for training you, before that your impressionable heart should become hardened and before that different things occupy your mind."<sup>1</sup>

In other hand, Aristotle concerns on morality discourse in his philosophy. He said: "That moral virtue is a mean, then, and in what sense it is so, and that it is a mean between two vices, the one involving excess, the other deficiency, and that it is such because its character is to aim what is intermediate in passions and in actions, has been sufficiently stated. Hence also it is no easy task to be good."<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the practice of moral principles involves a certain amount of hardship and privation. Morality based on religious faith because it is the most important guarantee for the practice of human principles and the biggest support for ethical values in man's struggle against passions. The aim of the prophets Muhammad was to educate human beings to attain the higher goals and to purge their thoughts of impurities.

Refers to explanation above, morality is habit; in

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1. Nahj al-Balaghah, p. 93

2. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Commens and Linscott, pp. 38.

mysticism (*'irfan*), anything that human done in life will be *malakah* (character of self). In other words, the positive and negative aspects of habit play a fundamental role in human's growth and development as well as his corruption and decadence. History can reveal to one that heritage has been an effective and important factor in determining the destinies of human societies. Imam Hasan al-Askari said: "One's abandoning of a habit is something like a miracle."<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the ethical teaching in Islam, which was launched by the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), was a unique movement, without a parallel, from the viewpoint of its constructive ethos, depth and originality. It was unique in the sense that it encompassed all the subtleties of the human spirit and paid special attention to every movement of human thought and consciousness which has its origin in human's inner being.

Furthermore, Islamic morality emphasizes on establishment of a moral society that is very fundamental, especially Muslim youth. The point of Islamic teachings is not personal salvation but establishment of a society that is just and free of *zulm* (oppression). Here we will like to deal with this aspect of Islamic ethic in greater detail, as it is most central to Islam. The Qur'an lays great emphasis on *'adl* (justice).<sup>2</sup> It is the central value in the Islamic ethic. The Qur'an says that "Be just; it is closest to being pious."<sup>3</sup>

The Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) has said: "Make your own soul a balance or a scale to weigh yourself against others. So approve for others what you approve for yourself, and disapprove for others what you disapprove for yourself. Do not be unjust to others as you do not like other people to be unjust to you. Do good to other

1. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 17, p. 217.

2. Mutadha Muthahhari, Keadilan Ilahi: Asas Pandangan Dunia Islam, Bandung: Mizan, p. 60

3. Surah Al-Ma'idah (5) verses 8.

people as you like other people to do good to you.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus in Islam there is no concept of piety without being just. The opposite of justice is '*zulm*' (oppression). *Zulm* is derived from the root *z.l.m.* that has several shades of meaning i.e. to do wrong, injustice, darkness, iniquity, oppression etc. The Qur'an often uses it in the sense of wrong doing and oppression.

In fact, Islam has unique morality of its own which puts great deal of emphasis, for example, on equality and justice and emphasizes dignity of all human beings. However, there are also universal moral values, which Islam lays emphasis on. The Qur'an gives us the concept of what it calls '*amal salih*' which, translated into English, would mean 'good deeds'. But this translation does not adequately convey the meaning. The key word here is '*salih*'. The root of the word is '*slh*' from which are derived many words with the meaning to be good, to repair, to mend, to improve, to be righteous, to be efficient, to be suitable, peace and friendliness, reconciliation etc.

Thus, it will be seen that '*amal salih*' leads to a society which is reformed, good, efficient, suitable (to humanity), improved and above all which is peaceful and friendly to all human beings. The Qur'an uses the word '*amal salih*' repeatedly. For a moral conduct, according to the Qur'an, '*amal salih*' is very necessary. It is represented by one of *Surah* in the Holy Qur'an: "By the time! Surely man is in loss, except those who believe and do good work (*amal salih*), and exhort one another to Truth and exhort one another to patience."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, based on the *Surah Al-‘Asr* above, the key ethical concepts here are 1) *amal salih*; 2) to be truthful and 3) to observe patience. One can say that these are basic elements

1. Nahj al-Balaghah, epistle 31. A part of his (p.b.u.h.) last will addressed to al-Hasan ibn Ali (p.b.u.h.).

2. *Surah Al-‘Asr* (103: 1-3)

of Islamic ethic. Man is surely in loss but those who perform good deeds are truthful and patient would not be. Thus for *amal salih* truth and patience are highly necessary. One can say that this is most comprehensive statement of the *Qur'anic* ethic.

Based on explanation above indicates that morality Islamic teachings should be related to spirituality which refers to *syariat*. Moreover, Islam emphasizes on rationality has been considered as man's 'inner' prophet and guide and as God's 'proof'. Imam al-Kazhim said: "God has appointed two kinds of guides for mankind. One is outward and manifest and the other is inward ad hidden. The manifests proof are the prophets, messengers and the holy leaders of the faith. The hidden proof is the intellect."<sup>1</sup>

The intellect is the best guide and the biggest source of discernment, but it practically loses its capacity of guidance. The Qur'an refers to the misleading role of desires and lusts: "But (O Prophet) if they fail to respond to you, know that they follow their desires. And who is more lost than him who follows his desires without guidance from God? God does not guide the unjust people."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, we must balance between spirituality and rationality in realize morality. Muslim youth should be start from now to prepare ourselves to build the Islamic civilization to counter negative impact of globalization.

Therefore, Muslim youth must do big effort to realize the glorious goals. Without doubt, to overcome and control one's desires and negative urges is a very difficult task. Only with persisting efforts and exercises can one keep the rebellious passions in check and make them tractable to reason. The Noble Prophet said: "Bravo to those who have accomplished the minor jihad and who yet remain to wage the major jihad!" He was asked, "O Messenger of Allah,

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, Vol. 1, p. 16

2. Surah al-Qasas (28) verses 50

what is the major jihad?" He replied, "That is the jihad against the self (desire)."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Best Figure of Morality (Ethics) to Muslim Youth in this Era Based on Islamic Doctrine

In hadith of *tsaqalain*,<sup>2</sup> Rasulullah left a message that Muslim has to be Al-Qur'an and *itrah ahlul bait* (the family of Prophet Muhammad) as guidance. So, Muslim youth should be refers to the Holy Qur'an and Ahlul bait doctrines that can be seen from *hadith*. The saying or *hadith* of the Infallible Ones are one of the valuable sources for guiding man in all his ontological dimensions. The pure source and sublime knowledge of the Infallible Ones gifts a felicitous life of salvation through the *hadith* to the arid lands of every spirit seeking happiness. It leads the man beaten by the storm of the thought and moral corruption to the cast of peace and perfection by its ship of light and salvation.

Furthermore, the Imamiyah Shi'as (Shia majority) believes that Almighty God never leaves the world without a Prophet or an Imam whether this "proof of God" is apparent or hidden. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), through an explicit ordinance, made 'Ali al-Murtada (a.s.) his successor. 'Ali (a.s.) made al-Hasan (a.s.) his successor, and Imam al-Hasan (a.s.) made his brother Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) his successor. In this way this chain continued until the eleventh Imam. The Eleventh spiritual guide Imam al-Hasan al-' Askari (a.s.) was succeeded by his son the twelfth Imam, the Imam of the Age, the Awaited One (a.s.), vicegerent of God. This belief is not an innovation of the Shi'as, rather it is a divine practice, which started with Adam (a.s.) and continued until the last Prophet (s.a.w.).

The Imams are considered to be the successors of the

1. Al-Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar, p. 160

2. See Sunan Tirmidzi 5/663 no. 3788, Mustadrak Ash Shahihain no. 4577, Ma'rifat Wal Tarikh Al Fasawi 1/536, Fadhail As Shahabah no 990, Musykil Al Atsar Ath Thahawi 3/56, Shahih Muslim no. 2408, Shahih Ibnu Hibban no 123, etc.

Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and the rightful recipients of his authority in Shia. They are not appointed by any popular consensus; Imamate is instituted by divine installation; only Allah truly knows who possesses the qualities required to fulfill this duty, therefore only they are capable of appointing them. The basis of their sublime human and spiritual attributes and divine nomination these twelve holy personalities had the guidance. They carried out the divine mission taking into consideration the exigencies of their time and the last among is Imam Mahdi. He is our leader in this period. The Imam held to be necessary to the constitution of the Universe. Then, he can establish Islamic values in the world.

As mentioned on the basis of their sublime human and spiritual attributes and divine nomination these twelve holy personalities after the great Prophet of Islam (S.A.W.) had the guidance and leadership of people in their hands and they carried out their divine mission taking into consideration the exigencies of their time and the last among these personalities is Imam Mahdi (A.S).

The traditions and narrations which have in our hands from Ahl al-Bayt (p.b.u.t.) are different with respect to the documentation and reference. Although it is not literally the same, semantically is similar and the idea they include can be found successively in all of them.

Imam Mahdi (M.A.H.H.A.) is the Holy Prophet's namesake. The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) has expressed that: "His name is like my name and his father's name is like my son's. He is from my daughter's descendent. By their hands, God reveals the truth and with their swords, He abolishes the wrongness...."<sup>1</sup>

He is from the Holy Prophet's Household (p.b.u.h.) and from Imam Hussein's descendants: The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "The world will not come to the end, unless a

1. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.51, p.67.

man from Imam Hussein's descendent rises for reforming my nation's affairs and he fills the world with justice, as it will have been filled before with injustice and inequity."<sup>1</sup>

His majesty, before his emergence, will occult for a long time: The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "Mahdi (M.A.H.H.A.) is my children, his name is my name and his name is my nickname. He is the most similar to me in humor and nature. There is an occultation for him..."<sup>2</sup>

Imam Mahdi (A.S.) was born in the year 255 A.H.; and then after the martyrdom of his holy father he became the Imam of the Islamic Ummah. As this Imam is the Last Divine Treasure and possessing all the qualities and characteristic of *Imamah*, first had the "Minor Occultation" period which lasted for 69 years, in which his close followers had relations with him. After that the "Major Occultation" period started which is continuing till today. According to divine order the direct connection with the Living Imam of the Age is cut off but everybody is awaiting his reappearance and advent and the Promised Mahdi will establish the 'Universal Islamic Government' and will fill the world with justice and equity after his reappearance.<sup>3</sup>

Jabir, in a tradition from the Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) has quoted: "The denial of Mahdawat is like disbelief in God"<sup>4</sup> Also the believers have been told that: "If someone dies while not having realized the Imam of his age, he has died as if at the Age of Ignorance."<sup>5</sup>

Indeed, during the period of "Major Occultation" the presence of the Hidden Imam has special benefits for the Islamic *Ummah*. It is mentioned in the traditions that the

1. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.51, p.66.

2. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol.51, p.72.

3. See A'lamul Hidayah Team, Imam Mahdi, Jakarta: Al-Huda

4. Kamil Oleiman, Ruzegar-e Rahaiyy (The Age of Release), translated by Ali Akbar Mahdi poor, p. 15.

5. Bihat al-Anwar, Vol. 8, p. 368; Sahih Moslem, Vol. 6, p. 22; and Mosnad Ahmad Hanbal, Vol. 3. P.446.

presence of Imam Mahdi (A.S.) is like the sun hidden behind the clouds. The issue of Mahdaviat is one of the important issues in the Shiite doctrine and has been discussed in detail in various books and those interested can refer to them.

In the period of major occultation of Imam Mahdi, Muslim youth should be prepared his presence through good morality that based on spirituality and rationality. The Holy Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) has said: “The best man is one who loves acts of worship embracing them in open arms, loving them by his heart, practicing them by his body, and preparing himself to accomplish them. For him, it does not matter how his world is passing. “No matter it is involved with suffering and hardship or with blessing and comfort.”<sup>1</sup>

Mahdi’s emergence is a divine bounty for the oppressed and humiliated people and is am means for their leadership and their authority, and it is a preamble for their inheritance of God’s caliphate on the earth: “And we desired to show favor unto those who were oppressed in the earth, and to make them examples and to make them the inheritors.”<sup>2</sup> In morality aspect, if Muslim youth contributes to prepare the appearance of Imam Mahdi. So, automatically Muslim youth can change the world will be better. Muslim youth also can minimize bad influence of globalization that implicates moral degradation.

Mahdi’s emergence is the realization of the promise given by God since a very long time ago in the heavenly. Books to the pious and God fearing people that the Earth is theirs: “And verity we have written in the Scripture, after the Reminder: My righteous servants will inherit the earth.”<sup>3</sup>

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1. Al-Kafi, Vol.2, p.83

2. Surah 28. Al-Qasas: 5.

3. Surah 21. Al-Anbiya: 105.

### 3. Implementation of The Figure's Doctrine on Islamic Ethics in The Globalization Era

The Muslim youth should step firmly based on their beliefs and way of life, and should assist God's religion to make their lord and leader happy. They are the ones to defend Islam and its ideals and goals against all the hostilities, deceits, deceitful policies, cultural invasions, anti-Islamic thoughts etc., and they should nullify the conspiracies, especially facing bad influence of globalization in every aspect. All the expectants should protect the boundaries of Islam and its intellectual and ideological positions.

Moreover, from the viewpoint of Islam that which distinguishes man from other animals is not limited to his perceptual and rational faculties. Rather it is faith and a special mode of cognition that makes man superior to all other animals. Here human have been burdened with responsibility by the system of creation and so, in a way fitting his human functions. Then, human must employ his faith and cognitive faculties throughout the ups and downs of life and in the conduct of his individual and social affairs.<sup>1</sup>

Refers to explanation in the last chapter, Muslim's duties can be effective in the growth and improvement of the Islamic society are knowing God's proof and the Imam of the era (Imam Mahdi), purifying the soul, and unity with the Supreme Rank of Leadership (*Welayat*).

In fact, morality indeed starts when one opens one's eyes to the world and finds oneself in need of defining certain relations to their beings and even to one self, both in theory and in practice. Any response to the theoretical aspect might be considered as one's world-view or metaphysics and any set of practices proposed in response to the practical aspect

1. Sayyid Mujtaba Musawi Lari, *Wthics and Spiritual Growth*, Qum: Foundation of Islamic C.P.W., 2010.

constitutes one's morality. So it would not be strange to suppose that everyone is in the centre of a moral universe formed with one's relations to other relevant beings. Of course, this does not mean that there are real separate moral worlds or that people's worlds have to be metaphysically different; it rather seems that almost all people presume that they live in one single and common world. People do not consider themselves and therefore the world around them unique. Hence, they can establish well-organized relationships with each other. Indeed, most people do not even notice that they live in such a moral universe.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the young expectants should try more and bring about this change and evolution in their souls and hearts sooner in order to accelerate his majesty's emergence. Meanwhile, it is necessary to know that Imam is present and supervises our deeds. The Imam has not left his followers and has not yielded them to the sensual desires; he takes care of them. His majesty is watchful and does his best to bring about this change of soul in this people.

If the Muslim youth are convinced that the Imam of the Era lives among them and observes their deeds, their conducts, life and death will undergo a qualitative transformation. The Imam of the Era is present and sees and hears whatever we do. Therefore, we should sooner make the change in ourselves and get ready and grow intellectually, faithfully and morally to the extent that we find the capacity for the presence of his majesty.

In other words, the Imam of this era is waiting for the moment that such an intrinsic transformation, to be taken place in human's hearts and soul, reaches its highest point, so that he can emerge. He is not absent from us, but we are absent from him.

However, Islam had a social agenda. It aimed at reforming not only the individual but also the whole society. It knew

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1. Mohammad A. Shomali, *Ethical Relativism*, London: ICAS Press, 2001

that the roots of exploitation and oppression lay in social structure, not only in individual avarice. So it aimed at transforming the society along with the individual.

In Islam, morality (Ethics) is one of religious foundations. Allah send messenger to edify (*akhlak*) human being. We believe that the ethical base of the people is the sign of their faith and beliefs and if the ethical foundations are based on religious and doctrinal roots they are more formidable and lasting. The people living in an Islamic society not only consider abiding by the ethical rules as their social and human duty but also consider them as divine and religious laws which have been preached by the divine prophets and the Infallible Imams (A.S.) and have to be followed and practiced.

Furthermore, the doctrine of Mahdaviat there will be a new reading of the world and the man. Imam Ali (p.b.u.h), in regard with description of the allegiance of Imam Mahdi (M.A.H.H.A.) companions to him states that: they swear allegiance to him not to approach fornication, not to curse a Moslem, not to kill unjustly, not to defame someone, not to invade someone's house,...<sup>1</sup>

Then, in the Holy Qur'an, human must condemn the negative kind in their life: "Say: Who hath forbidden the adornment of Allah which He hath brought forth for His bondmen, and the good things of His providing? Say: Such, on the Day of Resurrection, will be only for those who believed during the life of the world. Thus do we detail our revelations for people who have knowledge."<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, Imam Ali said that about this subject: "Dominate your desires before they become violent and defiant, because if rebellious urges are allowed to grow in their aggressiveness and obstinacy, they will come to

1. Sayyed Ibn Tawus, *Al-Malahim wa al-Fitan*, pp. 49 and 122.

2. Surah Al-Araf (7) verse 32

dominate you and pull you in whatever direction they like. In that case you will lose the power to resist them.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, as the agent of change, Muslim youth should be harmonized between morality, spirituality, and rationality. In globalization era, youth Muslim have to do everything refers to based on Rasulullah and *Ahlulbait's* teachings to prepare the appearance of Imam Mahdi. In this field there are many books on ethics and reading and acting on them is necessary.

### *Summaries*

- Based on the formulation of problems and the paper content, so the summaries of this paper are:
- The bad influence of globalization to Muslim youth is moral degradation.
- Muslim youth should be done positive actions; not only individual but also social scope refers to the best figure of morality in Islamic doctrines, in this era that is Imam Mahdi.
- Muslim Youth to implement of the figure's doctrine on Islamic Ethics through harmonize spiritual, intellectual, and morality aspect.

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1. Al-Amidi, Ghurar al-Hikam, p. 498.



## **The coming of the Saviour of the World: Moral Principles for a Just Community**

**Clara López de Letona<sup>1</sup>**

“Associate with people of virtue; you will become one of them. Keep aloof from people of vices; you will remain safe from them.”<sup>2</sup>

### **FOREWORD**

“The most trustworthy intermediary is that which you adopt between yourself and Allah the glorified.”<sup>3</sup>

The ultimate reason of man and Creation is God’s Glory; this is the purpose of our earthly existence.

“I am the Lord, that is my created name; my Glory I give to no other, nor my Praise to graven images”<sup>4</sup>

The Goal of a Just Community is God’s Glory through the coming of His Kingdom on earth, and man is call to:

“Know O my child, that what I love most for you to adopt from my will is to fear Allah, to confine yourself to what Allah has made obligatory on you, and to follow the actions

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1 . Licentiate in Political Sciences and Administration

2. Imam Ali (pbuh), Letter 31, Nahjol Balaagha

3. Imam Ali (pbuh), Letter 31, Nahjol- Balaagha

4. Is 42:8

of your forefathers and the virtuous people of your household....”<sup>1</sup>

We, believers in God, have a very precise duty as builders of a new moral human world for today, tomorrow and the time to come.

“Be a partner in the work of bringing God’s creation to perfection.”<sup>2</sup>

### *What is Virtue?*

“The actual intelligent is only that who receives Allah’s commandments heedfully and works sincerely for the world to come”<sup>3</sup>

Virtue is a habit that gives the inclination and the power to do what is morally good. The virtues are therefore qualities which benefit the persons and increase their capabilities.

Genuine virtue flows from the correct fundamental option. It must be grounded in the unequivocal and definite orientation towards the supreme goal, which is the glorification of God. Virtue must be centre in the love of God.

“The marks of the virtuous are four: they are to purify the heart and enhance the (good) deeds and the earnings as well as all the affaires”<sup>4</sup>

### *The Theological Virtues*

#### **The virtue of Faith**

Saint Paul says to the Church of Ephesus:

“I repeat, it is owing to his favor that salvation is yours through faith, This is not your own doing, it is God’s gift”.<sup>5</sup>

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says about faith:

1. Ali Ibn Talib (pbuh), Letter 31, Nahjol-Balaagha

2. Gaudium et Spes, 67

3. Maxims of Iman Ali (pbuh), Tuhaf Al-Uqoul, p. 109

4. Maxims of the Prophet (pbuh), Tuhaf Al-Oqoul, p. 31

5. Eph 2:8

Faith is an act of our intelligence by which we adhere to the truth, even when our intelligence is not satisfied by its direct evidence, through the assistance of an act of the will which moves us to put away our hesitations and doubts and hold fast to the testimony of a trustworthy witness”.<sup>1</sup>

The great mysteries of our life cannot be known by reason but only by faith. The signs made by Jesus (pbuh) manifest to all their disciples that God spoke through him.

“The mark of the (faithful) believer are kindness, understanding, and shyness”.<sup>2</sup>

This gift of faith brings us “fear of the Lord” which is the beginning of wisdom. Thomas Aquinas says that this gifts enable us to use these virtues in a manner that transcends our ordinary human mode of acting.<sup>3</sup>

The gift of faith render us flexible and docile, and permits our faith to grow. First because it allow us to have a deep insight into the truths of faith and secondly because, thanks to these deep insight we can easily see the relationship between these truths and their application in life.

The course of faith is bright. Its signpost is brilliant. Its lights are luminous. Its extreme is high.... Paradise is its prize.<sup>4</sup>

According to St Thomas Aquinas, God can give the virtue of faith even to the least intellectual and educated.

“There are those with little understanding who fear God, and those of great intelligence who violate the law”.<sup>5</sup>

Conscience can be certain or doubtful. A certain conscience passes judgment without fear of error. A doubtful conscience is uncertain concerning the morality of he action .A certain conscience must always be obeyed when it commands or forbids, and it may always be

1. CCC #154, Catechism of the Catholic Church, p.47

2. Maxims of the Prophet (pbuh), Tuhaf Al- Uqoul, p. 31

3. Summa Theologiae I-II, q. 68, a.1-3

4. Maxims of Imam Ali (pbuh), Tuaf Al-Uqoul, p.188

5. Summa Theologiae I-II, q. 57

followed when it permits something.

“Doubt has four aspects: Unreasonableness, fear, wavering, and undue submission to every thing.....Only the bearers of conviction may be save”.<sup>1</sup>

Moral dilemmas involve difficult situations that requires reflection upon the several points involved in the situation. The problem that arise is that we often have to consider prudently if a good action will bring bad consequences.

When Jesus (pbuh) was eating with tax-collectors, who were agents of the oppressive Roman government who exploited the poor, Jesus new what the Pharisees were thinking while looking at him, that is why he told them:

“Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but the sinners”.<sup>2</sup>

“The most inclusive word of wisdom is to love for people what you love for yourself and hate for them what you hate for yourself”<sup>3</sup>

### **The Virtue of Hope**

Without hope a man cannot exist because he cannot avoid his desire for perfection and happiness. Hope is the best companion for a man’s pilgrimage on earth.

When Jesus (pbuh) preaches the coming Kingdom of God, makes clear that his Kingdom includes earthly justice and peace. His teachings were always towards the hope in the Kingdom to come, he told his disciples to pray God and say,

“Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven”<sup>4</sup>

Jesus (pbuh) constantly urged his disciples to be vigilant for his Second Coming, as in the great Eschatological Discourse of Mark:

“ Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he! And they

1. Maxims of Iman Ali (pbuh), Tuaf Al-Uqoul, p 190

2. Mk 2:14-17

3. Maxims of Iman Ali (pbuh), Tuaf Al-Uquol, p. 92

4. Mt 6:20-22

will lead many astray, And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nations will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places, there will be famines; this is but the beginning of the sufferings.<sup>1</sup>

Hope requires faith, and faith requires the determination of our will to walk towards the encounter of God. God call us first! The path to heaven is not an easy path to follow, many times we have to walk in darkness, and is then when we need to endure our effort with the virtue of hope, through the Grace of God.

Hope, like love, is one of the very simple, primordial dispositions of the living person. In hope, man reaches “with restless heart”, with confidence and patient expectation, towards the bonum arduum futurum, towards the arduous “not yet” of fulfillment, whether natural or supernatural.<sup>2</sup>

But hope can be destroyed by two sins, the sin of despair or its contrary, the sin of presumption.

By despair, man ceases to hope for his personal salvation from God, for help in attaining it or for the forgiveness of his sins. Despair is contrary to God’s goodness, to his justice – for the Lord is faithful to his promises – and to his mercy.<sup>3</sup>

There are two kinds of presumption. Either man presumes upon his own capacities, hoping to be able to save himself without help from on high, or he presumes upon God’s almighty power or his mercy, hoping to obtain his forgiveness without a conversion and glory without merit.<sup>4</sup>

“Apart from me you can do nothing.”<sup>5</sup>

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1. Mk 13:3-8

2. Joseph Pieper, Faith, Hope, Love, p.100

3. CCC # 2091, Catechism of the Catholic Church, p. 563

4. CCC # 2092, Catechism of the Catholic Church, p. 563

5. Jn 15:5

Sins against hope are worse than those sins against any of the cardinal virtues, prudence, temperance and fortitude. But with no doubt the sins against faith or love are the worst of all sins, because, they are sins against the divinity of God; against his truth and goodness.

Presumption is the opposite of despair, is not based on trust in God but in trusting our own powers. It is a false hope, that neglects the means God offers us.

Presumption is against the virtue of magnanimity, which encourages the person to achieve great actions, and also it is directly against the theological virtue of hope, because the person delays repentance with the presumption that after living a life of sins, expect to have the opportunity before death to convert.

The prophets confronted presumption among the people of their times whom they committed sins in the confidence that because they were members of the Chosen People they would be saved. Also John the Baptist denounced the same, saying:

“Do not presume to say to yourself, ‘We have Abraham as our father’, For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones”<sup>1</sup>

Jesus’ words were very hard when he said to the Pharisees:

“If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing the works of Abraham. But you are trying to kill me,.. Abraham did not do this.. You belong to your father the devil and you willingly carry out your father’s desire”<sup>2</sup>.

The remedy for the vice of presumption is humility before God and meditation on the mystery of God’s grace and mercy.

### **The Virtue of Charity**

Charity is a theological virtue infused by God into the will, by which we love God for himself above all things,

1. Mt 3:9 and Luke 3:8

2. Jn 39b-40a, 44

and ourselves, and our neighbor for God. The object of charity is primarily God, secondarily ourselves and our fellow human beings. The object of charity is God as supreme goodness in himself and as our ultimate end.

Charity is the most excellent of all virtues, not only because it is the virtue that ultimately unite us with God, but also because it is the form of all infused virtues.<sup>1</sup>

Love is the most fundamental emotion of man, being at the basis and origin of all the others. If love is mainly concerned with acquisition of the good for the one who loves, then is called love of desire, amor concupiscentiae. If loves aims at the preservation and promotion of the good of another person or being, it is called love of benevolence, amor benevolentiae or also agape. This is the love which wills the good of another.

“There are in the end three things that last: faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love”<sup>2</sup>

### **Man’s Love for God**

“In this world everything that is heard is better that what is seen, while of everything of the next world that is seen is better than what is heard.”<sup>3</sup>

Man’s love for God is a response to the prior love of God. The divine love call us for a response, and give us at the same time another commandment, to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, which is of equal importance, and they sum the law and the prophets.

Man’s love for God essentially belongs to the category of benevolent love, whose characteristics it is to will the good of another. To will the good of another can mean two things: first, the simple approval of the good he possesses and the esteem for it; and second the wish and determination to protect and further the good of another and to add what is

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1. Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, p. 266-267

2. 1Cor. 13:13

3. Imam Ali (pbuh), Sermon 113 Nahjol-Balaagha

lacking in goodness. There is no doubt that man can and should love God in the first sense of benevolent love.<sup>1</sup>

To love God with all our heart and strength signifies to love his will and work deeply for the realization of God's Kingdom and glory on earth.

“Blessed be those who act faithfully to Allah in action, knowledge, love, hatred, receipt, leave, speech, silence, deeds, and words.”<sup>2</sup>

We know that sentiments and words of love without corresponding deeds are false love. But also, external deeds and works of charity without the inner spirit of love are not authentic love either.

Jesus (pbuh) warns his disciples not to give alms for their own praise and glory, but for the sake of the Father in heaven:

“Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no rewards from God who is in heaven.”<sup>3</sup>

Saint Paul says about the theological virtue of love, the following:

Even “if I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.”<sup>4</sup>

He continues: For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement:

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”<sup>5</sup>

Finally, Paul concluded:

“Faith, hope and love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”<sup>6</sup>

“Do charitable acts as much as possible and you will find their rewards in the day to come.”<sup>7</sup>

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1. Louis Collin, Love the Lord Thy God

2. Maxims of Imam Ali (pbuh), Tuaf Al-Uqoul, page 109

3. Mt 6:1

4. Cor 13:3

5. Gal 5:14

6. 1 Cor 13:13

7. Maxims of Iman Ali (pbuh), Tuaf-Al-Uqoul, page 117

Jesus (pbuh) in the judgment of the Nations he will separate those that follow the works of love, from those that follow evil, and he will say to the ones that follow love:

“Inherit the kingdom prepare for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me , I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visit me , I was in prison and you came to me.”<sup>1</sup>

The prophet (pbup) told Imam Ali ibn Talib (pbuh):

“O Ali, three matters are within the doors of charity: they are generosity, good wording, and steadfastness against harm”.<sup>2</sup>

Jesus’s (pbuh) most important commandment is:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And the second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself”.<sup>3</sup>

Faith, hope and love are theological virtues, and love to God and our neighbor is the highest of all virtues because, as John says:

“Whoever does not love a brother he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen”.<sup>4</sup>

### *The Cardinal Virtues*

#### **The Virtue of Prudence**

Prudence is the first of the four cardinal virtues, and is considered the queen of the other three virtues, justice, fortitude and temperance. Prudence is a virtue infused by God into man’s intellect to move him to good actions that will make him to reach the promised kingdom of God. Prudence is given to man with sanctifying grace.

1. Mt 25:34-36

2. Maxims of the Prophet (pbuh), Tuhaf Al-Uqoul, p. 19

3. Mt 22:37-39

4. 1 Jn 4:2

“Conviction has four aspects: prudent perception, intelligence and understanding, drawing lessons from instructive things and following the precedents of past people. So, whoever perceives with prudence, wise knowledge will be manifest to him”.<sup>1</sup>

Infused prudence governs the supernatural order, and operates under reason enlightened by the theological virtue of faith and informed through the acts of love. Prudence enables us to judge any situation rightly and perfectly, and it is because of this rightness and perfection that other virtues need the infused virtue of prudence to deliberate properly about what is right and what is wrong in a given circumstance. For this reason, can be said that, without prudence, no other virtue can be practiced with perfection.

Deliberation, judgment and execution. These are the three acts involved in the functioning of prudence. First of all, depending on the importance and the complexity of the matter, one must consider the various means for attaining an end or the various ways of performing and action. Is at this point that we need a knowledge of principles or norms of action and at the same time the ability to relate those principles to the concrete case. Once the matter has been deliberated, a judgment is made as to the proper method of action and lastly the will gives the command to carry out the decision.

The parts required for the perfection of prudence are, memory of the past, understanding of the present, docility, sagacity, reasoning power, foresight, circumspection and precaution. The first five belong to the speculative aspect and the last three to the practical aspect.

### **The Virtue of Justice**

“Justice has four aspects: Keen understanding, deep knowledge, good power of decision and firm forbearance.

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1. Maxims of Iman Ali (pbuh) Tuhaf Al-Uqoul, p. 188

Therefore, whoever understands comes to acquire depth knowledge, whoever acquires depth knowledge drinks from the spring of judgment, and whoever exercise forbearance never commits evil actions in his affairs and leads a praiseworthy life among the people”.<sup>1</sup>

Justice is the virtue by which we have a constant and permanent will to give each person what is that person’s rights and it has to do with our relation to others. Mainly concerns with a right that belongs to some person and it implies equality between the one that give and the one that perceives. The virtue of justice implies distinction of persons while the virtue of love implies union of persons. Because love is a supernatural virtue infused to us by the grace of God.

“Pay to all their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, toll to whom toll is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due. Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another”.<sup>2</sup>

The virtue of justice is the most demanded virtue in humanity, and one of the most important biblical themes.

“The unjust people must enjoy three characteristics: the dominate him who is less powerful than they are by means of their powers, they dominate him who is more powerful than they are by means of acts of disobedience (to Allah), and they support the oppressors”.<sup>3</sup>

Justice is not only in our minds or feelings; justice moves our will, and it is not easy for us to go beyond ourselves in order to respect the rights of others. Here, love is also needed, because the demands of love exceed the demands of justice. Duties of justice and duties of love are not identical, sometimes the moral obligation of justice is more strict than those of love, because justice implies equality, what means, to accomplish a precise and determined obligation.

1. Maxims of Iman Ali, (pbuh), Tuhaf Al-Uqoul, p. 188

2. Rm 13:7-8

3. Maxims of the Prophet (pbuh)) Tuhaf Al-Uqoul, p. 21

Justice, as a cardinal virtue, deals with the needs of human beings in general, but in particular with our needs in society. Living in society requires a mutual respect among the members of the society. As I said before, justice is in the will, and as spiritual faculty, is greater than moderation and courage, that are body emotions..

Aristotle, wrote:

“Justice is often thought to be the greatest virtue and ‘neither evening nor morning star’ is so wonderful”.<sup>1</sup>

No solid social order and not lasting peace are possible without respect for the demands of justice. Charity works can never be a substitute of that justice being denied . Justice must be animated by love even in the social order. In fact there is a close relation between justice and love, for whatever is demanded by justice, is also demanded by love. Love is the more comprehensive virtue, and the demands of justice constitute its minimum requirements. The fundamental relation between justice and love, consists in this that every duty of justice is a duty of love, though not every duty of love is a duty of justice, since love transcends justice.

Justice sets down where love has to begin. It secures the most basic requirements for human existence, self-realization and life in community. Justice allows others to be what they are leaves to then what is theirs. Love in addition places itself at the service of others that may attain to the fullness of their being.<sup>2</sup>

The expression “to be hungry and thirsty” appears many times in the Old Testament, either with a literal or symbolic meaning.

Prophet Amos tells us that the thirst and hunger is not only physical but spiritual:

“Yes the days are coming, says the Lord God, when I will

1. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Bk.V, c. 1, 1129b

2. Peschke, Vol II, 235-236

send famine upon the land: not a famine of bread, or thirst for water, but for hearing the Word of the Lord”.<sup>1</sup>

But the fourth Beatitude speaks, not of the physical thirsty or hungry, but of those who are hungry and thirsty for the justice of the kingdom of God; and this hunger and thirst leads them to the care of the ones that are really thirst and hungry in this world because they live in poverty. The fourth Beatitude is talking about the preferential love for the poor.

### **The virtue of Fortitude**

Fortitude means firmness of spirit and strong character and also designates a supernatural infused virtue that strengthens our irascible appetite and our will not to abandon the pursuit of the arduous or difficult good. Fortitude has as its proper subject the irascible appetite because it is specially concerned with control of fear and daring. Since the greatest natural evil is the loss of one's life, the virtue of fortitude is principally concerned with the fear of death.

“The marks of the patient are four: they are steadfastness against misfortunes, determination in the good deeds, modesty, and clemency”.<sup>2</sup>

The virtue of fortitude uses the emotion of anger as its instrument to get our bodies prepared to sustain or attack. Fortitude is needed to be faithful to the dictates of all the other virtues. It is for this reason that Fortitude is a cardinal virtue, superior to the virtue of temperance because it gives all the other virtues courage and strength. Nevertheless, fortitude is less important than prudence and justice, because, a person can have courage and fortitude to oppress another person or himself.

Prophet Isaiah, with respect to act with fortitude and courage in a given difficult situation, says,

Go forth to meet Ahaz....and say to him: “Take care you

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1. Am 8:11

2. Maxims of the Prophet (pbuh), Tuhaf Al-Uquul, p. 31

remain tranquil and do not fear; let not your courage fail”.<sup>1</sup>

We also find in Proverbs the importance of being patient and temper:

“A patient man is better than a warrior, and he who rules his temper, than he who takes a city”.<sup>2</sup>

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus (pbuh) refuses to take up the sword and he says to Peter:

“Put back your sword into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword”.<sup>3</sup>

And in the Sermon on the Mount he teaches his disciples fortitude, patient and temperance, when he says to them:

“You have heard that it was said: ‘An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth’. But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one to him as well”.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Virtue of Temperance**

“The aspect of carelessness are arrogance, pride, negligence, and excessive expectation”.<sup>5</sup>

Often men are driven by the lust for physical pleasure and the desire for immediate gratification. Western culture denounces social injustices, but at the same time does not admit the fact that sins of the flesh are sins also, and this conviction deeply affects our daily life today.

Alcoholism, drugs addition and consent adultery, are the fundamental cause of the end of marriage and the end of family life. This wide spread moral laxity is destroying the sense of living in Community and the importance of “moral goodness or “Common Good”, for a peaceful and prosperous material and spiritual growth.

Jesus was gentle and humble but he also felt anger. One of

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1. Is 7:3

2. Pr 16:32

3. Mt 26:52

4. Mt 5:38:39

5. Maxims of Imam Ali, (pbuh) Tuhaf Al-Uquol, p. 191

the most clear situation of his anger was when he saw the commercialization of religion in the Temple and overturned their tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons;”<sup>1</sup>

He also suffers and reacts when he saw the lack of faith of his apostles, saying:

“O faithless generations, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?”<sup>2</sup>

The virtue of temperance is an ability to stick to the middle between the extremes of pleasure in relation to the true purpose of life, which, by faith we acknowledge, is the ultimately union with God.

“He who confines himself to the minimum necessity will have rest before others and will find himself a place in the tranquil life”.<sup>3</sup>

Three kinds of temperance are needed to discipline the pleasure of touch: abstinence regarding food; sobriety regarding drink; and chastity, regarding sex.

Jesus (pbuh), in the Sermon of the Mount , said to his disciples about committing adultery:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’ But I say to you that every one who looks a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart”.<sup>4</sup>

Imam Ali (pbuh) said:

“Take away from this world your hearts before your bodies go out of it, because herein you have been put on trial, and you have been created for the other world.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Humility and Pride**

Is the virtue of humility the one that moderates our human

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1. Mk 11:15

2. Mk 9:19

3. Maxims of Imam Ali (pbuh), Tuhaf Al-Uqoul, p. 100

4. Mt 5:27-28

5. Sermon 202, Nahjol-Balaagha

tendency to take pleasure in self- esteem, in fantasizing that we are more excellent than we really are, and our pain at being humiliated. But is the sin of pride to claim for ourselves by our own power to be anything but what we are, or to forget that even what we are is God's gift.

The capital sin of pride is not the same as vainglory, which is, too much concern for what other people think of oneself. Pride is an excessive claim of superiority, which is the root of all sin. Pride as capital sin is in control of presumption, ambition and vainglory.

Jesus (pbuh) has taught us the virtue of humility, not only by words, but directly from his own way of life while he was living on earth. He tells us to learn from him to be meek and humble like he was, when he says:

“Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light”.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Time of Reappearance of the Saviour of the World*

There is a growing hope between believers that the world society will be inspired by a truly universal friendship between all men that believe in the reappearance of the Mahdi (pbuh) for Muslims, and the second coming of Jesus (pbuh) for Christians.

There are many signs that this belief is being strongly incarnated in the heart, mind and will of many people in the world today. A fraternal world, where, narrow- minded obsessions with power and influence that afflict the world society today, will be abandoned and the world Communities of believers, rather will look for a way of living together with peace, joy and love.

As St. Paul says, love will guide their actions, because:

“Love is patient. Love is kind and is not jealous. ..., nor is

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1. Mt 11:29-30

arrogant...Nor is it resentful....Nor does it rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, it believes all things, it hopes all things, it endures all things.”<sup>1</sup>

To everybody is well-known that there is still open wounds between countries and regions, that create conflicts and increase the difficulties to live together in solidarity with people of different cultures and civilizations, even with people of the same region, with different believes. Of course, is not easy, but, the problem is that if we do not find a solution, where each party looks, primarily their future in peace, and secondly their own interest, peace, will never reach them, and hatred and conflicts will become bigger and bigger, at the cost of many innocent lives that by the sole reason of being born have the right to live their lives in peace and in joy.

Today, the western society, being detached from their Christians origins, is a society deeply marked by secularism and atheism, which drives people to a radical individualism, forgetting the sense of Community and forgetting God.

There are values that are common to all cultures because they belong to the nature of the person. Is of great importance to make people aware of this shared values to bring them to a universal and cultural dialogue. All religions can contribute to the universal purpose of understanding and self awareness that we all, are sons and daughters of the One and Only God.

Socially speaking, the most important value today is solidarity which our global interdependence makes it more and more important everyday doubt to the existing inequalities between nations.

In order to build a society based on love and understanding, we have to consider education as a fundamental value. We all know that ignorance is a very dangerous issue against the possibility of building a society

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1. 1 Cor 13:4-7

capable of attaining the reappearance of the Savior of the World.

Future generations might regard us as fortunate because we were privileged to live in a moments of great importance. Something is happening in our days that seems to be the culmination of what others have hope for, dreamed of, and lived for, but did not live to see it.

Over the last decades a process of social awareness has taken place which affects all human beings. A strong desire for universal friendship, for a world of justice, peace, equality and participation is become increasingly felt and articulated. The greatest single mental change happening today is a sharpened sensibility toward unjust and oppressive structures on all levels of human society.

This awareness express itself in the almost desperate search for a new social, political and economical order. Never before we had such an opportunity to build for the whole human family a new world order where justice and peace for all is not a mere dream or utopia, but a reality.

To identify this revolution for justice, peace, and human rights as the Kingdom in the concrete situations of human history means to read the signs of the time from the commitment of faith.

The Kingdom of God is viewed as the consummation of history, the final fulfillment of human's kind social destiny, the accomplishment of God's own intervention for the whole creation. We have, therefore, always to be on guard not to regard the Kingdom of God as a utopia that is situated only on the horizon of history. The Kingdom of God is a present reality at the heart of history.

St. Luke said in his Gospel

“And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth...; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a

cloud with power and great glory”.<sup>1</sup>

### Final Comments

“Without the Creator the creature come to nothing”.<sup>2</sup>

Peace on earth, which all men of every era have most eagerly yearned for, can be firmly established only if the order laid down by God be dutifully observed.

How strongly does the turmoil of individual men and peoples contrast with the perfect order of the universe? It is as if the relationship which bind them together could be controlled only by force. But the Creator of the world has imprinted in man’s heart an order which his conscience reveals to him and enjoins him to obey.

“Know O creatures of Allah! that piety is a strong house of protection while impiety is a weak house which does not protect its people, and does not give security to him who takes refuge therein”.<sup>3</sup>

The order that prevails in society is by nature moral. Grounded as it is in truth, it must function according to the norms of justice, it should be inspired and perfected by mutual love, and finally it should be brought to an ever more human balance in freedom.

Will the vision of the prophet Micah one day come true?

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hookds;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more;  
but they shall sit under their own vines and  
under their own fig trees,  
and no one shall make them afraid;  
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken”.<sup>4</sup>

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1. Lk 21:25-28

2. Gaudium et Spes, 36

3. Imam Ali (pbuh), Sermon 156, Nahjol-Balaagha

4. Mi 4:3-4

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## Love and Direction

(The Role and Social Condition of Women and Ground Setting Lifestyle)

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### *Introduction*

The universe is a marvel that manifests a complex system of visible and veiled reality characterized by complete order, where every bit and parcel, directly or indirectly affecting each other, is interlaced into a grand and intricate design. Despite the apparent vast distance separating each particle from the other, a change in the nature or movement of one sends ripples across the seeming empty space and impacts on others as well.

Another distinct feature of this system is the constant movement involving every thing in this realm, from the grandest planet to the minute atom, all are continually in motion, with each having to go through stages in development until reaching perfection, the highest degree of excellence beyond improvement, conforming absolutely to the description or definition of the ideal type<sup>2</sup>. To add to the wonder of this blueprint, despite the disparity in nature,

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1. Researcher

2. [Dictionary.reference.com/browse/perfect?s=t](http://Dictionary.reference.com/browse/perfect?s=t)

shape and size of its components, the cosmos is a wonderful display of precision and cohesion that, given their interconnectedness and interdependence, point to the reality of a superbly intelligent hand behind its creation and preservation. With motion, direction and change intrinsically built into the structure of the universe, it is in concordance to logic to surmise that there is a goal behind this creation.

When compared to every created thing in this realm, man has the distinction of having the ability to set his own course with his intellect and will; motivated by a thirst for knowledge, goodness and beauty and with the natural propensity to discern right from wrong built within his very system.

With the faculties of thinking and feeling, man is a source of energy effecting change not just in himself but also in his environment.

The survival and continuity of the human species requires the establishment of the family which is the basic unit of the society. In this union of the male and female, roles are assigned as according to their nature building a partnership wherein each complements the other. Ideally speaking, while men are busy 'hunting' outside the home, the women are left to tend to the house and the children. This arrangement is supposed to create an environment where the children are molded as wholesome individuals that will eventually be the next active members of the society.

As humans are both a thinking and a feeling being, having both a brain and a heart, man is assured of having the proper faculties to know the truth about their reality, having an understanding of the main reason of their being here. With a compass wired to their very system, the Creator of the universe sent Messengers to provide humanity a map so as to enable them (humans) to make the most of their limited stay here.

### *The World as It Is Today*

As Islam posits, man is wired to the truth. That by virtue of his very nature, he appreciates beauty and all goodness; and through the use of his reason and observance of creation, man will inevitably acknowledge and be led back to the worship and subservience to the Supreme Being Who is the Intelligent Hand behind creation.

However, given the inconsistency with science and logic of the prevailing religion in Europe at that time, it was inevitable that the likes of Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet, men who were used to challenge ideas to advance knowledge with their scientific knowledge and intellectual interchange would settle for no other master but their reason, would state in hope that: “The time will therefore come when the sun will shine only on free men who know no other master but their reason; when tyrants and slaves, priests and their stupid or hypocritical instruments will exist only in works of history and on the stage; and when we shall think of them only to pity their victims and their dupes; to maintain ourselves in a state of vigilance by thinking on their excesses; and to learn how to recognize and so to destroy, by force of reason, the first seeds of tyranny and superstition, should they ever dare to reappear among us.”<sup>1</sup>

Generalizing all religions as mere collections of superstitions and conjectures utilized by men to subjugate men, closing behind them the door for a critical and scientific review of other religions, these men of science limited their scope by considering the brain as the only seat of intelligence. Relegating whatever religious tendencies outside the realm of practicality and reason. Another important factor missed out is the ideal prototype of man.

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1. Marie Jean Antoine de Condorcet, Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind, trans. June Barraclough (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1955), pp. 4-5, 9-10, 128, 136, 140-142, 173-175.  
<http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/sketch.html>

With religion taken out of the equation, the perfect man will always be sought but never found.

Thus, what became deeply ingrained then in the psyche of man is the concept of reason contradicting revelation, with the pursuit of brain perfection outweighing and even disregarding the soul's perfection. Thinking and feeling thus divided, with the intellectual prowess focused on merely the material sans its spiritual bearing, a purely materialistic view of life and the world enveloped the continents.

Thus, onwards from the period of the Industrial Revolution in Europe, the cultural movement of intellectuals gained momentum not only in Europe but also made incursions in Muslim dominated areas among the intellectuals. Of course, this was made possible by Muslims themselves when the majority deviated from the pristine Islam of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), straying away from the spirituality that was backed by logic and reason which was the hallmark of the lifestyle of his (Prophet Muhammad's, peace be upon him) family who stuck to his instructions and kept his way of life. The Muslims of the past did not stop at just abandoning the Prophet's life, worse, they even killed 11 of these 12 Authorized Leaders appointed by the Lord of the Worlds Himself, and dislodged them from mainstream history through concocted lies spread as gospel truth.

With the Message of God based on the unity of creation pondered over through a fragmented lens, making a clear divide between the secular and the divine, it is no wonder that ignorance now holds sway over the globe, causing much mayhem, chaos and confusion despite the guidance from the Creator of the universe Who sent all the Prophets (124,000 in all including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, peace be upon them all) and the Imams of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

“They (Imams) are the lamps in darkness and the Imams of guidance and signs of piety. One who loves them and

accepts their Mastership, then, I assure Paradise for him near Allah.”<sup>1</sup> "One who dies while he has not recognized the Imam of his era, has died the death of ignorance." These are no less than the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the Seal of the Prophethood, reminding men lest they miss the chance of having a blissful life in this world and the next.

It is due to this divergence that left peoples confused despite their God-given faculty of reasoning. Consequently, man's loss of grip over reality resulted to his vulnerability in the face of manipulation and destruction through superstition and tyranny. What we now have is a world wrought with confusion and injustice. A review of contemporary development the world over, with mayhem and destruction present in every quarter of the globe, suffices to show the detrimental effect this lopsided view of the world has.

### *From the Heart*

Love is what keeps man going, so to speak. It is that force that gives him the zeal to surmount challenges, overpower adversarial forces, access inaccessible domains and unlock blocks in his quest to find that which will provide contentment in his heart. With the heart deeply attuned to the find the Fundamental Source of the sublime qualities of justice, beauty and everything positive and good, the resiliency to be back on the right track towards perfection is always open even after a lapse of vigilance due to his lopsided view.

Hope springs eternal, for as long as man is alive and his critical thinking<sup>2</sup> is unimpaired, then the door will always be open. For primarily, all he needs to do is ask. Sticking to sound logic and reasoning will eventually lead him to the

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1. Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 36, Pg. 296

2. What is Critical Thinking? <http://krieger.jhu.edu/greatbooks/003.html>

right person to ask.

'If you desire true knowledge, then it is with us, the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). Then we are the 'People of Remembrance', those regarding whom Allah declares – 'so ask the followers of the Reminder if you do not know.' (16: 43)<sup>1</sup>

However, given the biases against religion and the misconceptions and black propaganda spread about the Infallible Imams (a.s.), is there no hope at all for the majority in this planet?

### *Love Gone Awry*

Women as the caregivers and nurturers in the family are the one's who are supposed to rule the world<sup>2</sup>. They are the ones who are supposed to mold stable individuals who will stabilize the society. However, the current chaotic state of societies around the world manifest a disharmony in nature's set up.

Today's world is engulfed with a culture that proves detrimental to the development and growth of individuals. Day in day out, radio, television, dailies and the internet are replete with sights and sounds that reinforce both the culture of nakedness and the fastfood culture that reinforce the instant gratification lifestyle, 24/7.

This upbeat lifestyle leaves men (both male and female) constantly preoccupied and too busy to stop and reflect on the deeper meaning of life. In turn, generally speaking, the contemporary man of science and technology who is always on the go to be in stride with the fast-paced world is imbued with superficiality that narrows his vision and leaves him weak to face and withstand the challenges and vicissitudes

1. Wasa'il ush-Shi'ah, Vol. 18, Pg. 49, taken from Rejaal al-Kashi. <http://www.al-islam.org/glance-beloved/1-true-recognition>

2. "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world" is a poem by William Ross Wallace that praises motherhood as the preeminent force for change in the world.

of life. This is manifested by the varied addictions that have plagued and ruined lives, and the more horrendous reality of the rising tide of suicides among the youth.

In fact, this is substantiated in ‘the Global Burden of Disease 2010, an extensive study published last December in the British medical journal *The Lancet*, set out to quantify time lost to healthy years of life through disability (a complex calculation), that found a 36.7 percent increase in the “burden” of mental illness and substance abuse disorders across the globe compared with 1990 ... In 2011, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the rate of antidepressant use in the United States rose by 400 percent between 1988 and 2008.’<sup>1</sup>

Definitely, one's lifestyle is a clear indication of love's direction. Habits, attitudes, tastes and moral standards speak well what one harbors deep in the heart. Sadly, despite noble intentions of many to be faithful to verbal pronouncements of belief in a Divine Being, the war is lost by the 'inconsequential' minute. Many women who are active on the internet are perpetually logged on to be updated with the latest in fashion and lifestyle on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest than men,<sup>2</sup>

This robs them of moments to deeply contemplate on more significant matters. Likewise, instead of contributing to reverse this trend, their engagement in such frivolous matters make them reinforce the prevailing culture and even passing them on to the young.

The deep feeling springing from the heart that naturally pursues things of beauty is there but, regrettably, has been diverted and pursues ephemeral fancies. Given the muddled

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1. T. M. Luhrmann, a contributing opinion writer at the New York Times, is a professor of anthropology at Stanford and the author of “When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship With God.”
  2. Britney Fitzgerald, Huffington Post. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/09/women-facebook-twitter-pinterest\\_n\\_1655164.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/09/women-facebook-twitter-pinterest_n_1655164.html)

state of things, what can be done? Where and how to start?

***Our Loved Ones Become Ourselves<sup>1</sup>.....***

Although breakthroughs in science may have been utilized to take advantage and manipulate people to have the pursuit of material things their main preoccupation in life, scientific findings can still be the catalyst that could turn the tide and work for the betterment of man. In fact, the more scientific discoveries are made through advanced technological gadgets, the more people get to realize the veracity of the Holy Qur'an.

It is a given that all Muslims, regardless of school of thought, are aware of the Qur'anic verse: "Say (O Muhammad), I do not ask any reward (for my mission) except love of my kin,"<sup>2</sup> knowing for a fact that one's prayer would be deemed incomplete minus the appeal for blessings sent along the Ahlul Bayt's a.s. way. However, due to the majority's total disregard for the Prophet's explicit instructions concerning his family, and mainstreaming the prevailing disposition to totally disregard the important and lofty status of the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), the salawat said for them is no more than mere lip service sans any meaning.

Why did Islam emphasize the importance of loving the Ahlul Bayt a.s.?

It is through the utilization of their mind that men of science gained inroads into untraversed territories, making them gain new insights. Thus, "According to researchers, the human brain puts strangers in one bin and the people we know in another compartment. People in your social network literally become entwined with your sense of self at a neural level. "With familiarity, other people become part

1. Christopher Bergland, Psychology Today.<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/.the-athletes-way/201308/neuroscientists-confirm-our-loved-ones-become-ourselves>

2. Holy Qur'an, Chapter 42, verse 23

of ourselves," said James Coan, a psychology professor in *University of Virginia's College of Arts & Sciences* who used functional magnetic resonance imaging brain (fMRI) scans to find that people closely correlate people to whom they are attached to themselves.

Humans have evolved to have our self-identity become woven into a neural tapestry with our loved ones. James Coan said, "Our self comes to include the people we feel close to."<sup>1</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The faculties of love and critical thinking man has been endowed with by the Supreme Creator which involves self-discipline that makes him a willing partner in whatever he will become point to two important facts: 1) man is by nature destined for perfection, and 2) God loves him so much that He even granted him the distinction of being a co-creator. This separates him from all of creation, and in essence opens for him a window for development that goes beyond this material universe.

"That is of which Allah gives the good news to His servants , to those who believe and do good deeds. Say (O Our Apostle Muhammad): I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives; and whoever earns good, We give him more of good therein; surely Allah is Forgiving, Grateful."<sup>2</sup>

By willingly choosing to love the Ahlul Bayt a.s., man gains the assurances of being on the right tract towards perfection since these Representatives of Allah are the embodiment of goodness and beauty that naturally lead to the doorway of the Ultimate Source. Not an iota of

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1. Christopher Bergland, Psychology Today. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-athletes-way/201308/neuroscientists-confirm-our-loved-ones-become-ourselves>

2. Holy Qur'an, Chapter 42, verse 23

corruption or selfishness has touched these Noble Leaders, making them to reflect nothing but positive energy. By consciously choosing to love them, man gets infused with positive energy that propels him to rise high above the plane subjected to destruction and decay.

The love for these divinely appointed Leaders that properly utilizes critical thinking in its utmost capacity are unlike lopsided and unrealistic love that disregard the value of justice and do not at all underscore the love-hate relationship (love for justice consequently results to hatred for injustice). In fact, this is the love that is direly needed at this time, both in the individual and collective levels, to satisfy the natural need of man to have a grasp of life's meaning. For indeed, the whole universe attest to a complete balance manifesting a Creator who initiated creation with justice out of His Love.

The love for the Ahlul Bayt is the only love in the right direction, for if man is to pursue his love for perfection, for everything good and beautiful, for everything right and proper, for everything untainted by selfishness and depravity, then he will eventually enter the courtyard of the Supreme Being, and come to realize that the Ahlul Bayt a.s. who are His Representatives in this plane are in fact His Signs that point to His Greatness.

## Consumerism, Debt Management, and Ground-setting Morality and Lifestyle

Dr. Mansoor L. Limba<sup>1</sup>

### *Abstract*

In an age of consumerism and ultra-materialistic lifestyle, incurring of consumerist debt is prevalent. It is meant to satiate one's wants rather than needs, and to sustain a life of leisure and extravagance. This is exacerbated by the proliferation of small rectangular plastic called 'credit card' which makes it much easier and swifter to withdraw and spend money from such debt. Although this is especially true in the Western world, Muslims are not spared from this state of affairs either.

In Islamic texts, a kind of debt (*dayn*) is castigated for preoccupying one's mind and heart, and sometimes for hampering spiritual growth. In a tradition (*hadith*), such debt is described as causing grief during the night and humiliation during the day. Also explicitly mentioned are some of its dangers such as turning a truthful person into a liar, a promise-honoring person into a promise-breaker.

This paper attempts to examine a consumerist debt-free

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morality and lifestyle for setting the ground for the Mahdi's advent (*zuhur*). Standing on the proposition that a ground-setting lifestyle is that which is consumerist debt-free, it takes Supplication 30 (His Supplication for Help in Repaying Debt) as the framework of the steps or measures to free oneself from the bondage of debt, and part of it is as follows:

“O God, bless Muhammad and his Household. Prevent me from extravagance and excess; put me on the course of generous spending and moderation; teach me excellent distribution; hold me back through Thy gentleness from squandering; allow me to attain my provisions through lawful means; direct my spending toward the gateways of devotion, and take away from me any possession which will bring forth pride in me, lead to insolence, or drag me in its heels to rebellion!”

The following steps or measures toward freedom from debt can be identified from this part of the supplication: (1) sincere supplications to be able to repay one's debt as soon as possible, (2) having streams of lawful incomes, (3) living below one's means by avoiding extravagance and excess, and (4) avoiding any possession which causes pride, insolence and other related moral vices, and (5) spending for wholesome endeavors including charity.

**Keywords:** consumerism, credit card, debt, debt management, lifestyle, personal finance, financial planning, financial management, financial freedom, Mahdism, mahdawiyyah

### *Introduction*

This paper attempts to examine a consumerist debt-free morality and lifestyle for setting the ground for the Mahdi's advent (*zuhur*).

In this paper, instead of the Latinized 'Mahdism' or 'Mahdiism', the transliteration *mahdawiyyah* of the Arabic

word is used because the latter is historically and linguistically more accurate than the former. The former can be considered an anachronism that has little significance in an age in which cross-cultural understanding is a pressing concern. Moreover, the suffix ‘-ism’ in ‘Mahdism/Mahdiism’ is used to form an abstract noun. The word *mahdawiyyah*, however, is a term which signifies not a set of concepts or propositions per se, but rather an activity or movement.

### ***Conceptual Framework***

Before presenting the conceptual framework of this study, some concepts used in this paper must be clarified.

#### **Mahdawiyyah**

Mahdawiyyah is the Islamic eschatological belief in the coming of a global savior or redeemer, called the Mahdi, in the future. In a Prophetic tradition (hadith) upon whose authenticity Muslim schools of thought agree, Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said:

If there were to remain in the life of the world but one day, God would prolong that day until He sends in it a man from my community and my household. His name will be the same as my name. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and tyranny.<sup>1</sup>

It is said that the establishment of this global rule will usher in a golden age for mankind characterized by spiritual and moral excellence, diffusion of knowledge, technological advancement, agricultural abundance, economic prosperity, and political stability. According to Prophetic traditions, people of the world will be so contented that ‘The younger ones wish they were grown-ups, while the adults wish they

1. Quoted in Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba’i, et al. ‘Messianism and the Mahdi’, in *Expectation of the Millennium: Shi‘ism in History*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, et al. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 8; Najmuddin Tabasi, *An Overview of the Mahdi’s Government*, trans. Mansoor Limba (Tehran: Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) World Assembly, 2009), pp. 117-118.

were younger....The good become even more good, and even the wicked ones are treated well'<sup>1</sup> and 'The inhabitants of the heavens and the inhabitants of the earth will be pleased with him [i.e. the Mahdi] and such plants will be produced by the earth that the living will wish the dead could come back to life.'<sup>2</sup>

### *Ground-setting Morality*

Ground-setting morality (akhlaq) refers to a type of morality and lifestyle that attempt to mold an individual and a society prepared for the reappearance of Imam al-Mahdi ('a). In other words, it is the same Islamic morality and/or lifestyle which emphasizes the centrality of the Imam's personality and universal mission in the future.

### *Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework of the ground-setting morality and lifestyle can be clarified by attempting to define our ideal muntazir (awaiting) individual and society. In other words, what kind of members of society do we expect to be waiting for the universal reformation? What kind of society which shall be receptive to the universal implementation of justice and equity? The simple answer is to produce a muntazir with a Qur'anic worldview.

According to Murtada Mutahhari, the great contemporary Iranian teacher and thinker,

“‘Worldview’ means a kind of understanding, an interpretation and a kind of analysis that a person has about existence and the universe as well as man, society and history... Worldview informs us of what exists and what does not exist; what law governs the universe and man;

1. Quoted in Harun Yahya, *The End Times and the Mahdi* (Maryland: Khatoons, 2003), p. 53.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

what law governs society; which movements and motions lead to which direction; how nature moves; and what is the very thing called ‘existence’.”<sup>1</sup>

Based on this definition of “worldview”, it can be understood that “Qur’anic worldview” is the worldview in which the ultimate source and authority of all knowledge is the Qur’an which is expected to provide a natural basis for the integration of all religious principles and precepts.

In this regard, the Holy Qur’an states:

“We did not send any apostle before you but We revealed to him that ‘There is no god except Me; so worship Me.’”<sup>2</sup>

*Tawhīd* or the Islamic system of belief in the Oneness of Allah is, thus, the all-encompassing reality that constitutes the overarching theme of the Qur’anic worldview.

Guided by this Qur’anic/*tawhidic* worldview, “self-development and societal wellbeing” serves as the conceptual framework of *akhlāq* (ethics) as inspired by the Prophet’s dictum, *tā’at al-khāliq wa khidmat al-makhlūq* or obedience to Allah and service to mankind. This can be traced back from the fundamental goal that Islam espouses for human beings and that is to induce movement in them – the movement toward behavior that would elevate to a level higher than that of angels, and not toward behavior that could drag them to a level lower than that of animals.<sup>3</sup>

In ethics (*akhlaq*), this movement which Islam wishes for its followers to undertake can be realized by perfectly regulating the four powers of the soul, viz. power of intellect (*al-quwwat al-‘aqliyyah*), power of anger (*al-*

1. Murtadā Mutahharī, *The Theory of Knowledge*, trans. Mansoor Limba (Tehran: Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, 2011), pp. 12-13.

2. Sūrat al-Anbiyā’ 21:25. Translation of Qur’anic passages are adapted from Sayyid ‘Alī Qūlī Qarā’ī, *The Qur’an with a Phrase-by-Phrase English Translation* (London: ICAS Press, 2004).

3. IEB-NASIMCO, *Curriculum Development Process: First Steps in the Implementation of ‘The Target Profile of a Madrasah Graduate’* (Ontario: IEB-NASIMCO, 1998), p. 29.

*quwwat al-ghadabiyyah*), power of desire (*al-quwwat al-shahwiyyah*), and power of imagination (*al-quwwat al-wahmiyyah*).<sup>1</sup> Moderation (*i'tidal*) in the development of these powers shall bring about these respective virtues, viz. wisdom, courage, chastity, and justice.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, deficient (*tafrit*) or excessive (*ifrat*) development of the same shall give rise to their respective vices, viz. stupidity vs. cleverness, cowardice vs. foolhardiness, lethargy vs. covetousness, and submissiveness vs. tyranny.<sup>3</sup> Along this line, vices of the power of desire such as love of the world, love of wealth, greed, illegitimate earning, and treachery<sup>4</sup> shall impel a person to incur consumerist debt.

As such, the ground-setting morality and/or lifestyle is that which manifests moderate development of the four powers of the soul and free from any deficiency or excess in their development, which in turn, gives rise to various vices.

In sum, the conceptual framework of this study can be represented by the diagram below:

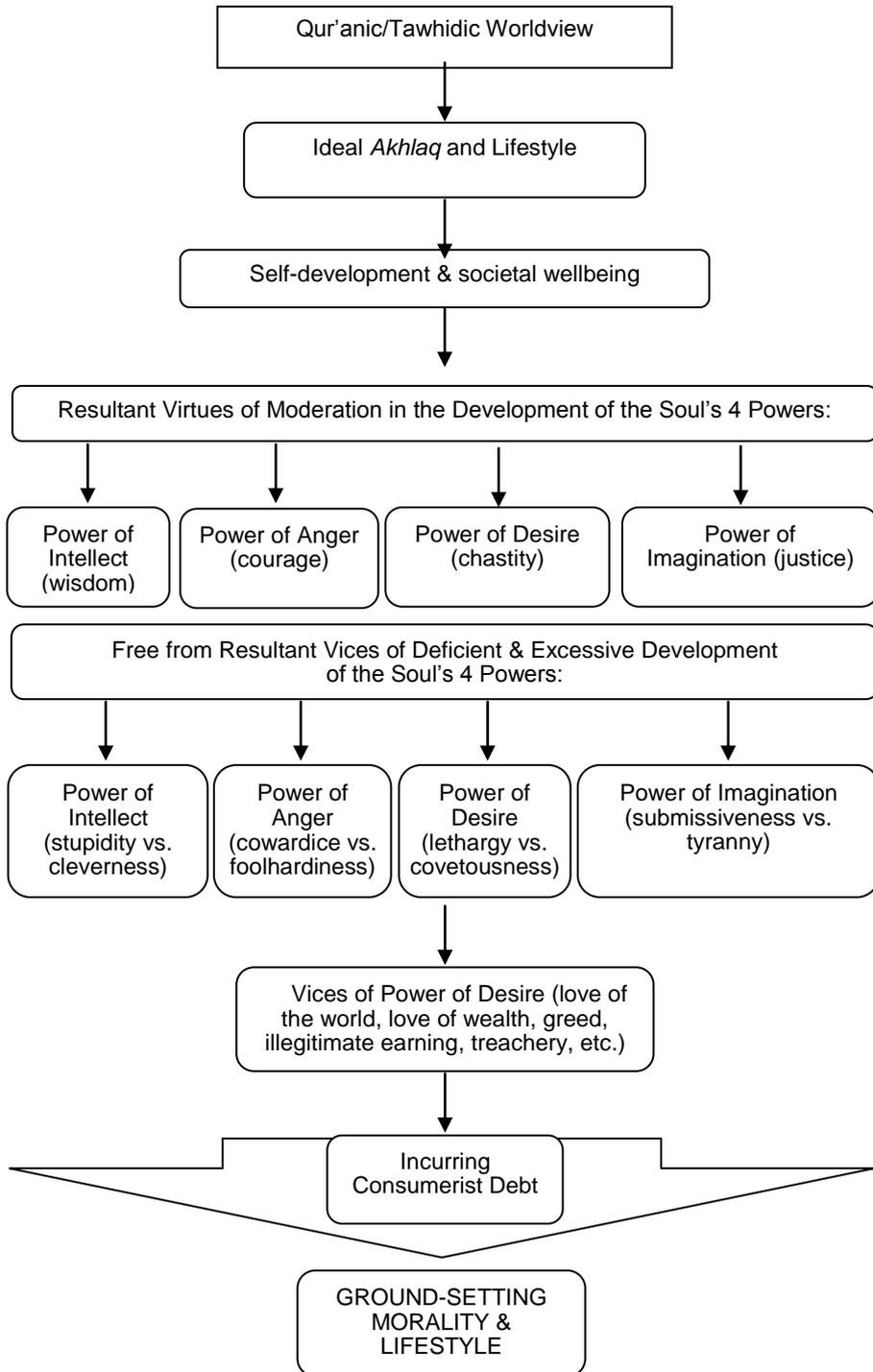
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1. Muhammad Mahdi ibn Abi Dharr al-Naraqī, *Jami' al-Sa'adat: The Collector of Felicities*, trans. Shahyar Sa'adat (Qum: Ansariyan Publications, n.d.), p. 16.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 93.



**Debt (*dayn*)**

Personal finance literature defines credit as “the ability to obtain goods or services before payment, based on the trust that payment will be made in the future” while giving the definition of debt as “a liability or obligation to pay or render something.”<sup>1</sup>

As such, credit is based on trust and related to purchases and debt, as it involves borrowing money (a loan) with the agreement or promise to pay it back at the future date. Among the loan instruments that characteristically make use of people’s credit are salary loans, car loans, housing loans, and credit loans.<sup>2</sup>

Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) distinguishes *dayn* (debt) from *qard* (loan), considering the former broader in connotation and covers the latter in its conceptual umbrella. In his *Tafsir-e Nemuneh*, Ayatullah Makarim Shirazi explains that *qard* is only applied when one is obliged to return the equivalent of the thing taken; for instance, if someone takes money as a loan, he is supposed to return the same amount of money and if he takes a certain item, he shall be obliged to return the same. Broader as it is, however, *dayn* includes any kind of transaction such as ‘settlement of claim’ (*sulh*), leasing (*ijarah*), buying and selling, and the like.<sup>3</sup>

**Consumerist Debt**

In this paper, our concern is a broad type of debt we call ‘consumerist debt’. We simply define ‘consumerist debt’ as that kind of debt which is motivated by consumerism understood in its negative sense; that is, ‘high level of

1. Entrepreneur Philippines, *It’s Your Money: Spend It, Save It, Invest It and Lead a Debt-free Life* (Mandaluyong City: Summit Publishing Co., Inc., 2013), p. 46.

2. Ibid.

3. Abu Muhammad Zaynu’l ‘Abidin, *Manifestations of the All-merciful: Reflections on the Daily Supplications Read in the Blessed Month of Ramadan* (Middlesex: The World Federation of KSIMC, 2005), p. 63.

consumption'.<sup>1</sup> In particular, the term is described as “the selfish and frivolous collecting of products, or economic materialism”. In relation to globalization, it is known as a force from the marketplace which destroys individuality and harms society.<sup>2</sup>

Describing the harms brought by consumerism in this sense, a personal finance adviser thus observes:

“Whether we accept it or not, we are now in the age of consumerism. Owning or having things becomes a status symbol. Consumerism gives us a false and fleeting satisfaction of our true desires for happiness and can also lead to real consequences. It pressures us to work more and more to satisfy our endless wants. It causes parents to cheapen relationships with their children by giving them toys, not time. It can even lead to debt, divorce, or depression.”<sup>3</sup>

The same financial expert also describes debt borne out of the impulse of consumerism in this manner:

“Debt brought into marriage is an especially troublesome part of many couples’ money problems. Debt has even become the number one problem for most newlyweds. Unfortunately, debt never rests, sleeps, gets sick, or takes a vacation. As long as we have debt, we are in financial bondage. Marrying into debt is a big responsibility to take and in many cases [it] is so unappealing that the debt serves as an anti-dowry.”<sup>4</sup>

In an age of consumerism and ultra-materialistic lifestyle, incurring of consumerist debt is prevalent. It is meant to

1. Roger Swagler, "Modern Consumerism," in Brobeck, Stephen, *Encyclopedia of the Consumer Movement* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clio, 1997), pp. 172–173.

2. Benjamin R. Barber, "Shrunken Sovereign: Consumerism, Globalization, and American Emptiness". *World Affairs* (Spring 2008), available at <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/shrunken-sovereign-consumerism-globalization-and-american-emptiness>, accessed April 21, 2014.

3. Chinkee Tan, *Till Debt Do Us Part: Practical Steps to Financial Freedom* (Philippines: Chinkee Tan, 2012), p. 12.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

satiate one's wants rather than needs, and to sustain a life of leisure and extravagance. This is exacerbated by the proliferation of small rectangular plastic called 'credit card' which makes it much easier and swifter to withdraw and spend money from such debt. According to American Demographics (May 1997), about 70 percent of Americans own at least one credit card and 34 percent of them do not know the interest rate of the credit card they use most often.<sup>1</sup> Although this is especially true in the Western world, Muslims are not spared from this state of affairs either.

### *Debt in Islamic Sources and History*

Dayn (debt) is mentioned in Islamic sources and history in various ways.

#### *Qur'an*

The Qur'an urges the faithful to fulfill their obligations and pledges<sup>2</sup> – including the repayment of debt. In Surat al-Tawbah, verse 60, it is mentioned that charities are meant, among others, "for [the freedom] of] the slaves and debtors."<sup>3</sup> There are traditions (ahadith) which indicate that debt sometimes stands in the way of spiritual progress.

#### *Traditions*

Prophet Muhammad (s) is reported to have said,

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالذَّيْنَ! فَإِنَّهُ هَمٌّ بِاللَّيْلِ، وَذُلٌّ بِالنَّهَارِ.

"Beware of debt, for surely it causes grief during the night and humiliation during the day."<sup>4</sup>

1. See Cynthia Clampitt, *Getting Out of Debt* (New York: IDG Books Worldwide, Inc., 1999).

2. Surat al-Ahzab 33:23.

3. Surat al-Tawbah 9:60.

4. *Mizan al-Hikmah*, vol. 2, p. 958. Quoted in Zaynu'l 'Abidin, *Manifestations of the All-merciful: Reflections on the Daily Supplications Read in the Blessed Month of Ramadan*, p. 64.

Some traditions such as the two below condemn indifference in repaying one's debt: it is reported that Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('a) said,

أَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ أَتَى رَجُلًا فَاسْتَقْرَضَ مِنْهُ مَالًا وَفِي نِيَّتِهِ أَنْ لَا يُؤَدِّيَهُ، فَذَلِكَ اللَّصُّ الْعَادِي.

“Whosoever comes to a person and takes some money as a loan from him while he has the intention of not paying him back is a common thief.”<sup>1</sup>

The same Imam ('a) also said,

مَنْ اسْتَدَانَ دَيْنًا فَلَمْ يَنْوِ قَضَاءَهُ، كَانَ بِمَنْزِلَةِ السَّارِقِ.

“Whosoever takes a loan and has no intention to pay it back, is the same as a thief.”<sup>2</sup>

There are also traditions that give warning for the spiritual consequences of habitual incurring of debt. It is reported that Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a) said,

كَثْرَةُ الدَّيْنِ تُصَيِّرُ الصَّادِقَ كَاذِبًا، وَالْمُنْجِرَ مُخْلِفًا.

“Excess of debt turns the truthful one into a liar and one who fulfills [his promises] to become unfaithful.”<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ('a) is reported to have said,

كُلُّ ذَنْبٍ يُكَفِّرُهُ الْقَتْلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الدَّيْنَ، لَا كَفَّارَةَ لَهُ إِلَّا آدَاؤُهُ، أَوْ يَغْفِي صَاحِبَهُ، أَوْ يَغْفُو الَّذِي لَهُ الْحَقُّ.

“Martyrdom in Allah's way expiates every sin, save debt, for it has no compensation save its repayment, or payment by the inheritor (*sahibuhu*) or forgiveness from the creditor...”<sup>4</sup>

Also, Imam al-Sadiq ('a) said,

حَقِّقُوا الدَّيْنَ، فَإِنَّ فِي خِفَّةِ الدَّيْنِ زِيَادَةَ الْعُمْرِ.

1. Wasa'il al-Shi'ah ila Tahsili Masa'il al-Shari'ah, vol. 18, p. 329. Quoted in *ibid*.

2. *Ibid.*, vol. 18, p. 328. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 65.

3. Ghurar al-Hikam wa Durar al-Kalim, p. 368. Quoted in *ibid*.

4. Wasa'il al-Shi'ah ila Tahsili Masa'il al-Shari'ah, vol. 18, p. 324. Quoted in *ibid*.

“Lessen your debts, for surely in the reduction of your debts is the increment of life.”<sup>1</sup>

### *Supplications*

In supplications (ad‘iyyah) transmitted from the Infallibles (ma‘sumin), there is an explicit prayer for the repayment of debt. A very good example is Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah’s Supplication 30 (Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin’s supplication for help in repaying debt) which is the main concern of this paper. Another example is the famous daily supplication during the month of Ramadan, which includes this line:

اللَّهُمَّ أَفْضِلْ دَيْنَ كُلِّ مَدِينٍ

“O Allah, facilitate the payment of every indebted one!”<sup>2</sup>

There are also supplications transmitted from the Infallibles one of whose benefits is the repayment of debt for one who recites them. Among these supplications are al-Mashlul,<sup>3</sup> Yastashir,<sup>4</sup> and al-Mujir.<sup>5</sup>

### *History*

It is mentioned in Islamic history that as Imam Husayn (‘a) made an encampment in the plains of Karbala’, he purchased the site for the would-be graves of him and the other martyrs so as not to be indebted to the owner after the tragedy: “The holy Imam gathered the people of the surrounding places, the owners of the plain of Karbala, and

1. Mizan al-Hikmah, vol. 2, p. 958. Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

2. Manifestations of the All-merciful: Reflections on the Daily Supplications Read in the Blessed Month of Ramadan, p. 63.

3. “Dua‘a Mashlul,” Supplications, available online at <http://www.duas.org/mashlul.htm>.

4. “Al-Sahifa e Alaviya Supplication 1 Praise of Allah Famous as ‘Dua-e-Yastasheer,” Supplications, available online at <http://www.duas.org/alaviya/dual.htm>.

5. “Dua‘a-e Mujeer,” Supplications, available online at <http://www.duas.org/mujir.htm>.

purchasing the land from them gifted the same to the people.”<sup>1</sup>

Earlier to that, we are told in history that when Muslim ibn ‘Aqil was asked to disclose his wishes before getting executed, the last of his three wishes is the selling of his coat of arm so as to pay for the piece of land where he had to be buried: “Bury thou my body out of my own money raised by the sale of my belongings without any obligation from any one of the Kufess (Kufans).”<sup>2</sup>

These two instances show the holy personages’ avoidance of incurring debt as much as possible and their firm resolution to repay once it is incurred.

Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah’s Supplication 30 (His Supplication for Help in Repaying Debt)

The translation of the text of Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah’s Supplication (His Supplication for Help in Repaying Debt) is as follows:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَهَبْ لِي الْعَافِيَةَ مِنْ دَيْنٍ تُخَلِّقُ بِهِ وَجْهِي، وَيَحَارُ فِيهِ ذَهْنِي، وَيَتَشَعَّبُ لَهُ فِكْرِي، وَيَطُولُ بِمَمَارَسَتِهِ شُغْلِي، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ يَا رَبِّ مِنْ هَمِّ الدَّيْنِ وَفِكْرِهِ، وَشُغْلِ الدَّيْنِ وَسَهْرِهِ، فَصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَأَعِزَّنِي مِنْهُ، وَأَسْتَجِيرُ بِكَ، يَا رَبِّ، مِنْ ذَلَّتِهِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ، وَمِنْ تَبَعْتِهِ بَعْدَ الْوَفَاةِ، فَصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَأَجِرْنِي مِنْهُ بِوَسْعِ فَاضِلٍ أَوْ كَقَافٍ وَاصِلٍ.

“O God, bless Muhammad and his Household and release me from a debt which makes me lose face, confuse my mind, disrupts my thinking, and prolongs my occupation with attending to it! I seek refuge in Thee, my Lord, from worry and thought about debt, from the distraction and sleeplessness of debt; so bless Muhammad and his Household and give me refuge from it! I seek sanctuary in Thee, my Lord, from debt’s abasement in life and its ill effects after death, so bless Muhammad and his Household

1. S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali, Husain the Savior of Islam (Kuwait: Acehahul Kisa Committee, n.d.), p. 164.

2. Ibid., p. 157.

and give me sanctuary from it through a bountiful plenty or a continually arriving sufficiency!”

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَاخْجِنِّي عَنِ السَّرْفِ وَالْإِزْدِيَادِ، وَقَوِّمْنِي بِالْبَدَلِ وَالْإِفْتِصَادِ، وَعَلِّمْنِي حُسْنَ التَّقْدِيرِ، وَأَقْبِضْنِي بِلُطْفِكَ عَنِ التَّبْدِيرِ، وَأَجْرٍ مِنْ أَسْبَابِ الْحَلَالِ أَرْزَاقِي، وَوَجِّهْ فِي أَبْوَابِ الْبِرِّ إِنْفَاقِي، وَأَزْوِ عَيْتِي مِنَ الْمَالِ مَا يُحْدِثُ لِي مَخِيلَةً أَوْ تَأْدِيبًا إِلَى بَغْيِي أَوْ مَا أَتَعَقَّبُ مِنْهُ طُعْيَانًا.

“O God, bless Muhammad and his Household. Prevent me from extravagance and excess; put me on the course of generous spending and moderation; teach me excellent distribution; hold me back through Thy gentleness from squandering; allow me to attain my provisions through lawful means; direct my spending toward the gateways of devotion, and take away from me any possession which will bring forth pride in me, lead to insolence, or drag me in its heels to rebellion!”

اللَّهُمَّ حَبِّبْ إِلَيَّ صُحْبَةَ الْفُقَرَاءِ، وَأَعِنِّي عَلَى صُحْبَتِهِمْ بِحُسْنِ الصَّبْرِ وَمَا زَوَيْتَ عَيْتِي مِنْ مَتَاعِ الدُّنْيَا الْقَانِيَةَ فَادْخِرْهُ لِي فِي خَزَائِنِكَ الْبَاقِيَةَ وَأَجْعَلْ مَا حَوَّلْتَنِي مِنْ حَطَامَتِهَا، وَعَجَّلْتَ لِي مِنْ مَتَاعِهَا بُلْغَةً إِلَى جِوَارِكَ وَوَصْلَةً إِلَى قُرْبِكَ وَذَرِيعَةً إِلَى جَنَّتِكَ، إِنَّكَ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَأَنْتَ الْجَوَادُ الْكَرِيمُ.

“O God, make me love the companionship of the poor and help me be their companion with excellent patience! Whenever Thou takes away from me the goods of this perishing world, store them for me in Thy abiding treasuries! Make this world’s broken pieces which Thou has conferred upon me and its goods which Thou has quickly granted to me a way to reach Thy neighborhood, a link to Thy nearness, and a means to Thy Garden! Verily Thou art possessor of bounty abounding, and Thou art the Munificent, the Generous.”

Description of Debt in Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah’s Supplication 30

At the outset, Imam ‘Ali al-Sajjad (‘a) thus supplicates:

“O God, bless Muhammad and his Household and release

me from a debt which makes me lose face, confuse my mind, disrupts my thinking, and prolongs my occupation with attending to it! I seek refuge in Thee, my Lord, from worry and thought about debt, from the distraction and sleeplessness of debt; so bless Muhammad and his Household and give me refuge from it! I seek sanctuary in Thee, my Lord, from debt's abasement in life and its ill effects after death, so bless Muhammad and his Household and give me sanctuary from it through a bountiful plenty or a continually arriving sufficiency!"

This initial part of the supplication is a window to Imam 'Ali al-Sajjad's ('a) description of debt and its potential maladies and repercussions upon the debtor. Among others, the Imam ('a) describes a debt as something that may humiliate a person (debtor) – “a debt which makes me lose face,” mentally disturb him – “confuse my mind, disrupts my thinking, and prolongs my occupation with attending to it”, emotional burden him – “from worry and thought about debt, from the distraction and sleeplessness of debt”, and a source of disgrace for him in this world and in the Hereafter.

Steps or Measures toward Freedom from Debt as Indicated in Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah's Supplication 30

In this brief and specific supplication of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin ('a), certain steps or measures toward freedom from debt can be alluded to, and these are the following: (1) sincere supplications to be able to repay one's debt as soon as possible, (2) having streams of lawful incomes, (3) living below one's means by avoiding extravagance and excess, and (4) avoiding any possession which causes pride, insolence and other related moral vices, and (5) spending for wholesome endeavors including charity.

#### (1) Sincere Supplications for Repayment of Debt

For any concern or problem of the believer – material or spiritual – he is supposed to extend his arms to the Source of Power and Knowledge, the Essence of Beauty and Grandeur. For relief from the burden of debt, one must

sincerely pray and implore to his Lord and perform various acts of devotion.

In Chapter 4 (Ways for Repayment of Debts and Recovering Loans) of Ways of Increasing Sustenance, there is a mention of seventeen ways transmitted from the Infallibles ('a) for the repayment of debts such as fasting for three days; supererogatory midnight prayers (tahajjud); a two-rak'ah prayer at night; another two-rak'ah prayer; recitation of Surat al-Qadr, Surat al-Nahl, writing of Surat al-Kahf, recitation of Ayat al-Mulk (Surat Ali 'Imran 3:26) and a particular short supplication; a medium-length supplication described as "taught by Almighty Allah to the Holy Prophet (s)"; Du'a al-Sahifah which is said to have been brought by Archangel Jibriel (Gabriel) ('a) for the Holy Prophet (s) and narrated by the great scholar Sayyid Ibn Tawus; a supplication said to be taught by Prophet Muhammad (s) to Imam 'Ali ('a); another supplication taught by the Noble Messenger (s) to his daughter Fatimah al-Zahra' ('a); a famous and important supplication reported by Imam al-Sadiq ('a) from the Holy Prophet (s); Supplication 30 of Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah; a short supplication read every after the daily prayers and taught by Imam al-Sadiq ('a) for the repayment of debt and going to Hajj pilgrimage; and a short supplication supposed to be read many times according to Shaykh al-Saduq in his Al-Amali.<sup>1</sup>

## (2) Having Streams of Lawful Incomes

These parts of the supplication – "Give me sanctuary from it (debt) through a bountiful plenty or a continually arriving sufficiency," "hold me back through Thy gentleness from squandering," and "allow me to attain my provisions through lawful means" – may allude to having streams of lawful incomes as a very obvious step toward freedom from

1. Reza Tauheedi, Ways of Increasing Sustenance (Mumbai: Ja'fari Propagation Centre, n.d.), pp. 81-94.

debt. There are many passages which disclose that sincere devotion to God coupled with earning lawful means is a key to floodgate of Divine abundance. For instance, it is said in one verse of the Qur'an:

( وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ )

“If the people of the towns had been faithful and God-wary, We would have opened to them blessings from the heaven and the earth.”<sup>1</sup>

### (3) Living Below One's Means

This part of the supplication – “prevent me from extravagance and excess; put me on the course of ... moderation” – may suggest an instruction to live below one's means by maintaining moderation and avoiding extravagance and excess in spending.

The Qur'an says,

( وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ... وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا )

“The servants of the All-beneficent are... those who, when spending, are neither wasteful nor tightfisted, and moderation lies between these [extremes].”<sup>2</sup>

Sa'dī has a story in *Gulistān* in which he quotes a mystic (*ārif*) saying, “It is better to die wishing for meat than to endure the expostulations of butchers.”<sup>3</sup> According to Shahid Mutahhari, the story actually is a tradition (*ḥadīth*) which Imam 'Ali ('a) said as he passed by a butcher's shop. The butcher said, “I have brought good meat.” Imām 'Alī ('a) said, “Now I have no money to buy [meat].” He said, “I shall be patient (waiting for your payment).” The Imām ('a) said, “I shall tell my stomach to be patient (not to be filled with meat for the meantime that I cannot afford it).”<sup>4</sup>

1. Surat al-A'raf 7:96.

2. Sūrat al-Furqān 25:67.

3. Edward Rehatsek, *Gulistan or Rose Garden of Sa'di* (Tehran: Peyk-e Farhang, 1998), chapter 3 “On the Excellence of Contentment,” story 10, p. 67.

4. Murtada Mutahhari, *Training and Education in Islam*, trans. Mansoor Limba

In this connection, after quoting this tradition (*hadith*),

لِيَكُنْ طَلَبُكَ لِلْمَعِيشَةِ فَوْقَ كَسْبِ الْمُضَيِّعِ وَتَرْفَعُ نَفْسَكَ عَنِ مَنَزَلَةِ الْوَاهِنِ الضَّعِيفِ.

“Look for your sustenance above the one who spoils himself and elevate your self above the one who appears to be weak,”<sup>1</sup>

Shahid Mutahhari thus observes,

“That is to say, one must look for his sustenance. Here, the issue of the need for looking for sustenance is morally anchored in strength and not looking for sustenance – which is dismissed and condemned – which is considered tantamount to weakness and helplessness.”<sup>2</sup>

In the parlance of personal finance, this is much related to the mantra “income minus savings equals expenses” in contrast to the common yet incorrect practice of “income minus expenses equals savings”.<sup>3</sup>

#### (4) Avoiding Any Possession Causing Pride and Related Moral Vices

This segment of the supplication – “take away from me any possession which will bring forth pride in me, lead to insolence, or drag me in its heels to rebellion” – leads us to another very practical step to freedom from debt; that is, shunning any possession or item which belongs to the category of ‘wants’ rather than ‘needs’ and which usually causes pride and related moral vices to the owner. This may be a car, jewelry, house, bag, watch, or any other personal item.

One guideline is the following statement from Imam ‘Ali

(Tehran: Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies and Ahlul Bayt University, 2011), p. 189.

1. Wasā’il al-Shī‘ah, vol. 12, p. 30. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 191.
2. Mutahhari, Training and Education in Islam, p. 191.
3. Bo Sanchez, 8 Secrets of the Truly Rich: What the Rich Know That the Poor Don’t Know (Quezon City: Shepherd’s Voice Publications, Inc., 2008) pp. 117-118; George Samuel Clason, The Richest Man in Babylon: The Success Secrets of the Ancients (New York: Penguin Books, 1926), pp. 15-22.

مَا فَوْقَ الْكَفَافِ إِسْرَافٌ.

“[To consume] more than needed is extravagance.”<sup>1</sup>

A quote from a classic book on financial self-help thus states that if a man respects himself, “He must pay his debts with all the promptness within his power, not purchasing that for which he is unable to pay.”<sup>2</sup> In a dictionary, debt is defined as “an ingenious substitute for the chain and whip of the slaveowner.”<sup>3</sup>

#### (5) Spending for Wholesome Endeavors Including Charity

Elsewhere in the supplication, Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin (‘a) thus pleads:

“Put me on the course of generous spending...; teach me excellent distribution... direct my spending toward the gateways of devotion... O God, make me love the companionship of the poor and help me be their companion with excellent patience! Whenever Thou takes away from me the goods of this perishing world, store them for me in Thy abiding treasuries! Make this world’s broken pieces which Thou has conferred upon me and its goods which Thou has quickly granted to me a way to reach Thy neighborhood, a link to Thy nearness, and a means to Thy Garden!”

These portions of the supplication direct us to a significant step toward freedom from debt and a way to ample sustenance; that is, to spend for wholesome endeavors of devotion including alms-giving and spending for charity. Islamic sources affirm the unseen or spiritual connection between the giving of charity and increase in sustenance.

1. Mustadrak al-Wasa’il, vol. 15, p. 271. Quoted in Sayyid Kamal Faghiih Imani (compiler), A Bundle of Flowers from the Gardens of Traditions the Prophet & Ahlul-Bayt (‘a), trans. Sayyid Abbas Sadr-‘Ameli (Isfahan: Imam ‘Ali Public Library, 2010), p. 210.

2. The Richest Man in Babylon, p. 41.

3. David Graeber, Debt: The First 5,000 Years (New York: Melville House Printing, 2011), p. 424n1.

The Qur'an states,

( مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ )

“Who is it that will lend Allah a good loan that He may multiply it for him severalfold? And Allah tightens and expands [the means of life], and to Him you shall be brought back.”<sup>1</sup>

It is also stated elsewhere:

( يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ )

“Allah brings usury to naught, but He makes charities flourish.”<sup>2</sup>

In the latter verse, Allah says that charity (*sadaqat*) – not usury (*riba*) as is the common notion – increases wealth.

Prophet Muhammad (s) says, “Attract sustenance by giving charity.”<sup>3</sup>

Imam al-Sadiq (‘a) says, “Allah gives help to person equal in quantity to the charity a person gives.”<sup>4</sup> The Imam (‘a) also says elsewhere, “Everything has a key, and the key to sustenance is charity.”<sup>5</sup>

In personal finance, the encouragement on giving or sharing blessings to others is explained in the context of the law of attraction.<sup>6</sup>

### Conclusion

From the above discussion, the following conclusions can

1. Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:245.

2. Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:276.

3. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 74, p. 392. Quoted in Ahmed Ali al-Kuwaity, The Beauty of Charity, trans. Shameem Muslim, available at <http://www.al-islam.org/the-beauty-of-charity-ahmed-ali-al-kuwaity>.

4. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 76, p. 311. Quoted in *ibid*.

5. Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 47, p. 38. Quoted in *ibid*.

6. See Michael J. Losier, Law of Attraction: The Science of Attracting More of What You Want and Less of What You Don't (New York: Wellness Central, 2006).

be drawn:

1. Incurring of consumerist debt is just a symptom of the root of the problem, and that is greed which is one of the vices of the Power of Desire (al-quwwat al-shahwiyyah);

Apart from being a symptom of a moral malady, incurring consumerist debt also brings about other things with equally dire spiritual consequences, viz. (a) personal humiliation, (b) mental disturbance, (c) emotional burden, and (d) disgrace in this world and in the Hereafter;

As shown in our examination of Supplication 30 of *Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah*, the supplications handed down to us from the Infallibles (*ma'sumin*) are full of pristine ideological doctrines and practical guidelines.

Supplication 30 of *Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah* is not only a text of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin's ('a) prayer for help for the repayment of debt but also contains practical steps or measures toward freedom from debt;

The *muntazir* (one waiting for Imam al-Mahdi's advent) is supposed to exemplify a ground-setting morality or lifestyle which is a manifestation of perfect regulation of the four powers or faculties (*quwwat*) of the soul, and the absence of the various vices of those powers, those of the Power of Desire in particular.

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