Islāmic Values In A Multi-Cultural Society

Hikmetullah Babu SAHIB*
Serdar DEMİREL**

Abstract:

Muslims have never lived in total isolation. With the disintegration of the Muslim Caliphate and the subsequent diasporas from their heartlands to much 'greener pastures' in pursuit of betterment or in compliance with the Prophetic directive of conveying the message of Islām, Muslims the world over have come in contact, more so, increasingly, with other dominant cultures. This phenomena, however, is not something new to Islām. In fact a study of its origin sheds adequate light on the early blossoming of Islām under a multi-cultural environment. What really concerns the Muslims today is not the relevance or otherwise of the Islāmic values to them, but rather how best Minority-Muslims could accommodate the presence of other values of other dominant cultures, with whom they have to sometime share a common political destiny. Can these accommodated values constitute Islāmic values? Are Islāmic values the exclusive rights of Muslims or can they be shared with others as universal values? Is there a need to have separate universal values? If there is, can those existing universal values be considered as Islāmic values? What is the notion of good and bad in Islām? Can the good values of all cultures be considered as Islāmic? How such cross-cultural fertilization of values can and has benefited Muslims and others in a multi-cultural society? And what new value, if any, Islām gains from such cross-cultural encounters? These are some of the issues this paper attempts to address. The writers feel that Islāmic values, though rooted in the Qur'ān and sunnah, continue to evolve to spatio-temporal needs. They believe that encounters of disparate values are essential for the continued relevance of the Islāmization of values by presenting the invaluable opportunities for critically examining the values of the dominant cultures and reassessing Muslim cultural-values in the light of Qur'ān and sunnah.

Key Words: Islām, values, multicultural society, West, principles.

* Assistant Professor, Department of General Studies, KIRKHS, International Islamic University Malaysia, e-mail: hikmatullah@hotmail.com

** Assistant Professor, Department of Qur'an and Sunnah Studies, KIRKHS, International Islamic University Malaysia, e-mail: serdard22@hotmail.com

Introduction

Values are essential for man. For without it man cannot live with his fellowmen, since relations between him and others are determined by the values he holds. Every human community has a system or set of values on the basis of which it decides for itself deeming an action or thing as good or bad. This notion of good and bad are relative, since it differs from person to person such that each decides such and such action or thing as good or bad through the experience he had or through the experiences of his predecessors which have settled in his subconscious mind as the values of the community he or she represents. They attach to these values so tenaciously that they will even go against all odds to uphold these values regardless of it being good or otherwise. However, no one follows a bad value knowingly.

The definition of bad values varies greatly in respect of society and time. It might be that what one society or culture considers as good value may be bad in the eyes of another and it may be the case that one and the same society considers a value as good at one time and considers it bad at another time. This only proves the impermanence and transitory nature of values. That is because, as man continues to progress and increases the occasion of interaction with his fellow men, he is bound to come in touch with values, which are at odds with his own values. Such interactions could be beneficial to him in understanding the strength and weakness of his own values. Thus an awareness of such variation is particularly necessary in this age of increased mobility and closer cultural integration through policies of globalization. This is a positive step, provided there is no perversion of values, such that good values are considered bad and vice-versa. But the problem lies at the source of those values. That is who is there to adjudicate which value is good or bad. If might is the criterion that determines right, than it is the might which is right and it might not be right for others to set it right. This is true in respect of God, the Almighty, being the Possessor of all Might. But if might is used in a tropical sense to mean the powerful society or nation or even individual, such that they impose their values as criteria to judge the values of others, this may create problems, particularly when the values of the imposer is considered bad. For instance, it has become an acceptable practice, in the West, to dispense with clothes by promoting nudity as normality and even as healthy. This profanity, however, has found its currency in societies patterning their continued existence on the progress of the West. Many of them, in their effort to define "progress" as a value, have failed to delineate the differences between "progressive value" and "value of progress". As a result they lost sight of what value really means and what progress is. In other words, is value the end or is it a means to an end.

Defining Value

The term value (from the Latin *valere*, meaning "to be of worth"), like many other terms, is highly elastic, in the sense that it is at times used narrowly as a synonym for good or valuable, and sometimes used broadly for the whole scope of evaluative terms, ranging from highest good through the indifferent to the worst evil, comprising of all positive, neutral and negative values. Thus, value is a term widely used to mean a number of simple, multiple and complex meanings. In addition to such varied and changing connotations in common speech, it is a technical term in a number of fields including philosophy, economics, mathematics, phonetics, music, art, anthropology, sociology and psychology with competing definitions. We are not concerned here with these specific definitions. For our purpose we define "value" as "standards or principles or ideas about the worth or importance of certain qualities [or even things] generally accepted by a particular group"[1].

In Arabic this term is expressed in a number of equivocal words each connoting certain aspects of the meaning of the term "value". Among the many words employed to mean value the most appropriate one for our purpose are: [a] *qadr* [value, quantity, amount, estimate, measure, rate, power, status], [b] *qīmah* [preciousness, value, worth, amount, price, quantity], and [c] *thaman* [preciousness, value, cost, price][2]. Of these both [b] and [c] are usually applied on things of socio-economic worth, whereas [a] is usually applied on both material and non-material things. The *Qur'ān* employs both [a] and [c] in a number of places. For instance Allāh says in the *Qur'ān*:

[a]   "وخلق كل شيء فقدره تقديرا"

"And it is He Who created all things and fixed their values in due proportions"[3]

---

[1] *Dictionary of Contemporary English* (New Edition), (Longman, 1989), p. 1165.
[2] Other words which signify the meaning of value include: *ajr* [reward, recompense, remunerate, rent, hire, lease, wages, pay, honorarium, emolument, price, rate, fee, charge], *si'r* [price, rate], *mithl* [equivalent], *jazā'* [requital, repayment, recompense, return, compensation, setoff, penalty, punishment], and *faḍl* [surplus, excess]. Even words like *ḥusn, qubḥ, jamāl, bahā', khayr, sharr*, etc. are also used to express the various meanings of values.
[3] *Al-Qur'ān*, (25:2).

[b]   "الله يبسط الرزق لمن يشاء ويقدر"

"Allāh grants the sustenance to whosoever He pleases and fixes [its] value or worth"[4]

[c]   "إن الله بالغ امره قد جعل الله لكل شيء قدرا"

"Certainly to Allāh accomplishes His purpose. He had indeed fixed value for everything"[5]

[d]   "وما قدروا الله حق قدره"

"And they did not value Allāh [according to] the value befitting Him"[6]

[e]   "فقدرنا فنعم القادرون"

"Then We fixed the value [according to need]. For, We are the best of those who fix value [on things]"[7]

[f]   "وكان أمر الله قدرا مقدورا"

"And the command of God is a fixed value"[8]

[g]   "وكل شيء عنده بمقدار"

"And everything with Him is according to some value [or measure]"[9]

---

[4]   *Ibid.*, (13:26). It is interesting to note that this theme is repeated with slight transposing of words in a number of verses following this chapter. See for details: (17:30), (28:82), (29:62), (30:37), (34:36&39), (39:52) and (42:12). Commenting on this verse, Allamah Yusuf Ali says, "God, the Sustainer and Cherisher of all His creatures, gives sustenance to all, - the sustenance including all means for their physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual growth and development according to their needs and capacities. To some He grants it in abundance; to others He gives it in strict measure. No one can question Him, for His Will is supreme, and it is the measure of all good". See his note 1840. This comment is based on rendering the term *qadr* as a measure. But if it is translated as value, as indicated in the text above, then it would mean that He fixes the value for the sustenance He provides to those whom He pleases. That means that He fixes the worth of the sustenance from the categories ranging from *ḥalāl* to *ḥarām*. Thus He provides the *ḥalāl* sustenance to whomsoever He pleases and provides *ḥarām* sustenance to whomsoever He chooses. This is in perfect agreement with the tenets of Islām wherein it is mentioned that والقدر خيره وشره من الله تعالى [the value of good and bad are fixed by God]. Thus the popular rendition of the imān al-mufaṣṣal where the term *al-qadr* as predestination may be misleading as the term is not *qadar* with a *fatḥah* on the second syllable rather it is a quiescent.

[5]   *Al-Qur'ān*, (65:3)

[6]   *Ibid.*, (39:67). See also (6:91) and (22:74).

[7]   *Ibid.*, (77:23).

[8]   *Ibid.*, (33:38).

[9]   *Ibid.*, (13:8).

[h]

"على الموسع قدره وعلى المقتر قدره"

"The wealthy according to his value and the poor according to his value"[10]

[i]

"ولا تشترى بآيتى ثمنا قليلا"

"Do not sell My Signs for a small price"[11]

[j]

"إن الذين يشترون بعهد الله وايمنهم ثمنا قليلا اولئك لا خلق لهم فى الآخرة ولا يكلمهم الله ولا ينظر اليهم يوم القيامة ولايزكيهم ولهم عذاب أليم"

"As for those who sell the faith they owe to God and their own plighted word for a small price, they shall have no portion in the hereafter, nor will God speak to them or look at them in the Day of Judgment, nor will He cleanse them [of sin] and they shall have a grievous penalty"[12]

Apart from these direct references to the words connoting value, *Qur'ān* also employs contextual significations whereby the meaning is deciphered from the context. For instance in the *Qur'ānic* verse,

[k]

"إن الله اشترى من المؤمنين أنفسهم وأموالهم بأن لهم الجنة"

"Certainly God has bought from the believers their wealth and souls [in exchange] for [their place in] the heaven"[13]

---

[10] *Ibid.*, (2:236).

[11] *Ibid.*, (2:41). See also (3:77 & 199), (5:44), (9:9) and (16:95). This does not indicate on the permission to sell (the religion) for a higher price. Al-Rāzī, Muḥammad Fakhr al-Dīn b Diyā' al-Dīn 'Umar, *Al-tafsīr al-kabīr wa-mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, (Beirut: Dar al-fikr, 1990), vol. 3, p. 44.

[12] *Ibid.*, (3:77). Also see (16:95). Explaining this al-Rāzī says, لان العاقل يجب أن لا يرضى بالوزر القليل فى الآخرة لأحــل "الأحر العظيم فى الدنيا ، فكيف يليق به أن يرضى بالعقاب العظيم فى الآخرة لأجل النفع الحقير فى الدنيا" [this is because, it is obligatory for an intelligent person not to be pleased with little provision in the hereafter for the great reward in the world, as such how is it suitable for him to be pleased with the great punishment in the hereafter for the little benefit in the world?]. *Al-Rāzī, op.cit.*, vol. 3, p. 150.

[13] *Al-Qur'ān*, (9:111). Explaining this verse Mawdudi says, "when a man has true faith it involves a commitment to devote himself sincerely to God and God's promise of reward in return for that commitment. This two-way commitment has been described as a 'transaction'. What this means is that faith is not just the affirmation of a set of metaphysical propositions. It is in fact a contract according to which man places all that he has – his life, his wealth – at the disposal of God; he 'sells' them to God. In return he accepts God's promise of Paradise in the Next Life…..The 'transaction' referred to in the above verse should not convey the impression that God intends to purchase what man owns. For, God is the true owner of all that man has. Hence the 'transaction' concerns what God Himself has granted man by way of trust, and with regard to which God has given man the freedom to act either in good faith or contrary to it. It is this freedom which man holds in trust from God which He asks man to recognize – and to do so purely of his own volition rather than compulsorily. Man is the trustee and not the absolute owner, and he is asked to avoid committing any breach of his trust which, by the nature of things, man is in a position to do. When someone voluntarily makes a bargain with God, committing his life in this manner, surrendering to God the freedom which God Himself has

the importance of value is emphasized through the context. That is, God has exchanged the entrance of the believer to the heaven and its felicity for their sacrifice of their self and wealth in His cause. In other words, believers must willingly offer their whole lives and possessions to God, and He gives them in return eternal freedom from the bondage of this world. It is to this al-Rāzī alludes to when he defined value as thus:

"القدر فى اللغة بمعنى التقدير، وهو جعل الشيء على مساواة غيره من غير زيادة ولا نقصان"

> "Value [al-qadr], literally means valuation or estimation [al-taqdīr], and that is to make a thing on the measure of [a thing] other than it without [any] increase nor decrease [thereof]"[14]

Value and Religion

It is not the intent of this paper to go in to polemics, even though in the selection of the option there is a world of difference in the understanding of values between the theists, representing the religions, and the non-theists representing those who do not see the relevance of religion in articulating values. It is the latter who concocted morality independent of religion by questioning whether such an equation is valid or not. That is, is it essential for morality to be tied to religion or can the former survive without the latter? In other words, does religion dictate

---

conferred upon him, then God recompenses him for his voluntary relinquishment of freedom by granting him Paradise in the never-ending life of the Hereafter. It is the believer who, by making such a commitment with God in expectation of reward, enters into a transaction with God. Such is the substance of the transaction that it is equivalent with faith itself….As for the faith which is of value in the sight of God, its requirements are quite different. Even if a person observes Prayer and Fasting that might not be deemed enough. For if a man considers himself the absolute master of his body and soul, of his heart and mind, of his wealth and resources, and of the different things which are under his control, deeming that he has the right to use them as he pleases, then such a person is not a believer in the sight of God regardless of what others think of him. For such a person does not commit himself to the transaction mentioned in the present verse and which the Qur'ān considers to be at the very core of faith. To exert oneself and one's abilities and possessions in a way disapproved of by God and not to exert them in the manner prescribed by Him betray a false claim to faith. For such an attitude clearly shows that either the person concerned does not consciously 'sell' his life and wealth to God, or that he still considers himself – despite the transaction he has made with God – the true owner of his possessions….This transaction is not just meant for the personal lives of the believers. The collective lives of the believers should also reflect the implications and requirements of the transaction. The Muslim body-politic must not pursue a course of action, whether it be political, economic or social, in disregard of the Islamic Law…..These being the implications of the transaction with God, it is clear why the grant of reward by God to those men who live up to their commitment to Him has been deferred to the Next Life. For Paradise is not given for merely professing that one has sold one's life and possessions to God. Rather it is a reward for man's action in accordance with that profession. That is, Paradise is a reward granted to him who abstains from using his life and wealth as though he has the right to use them as he pleases. Thus, the transaction will mature only when the life of man – the seller – will come to an end and it is proved that he did truly abide by the terms of the transaction he had made with God. Then, but not before, can it be decided how he should be recompensed. Mawdudi, Sayyid Abu A'la, *Tafhīm al-Qur'ān* [*Towards Understanding the Qur'an*], ed. by Zafar Ishaq Ansari, (U.K.: The Islamic Foundation, 1990), vol. III, pp. 254-7.

[14] *Al-Rāzī, op.cit.*, vol. 31, p. 27. See his discussion on the meaning of *al-qadr* in the chapter of Power.

morality and are there differences between religious values and secular values or are they essentially one? Answering them Tolstoy says,

> The attempts to found a morality apart from religion are like the attempts of children who, wishing to transplant a flower that pleases them, pluck it from the roots that seem to them unpleasing and superfluous, and stick it rootless into the ground. Without religion there can be no real, sincere morality, just as without roots there can be no real flower.[15]

Thus it can be seen that religion has so dominated the moral landscape of a society that it is virtually indistinguishable from it.

However, for sure, there are some exceptions to this, like the Confucianism in China, the non-theist versions of Buddhism and the Greek philosophers[16]. Many secularist including Bertrand Russell and Kai Nielsen, have argued against claims [a] that religion is the basis of ethics and [b] that religion completes ethics. They contended that morality has no need of God. Thus Russell observes that,

> Nature, omnipotent but blind, in the revolutions of her secular hurrying through the abysses of space, has brought forth at last a child, subject still to her power, but gifted with sight, with knowledge of good and evil with the capacity of judging all the works of his unthinking Mother.[17]

His suggestion may be interpreted as [a] that God-man relation is based on uncritical acceptance or [b] a child is capable of judging good and evil without being influenced by religion. But what he did not elaborate and address was that the child's judgment of good and bad are subject to the extent of his knowledge. And knowledge based on reason is found to be defective, since reason itself relies on defective human senses. Thus values judged through such defective tool are themselves defective. It is the defectiveness of the source, which causes differences in the understanding of one and the same value between people and society. This imperfection is resolved through the articulation and determination of values by a supra human source, which the theists have identified as God. Despite this common source called as God, people and their society do still see

---

[15] "Religion and Morality" in *Leo Tolstoy: Selected Essays*, trans. A. Maude, (Random House, 1964), p. 31.

[16] This is in so far as there is lack of evidence to prove the sending of prophets to them. Otherwise, as God has said, there is no community on earth, which has not received a prophet.

[17] "A Free Man's Worship" in *Ethical Theory*, ed. Louis Pojman, (Wadsworth, 1998).

and interpret values differently.

Does this suggest that God determines different values for different people? In a way, "Yes". But this statement needs to be qualified. Lets the reader may construe wrongly that this is meant to be a general permission that includes even the belief-system. What is intended by this approval is only those values which have social meanings that changes according to time and space. The gist of what God, the Almighty, says in verses (5:42-50) with reference to value is:

[a]   To judge by the rule or value of God,

[b]   Every people have their own set of values revealed to them even though the source and the message are one and the same.

[c]   Not to follow values based on personal desire.

[d]   Not to change values due to fear or favor.

[e]   All those who act according to the values revealed to them have indeed obeyed God, as such those who do not act according to the values revealed to them are unbelievers[18], wrong-doers[19] and as rebel[20].

[f]   Different values for different people are meant to test who obeys God and His revelations[21].

[g]   If one is to judge between people of different religions (or cultures), one should be just and cautious.

[h]   Not to revert to the by-gone values, and

[i]   Values set by God are better for those who are firm in faith.

Thus, it comes as no surprise that people differ in respect of the values they hold. Despite these differences, people are forced to find shared values for better cross-cultural understanding. This is inevitable, particularly when one is living as a minority. Whether one likes it or not, one is somewhat compelled by circumstances into a situation by forces of unity and diversity to encounter values

---

[18]   *Al-Qur'ān*, (5:44).
[19]   *Ibid.*, 45.
[20]   *Ibid.*, 47.
[21]   This Divine Rule of Divide and Rule should not be taken as a Divine sanction to keep people apart. This in no way endorses or justifies the political principle of divide and rule. On the contrary God has commanded man to hold fast to His rope and not to get fragmented. See *Ibid.*, (3:103).

which are at times in contradiction to those values into which he was born. Most often such opposing values seeps into his personality without he realizing them, through the powerful media of acceptance and relevance. Their influence is so great that they become the brokers and arbitrators of values. Even many nations have succumbed to the dictates of these forces that they plot the courses of their continued existence through perversion of values. Some even wondered on the idea that having no-value is like having values – that is the value of having no value. This brings us to the meaning of value in Islām.

What is Islāmic Value?

Islām is defined as [الإنقياذ لأوامر الله تعالى والإجتناب عن نواهيه] acting according to the injunctions of God and abstaining from His prohibitions. Therefore, Islāmic values refer to the "standards or principles or ideas about the worth or importance of qualities or things generally accepted by Muslims which are in accordance with the dictates of Divine injunctions and prohibitions". This definition indicates on the existence of two types of values: [a] values imposed by God, and [b] values imposed by those other than God. Accordingly any value accepted by a Muslim that is in agreement with the Divine injunctions and prohibitions is considered as Islāmic value, even if there is no explicit command from Him regarding the value. It is in this aspect all those values, which a society imposes from time to time, that are in agreement with the principles enunciated in the *Qur'ān* and the *sunnah* are considered as Islāmic values, even if the society is a non-Muslim society. Even "secular" values (those values not derived from any religious sources) if they are in accordance with the above principles are considered as Islāmic[22]. It is here one sees the dynamism of Islām. That is, Islām accommodates all those values, regardless of their origins, provided they are in conformity with its principles. This is based on the prophetic instruction that wisdom is the lost property of the believer as such wherever he finds it he has a better right over it.[23]

Does this mean the good values of all cultures are Islāmic? Not necessarily so when one considers some of the conflicting good values between cultures. Take for instance the value of gambling for charity. Many feel that gambling is not a bad value, whereas Islām says it is a bad value, even though it is done for a good cause such as raising money for charity. But achieving a good

---

[22] This is derived on the basis of the *ḥadīth*: "فما رأى المسلمون حسنا وهو عند الله حسن" [all that the Muslims consider as good are (themselves) good with God]. *Musnad, Ibn Ḥanbal*, 1:379. There is a slight problem in this, because this might be taken literally by Muslims and they may take this as a divine sanction for whatever action they think is good. This may lead to anarchy. As such the correct understanding of the *ḥadīth* should be [all that the Muslims consider as good in the *sharaʿī* sense are (themselves) good with God].

[23] "الحكمة ضالة المؤمن" Tirmadhī, *Jāmiʿ*, 5:52 no. 2687; Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, 2:1395, hadīth no. 4169.

end by a bad means is not good at all, because it would justify all bad values if they were tied to good ends[24]. Take another example, the advertisement *"If you drink go public"*. What sort of value does this caption promote? For many it is an encouragement as much as a challenge. But for a Muslim it will land him in a double tragedy: one for drinking and another for going public while drunk. This, certainly, is not a good value for Muslims. There are many such captivating wit-blinding advertisements in wider circulation targeting, not just Islām and Muslims, but the entire peace-loving and good-intending religious fraternity and humanity at large. This is, no doubt, an exercise in the perversion of values through creative destruction by unmaking what has been made in order to remake what has been made - albeit in a different form. The form such remaking may take depends on with what value the re-maker shapes the form. Any decision on that is dictated by his concept of value.

Value occupies an important position in Islām. Muslim scholars have discussed this under the rubrics of *al-ḥusn wa 'l-qubḥ* and *al-khayr wa 'l-sharr*. Following their Greek predecessors Islāmic scholars deliberated on the role of [a] *'aql* (intellect) and [b] *shara'* (law) in deciding between good (*khayr* / *ḥusn*) and bad (*sharr* / *qubḥ*) values. Those who gave preponderance to [a] were known as the Mu'tazilites, as opposed to the Ash'arites who gave preponderance to [b]. The Mu'tazilites viewed that, since God has perfected the intellect of the *mukallaf* for the purpose of speculation leading to knowledge and certitude and made easy for man the path to act according to the measure of his capability in order to execute His injunctions and prohibitions, suffice is the *'aql* as the only way for guiding man in his practical life. For they argue that both *ḥusn* and *qubḥ* are essential attributes (*al-ṣifāt al-dhātiyyah*) in every thing and the purpose of *'aql* is to unveil the aspects of *ḥusn* and *qubḥ* found therein. They adduce the following texts as their support:

[l] "فالهمها فجورها وتقواها"

"And its [i.e. the soul's] enlightenment as to its wrong and its right." [25]

[m] "بل الإنسان على نفسه بصيرة"

"Nay man himself has (the power of) mental perception."[26]

---

[24] This should not be interpreted on the basis of the legal maxim: "المقاصد اكــد مــن الوســائل" [the end is more important than the means]. What this maxim implies is that importance should be given to the end or aim and not to the means of achieving the aim. This, in no way justifies the good end by bad means, just as illustrated above.
[25] *Al-Qur'ān*, (91:8).
[26] *Ibid.*, (75:14).

Even the Prophet is reported to have said:

"إذا أراد الله بعبد خيرا جعل له واعظا من نفسه يأمره وينهاه"

"If Allāh had intended any good for His servant, He would make for him a preacher from himself who will command him and prohibit him."[27]

"يا وابصة استفت قلبك"

In response to a Sahabi by the name of Wabisah who sought the counsel of the Prophet regarding good value, and the Prophet replied by saying thrice:" Seek opinion from your heart."[28]

Thus, according to the Mu'tazilites, one should exercise his reason in respect of all matters. On the contrary, the Ash'arite assault on the Mu'tazilite stand was meant for the preservation of God's omnipotence, in the sense that He is not subject to any restriction and that He is the originator of value, as such man's actions have no intrinsic value of their own. Thus they, (i.e.: the Ash'arites in general and al-Ghazālī in particular), attempted to place value *per se* beyond the realm of man's intellect and argued that "good" and "bad" when not based directly on the *nuṣūṣ* (textual evidences) are invariably considered as object of human desire and not of reason.

Even though the Ash'arites did not reject the Mu'tazilies view on the importance of *'aql*, they nevertheless felt that it is the *shara'* that guides the *'aql* and not vice-versa. In this regard al-Ghazālī says in his "Qānūn al-Ta'wīl",

"العقل حاكم لا يكذب قط لأن به ثبت الشرع وهو الذى قد شهد بصدق النبي فلا يمكن القول بكذبه ، لأن من كذب العقل فقد كذب الشرع ، ولولا صدق العقل لما عرف النبي من المتنبي"

"The intellect decides and does not deceive, because through it the law is ascertained and through which the veracity of the Prophet is witnessed. Therefore, it is not possible to say that it

---

[27] Alāu al-dīn Ali bn isām al-dīn al-muttqi al-Hindi al-Burhān fawri, *Kanzu al-Ummāl*, ed. by Bakrī ☐ayyānī and ☐afwat al-Saqā, 5ᵈ edition, (n:p: Mu'assasat al-Risalah, 1981) vol. 11, p. 95, hadīth no. 30762; Al-Munāwī, 'Abd al-Ra'ūf, *Fayḍ al-Qadīr Sharḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr*, (Egypt: Al-Maktabat al-Tijāriyyat al-Kubrā, 1356h.), vol. 1, p. 256. This *ḥadīth* may also support the stand of the Ash'arites if the pronoun attached to the word *nafs* is taken to mean God. In that case, the text would read as "*if Allāh has intended any good for His servant, He would make for him a preacher from **Himself** who will command him and prohibit him*".

[28] Ibn Ḥanbal. Ahmad, *Musnad*, ed. by Shu'ayb al-Arna'ut, 2ⁿᵈ edition, (n:p: Mu'assasat al-Risalah, 1999) vol. 4, p. 228.

> deceives, because one who deceives the *'aql* has indeed deceived the *shara'*, and had not *'aql* been truthful it would not have known the Prophet from one who claims Prophethood." [29]

This is because it is *'aql* which ascertains the *shara'*. As such it is not possible to know the veracity of the truth by an *'aql* which deceives. This stand of al-Ghazālī is based on the premise that *'aql* is the instrument to affirm the *shara'*, as such its proof is never rejected outright. However, this is in contradistinction from his stand in respect of *'aql* vis-a-vis *ḥusn* and *qubḥ*. The same view is propounded by another Ash'arite, al-Rāzī, who says,

<div dir="rtl">

"قدرنا قيام الدليل العقلى القاطع على خلاف ما أشعر به ظاهر الدليل السمعى فلا خلاف بين أهل التحقيق ، انه يجب تأويل الدليل السمعى ، لأنه اذا لم يمكن الجمع بين ظاهر النقل وبين مقتضى العقل وجب أن يتأول النقل ، إلى ما يوافق العقل..."

</div>

> "We are able to establish the clear intellectual evidence against that which is notified by the literal hearsay evidence. Therefore there is no difference between the people of certitude that it is necessary to interpret the hearsay evidence, because, if it is not possible to reconcile between the literal *naql* (reported evidences) and the dictates of *'aql*, it is obligatory to interpret the *naql* in accordance with that is agreed by the *'aql*." [30]

The Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites differed with regard to the role of *naql* and *'aql* in deciding a particular act or thing as *khayr* / *sharr* or *ḥusn* / *qubḥ* [31]. However, both groups agreed on the constituents of *khayr* and *sharr*. Accordingly they defined these two terms as:

<div dir="rtl">

"الخير هو النفع الحسن...الشر هو الضرر القبيح"

</div>

"Good is (that which is) beneficially beautiful… Bad is (that which is) harmfully

---

[29] Al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad, *Qānūn al-Ta'wīl*, ed. by Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī, (Cairo: Al-anwār, 1940), p. 9.

[30] Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn, *Nihāyat al-'uqūl fī dirāyat al-uṣūl*, manuscript no. 748 preserved in 2 vols. under 'Aqā'id Taymūr at Dār al-kutub, Cairo.
But interestingly in elucidating the statement al-Ghazālī makes a poignant remarks with regard to the Ash'arite point of view as explained by al-Rāzī that such a contradiction between the *'aql* and *naql* only occurs in matters of anthropomorphic (*mutashābihāt*) expression of God's attributes.
See, Al-Ghazālī, Abu Ḥāmid Muḥammad b Muḥammad, *al-Iqtiād fī al-I'tiqād*, 1th edition, (Bayrut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2004), pp. 115-116.

[31] For further details see, Sahib, Moulavi M. H. Babu, *The Tenets of Islam*, (Singapore: MUIS, 2000), pp. 236-9.

repulsive."[32]

Thus if an act brings *nafaʿ* (benefit) for its doer but is not *ḥasan* (beautiful) at the same time is not considered as *khayr* (good), just as the reverse is also not considered as *khayr*. This is because *khayr* and *sharr* by their attributive relations differ according to the differences in respect of persons, conditions and circumstances. Thus, at times a good action of a person becomes a bad action of another and perhaps the disadvantage of a community becomes the advantage of another community, just as a thing may be good for a person at a particular time may be bad for him at another time. Likewise, a thing, which is compatible with the current objective, may become incompatible after that objective is achieved. This is because, the compatibility or otherwise of human nature is consistent whereas the means of attaining his goals changes constantly such that it does not submit to any established measure for it to be applicable for all times and places.

To illustrate the above point let us take the example of food avoidances in various communities. Many think that it is only Muslims who are particular in avoiding certain food. In fact a study of the human society as a whole shows that different communities have strong reservations regarding a wide range of species including beef, pork, chicken, horsemeat, camel flesh, dog flesh, and even fish and eggs. Such reservations were the result of rules, prejudices, and conventions many of which were established for unknown reasons in the distant past. It is at times difficult to argue against the prohibition since consuming such foods does not seem to harm others who do consume it. It is said that Avicenna, in his classification of foodstuffs, has included pork among foods that strengthen the blood[33]. But Muslims are commanded to avoid pork by the *sharaʿ*, just as it was commanded to the Christians and the Jews. Thus what determines pork as *ḥasan* or *qabīḥ* is the *sharaʿ*. That is why it is said that the good is that which the *sharaʿ* made good and the bad is that which the *sharaʿ* rendered bad [الحسن ما حسنه الشرع والقبيح ما قبحه الشرع][34]. This is the stand of the Ashʿarites, where there is a mutual inclusion of *ʿaql* and *sharaʿ*, such that the *sharaʿ* confirms exoterically what the *ʿaql* establishes esoterically. In other words, the value of a thing or act is determined by the *sharaʿ* and *ʿaql* together. Explaining this, al-Ghazālī says in his *Maʿārij* that, there is no conflict between the *sharaʿ* and the *ʿaql*, for they are mutually interdependent. Thus one cannot be realized without the other. He says,

---

[32] Al-Hamadāni, ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *Al-Mukhtaṣar fī uṣūl al-dīn*, ed. by Muḥammad ʿAmmārah, (Cairo: Maṭbaʿah al-hilāl, 1971), vol. 1, p. 211.

[33] Simoons, Frederick J., *Eat Not This Flesh: Food Avoidances from Prehistory to the Present*, 2nd edition, (USA: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), p. 35.

[34] *Sahib, Tenets, op.cit.*, p. 237

"The *'aql* will never be guided towards righteousness except by the *shara'*, while the latter stands in need of the former in respect of its clarity. The relation between the two is that of eye and the ray of light, where eye represent the *'aql* while the ray represents the *shara'*. Just like the eye alone is insufficient for one to see things without the ray, the ray, too, will never benefit without the eye. It is in this sense God says, there has come to you from God a light and a perspicuous Book by means of which God guides those who seek His pleasure to ways of peace and safety, and leads them out of darkness with His permission."[35]

Therefore, he feels that "the *shara'* is the *'aql* in the exoteric sense, while *'aql* is the *shara'* in the esoteric sense, both being mutually inclusive or integrated into one."[36] As such if the *shara'* loses the *'aql* "nothing will appear by means of it and will be lost just as the light is lost when the light of the eye is lost. If the *'aql* loses the *shara'* it becomes incapable in respect of many things, like the incapacity of the eye when there is no light.[37] Moreover, al-Ghazālī feels that the *'aql* in itself is not self-sufficient and it does not reach to anything except knowledge of the universals and not their particulars, like the goodness in believing the Truth, the speaking of truth and engaging in good works, the goodness of getting used to justice, adhering to chastity and so on, without knowing all that in detail, whereas the *shara'* knows both the universals and the particulars of things by elucidating that which is obligatory to be believed and just in respect of each and every thing[38]. In short, what al-Ghazālī says is that the *'aql* cannot guide itself to the details of the *shara'*; while the *shara'* at times comes to confirm what is established by the *'aql*, awakens the unmindful to the realities of knowledge, reminds the intelligent person so that he remembers what he has lost, and teaches the *shara'i* laws and the details of the conditions of the hereafter[39]. Thus, the *shara'* is the standard of valid beliefs and righteous deeds, and it is the indicator on what is good for both this world and the next. As such anyone who deviates from it he verily loses the straight path[40]. It is to this *'aql* and *shara'* God alludes to by the terms favor (*al-faḍl*) and mercy (*al-raḥmah*) respectively in the *Qur'ān*.[41] This is the basis of value in Islām. This value-consciousness, writes A. Husain,

---

[35] *Al-Qur'ān*, (5:17-8).
[36] Al-Ghazālī, Abu Ḥāmid Muḥammad b Muḥammad, *Ma'ārij al-quds fī madārij ma'rifat al-nafs*, ed. by Maḥmūd Bījū, (Damascus: Maṭba'ah al-sabah, 1992), pp. 54-5
[37] *Ibid*.
[38] *Ibid*.
[39] *Ibid*
[40] *Ibid*.
[41] *Ibid*, see the verse, 4:83.

"is the foundation of Islam. So long as it remains alive, Islam is a living entity. The *ahkam* of Islam, therefore, are not mere judgments. They are values in themselves. The element of commands in them is inexhaustible in terms of the wish, the desire, the craving, or the demand of a will…. Consequently, in Islam, God is not mere power, nor mere knowledge, nor mere feeling. He is above all, 'Sublime' (Subhan), a being who is *All Value*. His message descending on His Apostles, in the belief system of Islam, is the exposition of the values, which are meant to shape mankind on the best image."[42]

This value-consciousness, therefore, works as the inherent principle for the interpretation of the Book, nay, the very comprehension of the *aḥādīth* and traditions of Islām also. The values are laws of inference from the source of material at the base of Islam: the Qur'ān, the *aḥādīth* and the traditions from the early generations"[43]. This value-consciousness "produces its own spirituality. It loves encounter; it teaches struggle; and demands of you to be resolute and cheerful. It gives you the joy of struggle…."[44] Therefore, "values are living blood of the *sharī'ah* which by running its veins, transforms its cellular commands into a system of living organism. Thus it is not possible to construct a *ḥukm* (ordinance) from some verse, unless the values of Islām, as principles of its construction, are comprehended"[45]. As such those ideas formulated by the creative thinkers of Islām in respect of the *sharī'ah* like *qiyās*, *istidlāl*, *istiḥsān*, *istishāb*, *istiṣlāḥ*, *maṣāliḥ mursilah*, etc. "are values"[46]. The nature of value is, therefore, like the nature of a pattern. Unlike the immovable patterns that are fixed and static, which are suitable for inorganic things, the patterns of life are dynamic and living forms. "The secret of Revelation in Islām", to quote Husain again,

"…lies in its teaching of the living pattern. It prescribes not only patterns, but also teaches how to pattern them. The *hows* are the fundamental values of Islam, which produce its system of the Shari'ah. The *ahkam* as Shari'ah are the patterns of action, the axiological bases of Islam."[47]

Let us, therefore, look at these *aḥkām*-based values in some details.

---

[42] Husain, Khwaja Ashkar, *The Concept of Value in Islamic Thought*, ed. by B. A. Dar, (Lahore: Pakistan Philosophical Congress, 1975), p. 34.
[43] *Ibid*.
[44] *Ibid*., p. 36.
[45] *Ibid*., p. 31.
[46] *Ibid*., p. 32.
[47] *Ibid*., pp. 38-9.
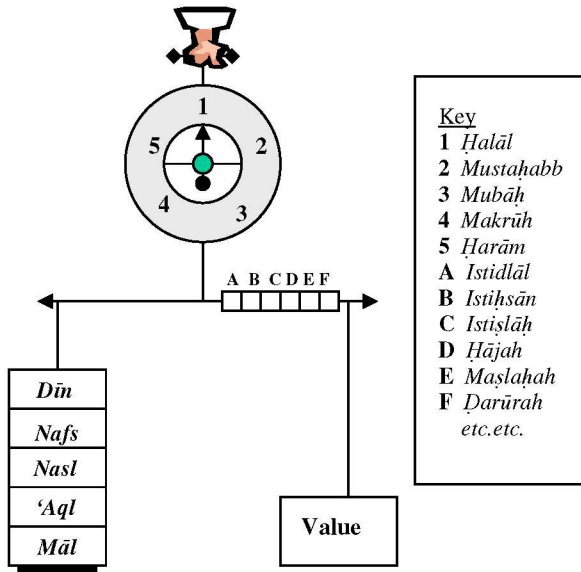
Determinants of Values in Islām

The worth or value of anything depends on the demand for it and its difficulty or ease of availability. If there is any such value for anything, that, too, is subject to change in relation to the value of other things on the basis of its relative importance. For, this term itself means a thing of particular quantity, quality, merit or status in exchange for which the possessor of anything will be pleased to dispose with or disown it while without being intimidated towards or encouraged against such exchange. The importance of a thing determined by the universal law of Islām over any other thing, if there arise a need for an inevitable choice between deciding one or the other of any two things from imminent destruction, is known as the **spiritual value** of that thing. If the other thing in exchange for which one agrees to dispossess or transfer the possession of the thing one possesses, then it is known as the price for that thing or its **material value**. Thus, in this sense, everything accessible to man and can be possessed by him has a price or value for it, although such price is changeable or varies according to the demand and availability on the basis of the relative values of other things. There are things with very high values placed on them and there are things with very little values placed on them. The fixation of such values is dependent on the relative importance of the things. The importance of a thing can only be known with clarity when one has to do an inevitable choice of saving between any two things, which face imminent destruction. One will be able to make this type of choice correctly only when one knows the merit of each one of the things involved. And one will appreciate such merits only on the basis of one's condition, need and ability. Religions come forward to provide the knowledge of the merits of everything. Islām as a religion has provided the widest knowledge of the merits of all things in the universe. It has classified things as good and bad with much detail.

Islām has classified the values vis-a-vis the *aḥkāms* into two categories: an action or thing is considered to be bad (*qabīḥ*) if it falls within the categories of *makrūh* or *ḥarām*. Those actions and things falling within the remaining three categories of *mubah*, *mustaḥabb* and *ḥalāl* are said to be good (*ḥasan*). These *aḥkām*-based values determine the right value of an action or a thing in relation to the five universals (*al-kulliyyāt al-khamsah*) of [a] religion (*dīn*), [b] life (*nafs*), [c] progeny (*nasl*), [d] intellect (*'aql*), and [e] wealth (*māl*).[48] Then these are weighed against the circumstantial factors like *maṣlaḥah*, *ḥājah*, *istiḥsān*, etc. This is indicated in the following illustration:

---

[48] See, Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad bin Muḥammad, *Al-Mustaṣfā Fī 'Ilm al-Uṣūl*, (Bayrut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1413h.), vol. 1, p. 174.

Key
1 *Ḥalāl*
2 *Mustaḥabb*
3 *Mubāḥ*
4 *Makrūh*
5 *Ḥarām*
A *Istidlāl*
B *Istiḥsān*
C *Istiṣlāḥ*
D *Ḥājah*
E *Maṣlaḥah*
F *Ḍarūrah*
   etc.etc.

A B C D E F

Dīn
Nafs
Nasl
'Aql
Māl

Value

It is, therefore, obligatory on Muslims to protect or safeguard these universals. In these universals there is an order of importance, where the obligation of protecting religion takes precedence over all other things, even though in their selections people differ in respect of their position vis-a-vis *īmān*, *islām* and *iḥsān*. For those whose *īmān* is strong they give importance to religion even over their life. That is the reason why many *a'immah* have withstood tortures and all sorts of tribulations and inquisitions at the hands of unscrupulous rulers. The cases of Aḥmad b Ḥanbal, Ibn Taymiyyah, Suhrawardi al-Maqtūl, and even al-Ḥallāj are some of the reminders of how learned scholars and men of piety have valued religion above everything that they considered their own life insignificant. They were not prepared to bargain their religion at any cost. This may not be the way for many of us who lack in piety and knowledge. Perhaps they might have taken the *Qur'ānic* verse, quoted earlier[49], literally – both in form and substance. That is by sacrificing their lives. What the verse says is the full commitment of man's life and wealth in the cause of God. This could be interpreted to mean that every effort a servant does through the exertion of his life and wealth in His cause - need not necessarily in *jihād* alone, as suggested by the text - will make him eligible to enter heaven. Normally we give importance to our lives - this is what Islām requires. Everything we do is to ameliorate our lives – be it something to do with our *nasl*, *'aql*, *māl* or even *dīn*. As such in the selection

---

[49] See note 24 above.

of the universals Muslims, particularly those living as minorities, are faced with situations where they are at times somewhat compelled by their conditions to make sound judgment in choosing between any two of these universals.

Take for instance a choice between protecting or safeguarding religion and / or life. A situation in which a Muslim child is denied of her education, because, her parents insisted on she wearing the religious scarf as part of her school uniform. The child's parents were given an ultimatum to choose either scarf or school, i.e.: between religion or life. The parents made a wise choice in favor of school and not scarf. It is a wise choice, because, the child is not required religiously to cover, whereas to pursue knowledge is religiously mandatory[50]. If they had opted for the religious scarf and send the child to another environment where she is able to continue her studies with scarf on, then they have indeed made a bold choice. This should not be taken to mean that by opting for school they are moderate Muslims and by opting for the scarf they are fanatic Muslims. In fact they are Muslims who are trying to follow the fundamentals of their religion to the best of their knowledge and ability while having a firm faith in the tolerant and harmonious disposition of the environment. Supposing the child has attained the age of discretion where she is religiously encouraged to cover her *awrah*, but she opted to expose herself to better her prospects in life and her parents feel elated by her exposure, these are Muslims who are trying to liberate themselves from the religious orthodoxy and feel that religion should not be a hindrance to their progress. Indeed, she and her parents, too, need real help. But when she is threatened with losing her career if she were to cover herself, then the matter should be brought to the worthy attention of the concerned authorities who would look into her constitutional rights wherein the freedom to practice her religion is guaranteed[51].

Classification of Values in Islām

In fact this act of Muslims placing the perspective of their religion above every other consideration has given a unique characteristic to the meaning of values in Islām. Accordingly they have classified values into, [a] values with the Maker [i.e.: God] and [b] values with the user [i.e.: man]. The fluctuation of values with the users is based on the demand, necessity or need of the user for the thing, while the fluctuation of values with the Maker is based on His likes or dislikes for the

---

[50] This does not mean that the parents are guilty of falsifying their religious obligations. In fact they have the right and the religious obligation to the proper upbringing of their children. It is part of that proper upbringing that they encourage their daughters to wear scarf.

[51] One problem confronting the non-Muslim authorities is the nature of veil. Many Muslims have distorted the veil-provision by masking their faces. There is no clear textual evidence which endorses such action. Therefore, masking the face should not be taken as a sign of perfection of their *īmān*, *islām* or *iḥsān*.

thing. Again things are either material or spiritual in nature. Thus the relation of values vis-a-vis things produces the following possible relations:

[a] Spiritual Value of a Spiritual Thing with the Maker

[b] Spiritual Value of a Material Thing with the Maker

[c] Material Value of a Spiritual Thing with the Maker

[d] Material Value of a Material Thing with the Maker

[e] Spiritual Value of a Spiritual Thing with the User

[f] Spiritual Value of a Material Thing with the User

[g] Material Value of a Spiritual Thing with the User, and

[h] Material Value of a Material Thing with the User

For instance, the material value of a material thing is the price one pays for a pair of shoes in concrete term of cash or kind. At times one pays in abstract terms of time or in terms of energy or accomplishments. Material value of a spiritual thing includes the expenses involved for performing pilgrimage and the sacrifices connected with it being counted in term of cash like the *kaffārah* for breaking the fast in the form of *mudds* of staple diet, etc. Spiritual value of a material thing is like the reward for charity as mentioned in the Qur'ānic verses, 2:245, 5:12 and 75:11. Spiritual value of a spiritual thing includes the reward for prayer, faith and all other good actions commanded by God if they are done for His sake are in terms of bliss in the hereafter which is a spiritual thing.

What we have seen so far regarding Islāmic values is that it is based on the *aḥkām* of *sharī'ah*, which again is based on the *tawḥīdic* principle of Godhead, as such He alone is able to fix the values, both the good and the bad. The belief in the life hereafter and the accountability thereof has indeed molded the values of Muslims. It is due to this reason Muslims tend to look at everything from religious perspective, as opposed to those who place material pursuit above religion by even looking at religion through material perspective.[52]

---

[52] This does not mean that Muslims should not pursue material comfort. What is intended here is that material pursuit should not be allowed to disorientate a Muslim from his religious pursuits.

Value – Culture Relation

Many in the field of anthropology consider the development of culture as their most outstanding contribution to the understanding of mankind. However, there exist much differences in respect of the definition of this concept, such that even the anthropologist themselves who employ the concept of culture often disagree on the actual import of the term "culture". Some defines it as "a way of life"[53], or "a meaning system"[54], or "the structure and function of society"[55], or as "modes of production"[56], or even as man's "mode of physically adopting to the environment"[57]. But the most appropriate definition for our purpose is that culture is "the training and refinement of mind, taste and manners"[58]. This definition presupposes an essential link between value and culture, since the presence or absence of one without the other is unthinkable. The relation between value and culture is like that of the soul and the body. Just as the function of a body depends on the presence of soul therein so is the function of a culture depends on the presence of values therein. Good values reflect good culture and bad values reflect bad culture.

What is a multi-cultural society?

Before understanding what multi-cultural society really means, it would be advantageous to know how this word originated and what shapes and shades this word has acquired through its currency over the years. This is particularly important, since meaningful denotations have been deliberately twisted to mean some biased connotations as in respect of the term "fundamentalism". Literally the compound term multiculturalism means the idea or principle of having many cultures regardless of being majority or minority. This in no way explains or details out the nature of relations between the cultures in a given society. Commenting on the origin of multiculturalism as a concept and how it has evolved over the years, Joan Masters observes,

> "Long before multi-culturalism became an infamous buzz word most large cities in the US were voluntarily divided into ethnic areas; Polish town, Italian town, Jewish town, and so

---

[53] Kroeber, A. L., "The Superorganic" *American Anthropologist*, 19(1917), pp. 163-213.

[54] Geertz, Clifford, "The impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man" in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

[55] Brown, A. R. Radcliffe, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*, (New York: Free Press, 1952).

[56] Wolf, Eric R., *Europe and the People without a History*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

[57] White, Leslie, *The Science of Culture: A Study of Man and Civilization*, (New York: Farrar, Stracoss, 1949).

[58] Sahib, Moulavi M. H. Babu Sahib, *Know Islam*, revised 3rd edition, (Singapore: Sahib's Al-Islam Tutorial School, 1989), p. 176.

on. First and second generation immigrants preferred to live in an area of the city where others spoke their language and shared their old world "culture". Those folks were not hostile to their adopted country, which they loved, but merely using their free choice to live among their "own" where they felt comfortable. This was not so much segregation, as it was a preference. In a couple of generations the, by then, higher educated children and grandchildren of these original immigrants inter-married with other "cultures" and moved up and out of the ethnic sections and into the more affluent suburbs. It was a natural progression called Americanization…….

The multi-culturalization of today is a deliberate social engineering scheme by government to keep us all at each other's throats [, which]…is…dangerous….as it….encourages bigotry by stopping a natural process which, if left alone, would solve itself, as it once did, by assimilation."[59]

This need not be the case, if multiculturalism is interpreted as a principle or even as an attitude which provides an environment free of discrimination and barriers in which all individuals who represent a society's great diversity have the opportunity to develop, participate, and contribute fairly and equitably. This includes actions to ensure a responsible attitude toward multiculturalism that influences all policies, processes, and procedures. Multiculturalism provides a forum for all individuals to recognize, understand, appreciate, value, and be cognizant of diversity, thereby promoting trust, enhancing communication, and nurturing respect and concern for the welfare of all individuals within the society. It creates an environment in which all members of the society are aware of and responsive to diversity, the individual in the society feels valued, their talent fully utilized and their potentials fully realized. Though this is an ideal situation, it is not impossible to achieve. The success of this lies on the relative freedom the society gives for nurturing cross-cultural understanding. Singapore has successfully experimented this multiculturalism, perhaps not in a cultural sense, but in the racial sense – i.e.: in the form of multiracialism. Commenting on this success and the subsequent inadequacies of the experiment, Kuo Pao Kun observes,

"In reality, it was the government's direct intervention which

---

[59] Masters, Joan, *Multi-Culturalism*, Retrieved from on 04-11-2009: http://www.distance-healer.com/110.html

has kept Singapore's racial peace. But government's control inhibited grassroots involvement, impeding cross-community initiatives. In the 40 years of Singapore's thorough transformation, *the government has been singularly subversive of old systems and practices*, as it has been boldly innovative in devising new methods and ideas. In resettling the bulk of the population, neighbourhood was totally recast; social networks were completely rebuilt, with government agencies replacing the former grassroots networks. In the new scheme, *the government and its agencies dictated policy and management in almost every aspect of community life. Racial peace, in effect, was managed by the state. Restrained and contained, the people lived safely under constant government protection and surveillance.*

Over time, the progress in inter-racial understanding was seriously impeded by the lack of a full cultural dimension. Citizens grew ignorant of and indifferent to the extraordinary richness and complexity of their numerous races, something which only culture could convey through its various sensual and intellectual forms – things which best express a community's sensitivity and sensibility. Taboos are there for each other to behold and respect; visions are there for each other to admire and share. Regrettably, for a multiracial nation of such affluence and abundance, there are not even national institutions for translation and publication. It is understandable why the cynics say Singapore's *Multiracialism* is more an exercise to keep the different communities peacefully apart than to draw them dynamically together." [60] [Emphasis added]

This is an acknowledgement of the failure of 40 years effort. However discouraging the result may be one thing this experiment has achieved, the nation's indubitable dependence on the government to chart the course of harmony and tolerance between the various communities. This is both an asset and a liability.[61]

---

[60] 'Contemplating an Open Culture: Transcending Multiracialism' in *Singapore: Re-engineering Success*, ed., Arun Mahizhnan and Lee Tsao Yuan, (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 52-3. Emphasis added by the writer.

[61] What worries the writer most is that the Singapore Success Story is being promoted by the Anglo-Indo-Israeli interests to re-chart the road map of the Middle East and the flash points in the

Tolerance and harmony must be nurtured to safeguard the stability of the country. In many areas tolerance is a commendable virtue. One can be tolerant on non-moral issues like language, skin color, race, etc. But on moral issues there is no room for tolerance. We are frequently asked to tolerate sin under the pretext of simply tolerating cultural diversity. The so-called "neutrality" of the secularists is a deception. It forbids a person to call sin, sin. It allows sin to go unchecked and unchallenged. There is no repentance without a clear sense of sin. We need the law to develop within ourselves an understanding of our own sin.

Cross-cultural encounters: A tug-of-war for cultural dominance?

When one examines the short history of man, he will notice that no society has ever remained homogeneous and static without interacting with one another, resulting in the fusion of different cultures. Culture is a combination of the basic ideas and behavior of a group of people, shaped by their history, language, religion etc. of a particular community or society. In other words, culture refers to how and why one thinks and acts the way one does. Generally, culture is dynamic and changing. In fact almost all human cultures have undergone some form of change whether knowingly or otherwise. No human society is believed to have remained in its original mold. Change is inevitable. The question remains, however, is whether such changes are for the better or the worse. Despite such call for change some have remained static for some periods of time. Perhaps their hesitation for change may be due to the overriding presence of conservative elements, who oppose any form of changes fearing that such changes may undo or even alter their long-held cultural values. It is equally true that some cultures are selective in respect to change such that one part of a culture develops with the changes in the socio-political reality, while others become static, or stagnant.

This is not something unusual, since the process of change will be meaningful, purposive and fruitful only when it functions within the context of the culture of the society concerned. Therefore, the presence of both the fixed and flexible aspects of the culture will preserve and ensure its continued relevance. A culture that is rigid and unchanging cannot survive. Likewise a culture that does not have an in-built fixed structure will become antiquated. In other words, there must be scope for conservation and change in a culture. Emphasizing their need Whitehead said:

"Mere change without conservation is a passage from nothing

---

subcontinent in managing the Muslims. The writers are of the view that the prospect for political correctness may overshadow the subversive social engineering entailed in applying the model in such areas. There is a need to make a critical study of the other side of the Singapore Story.

to nothing. Its final integration yields mere transient non-entity. Mere conservation without change cannot conserve. For, after all, there is a flux of circumstances and the freshness of being evaporates under mere repetition."[62]

Therefore, change for the sake of change is chaos, just as staying conservative when change is warranted is freezing society in history. This is particularly so in respect of changing one's deep-rooted religio-cultural values. Many Muslims have unwittingly fallen into this trap. They are faced with a dilemma of choosing between their cultural values and religious values. Most often they fail to distinguish between Muslim values and Islāmic values. This is because Muslim values may have their imperfections due to the imperfections of the Muslims, unlike Islāmic values, which are values, fixed by the All Perfect God from Islāmic perspective. The understanding of this distinction is necessary, particularly, for the new Muslims and potential Muslims, who are perplexed with the contradictions they find between the Islāmic words and Muslim actions. They should be made to understand the values based on Islāmic principles so that they can see their similarities in their own cultural traditions. This will enable them to apply the principles of Islām in respect of their cultural values by critically examining them in the light of the *Qur'ān* and *sunnah*. This was the task of the *'ulamā'* in the past. They accepted the values of others that are in accordance with the teachings of Islām and considered such adopted values as Islāmic. It is essential because, today, many of us mistakenly equate technological progress with cultural progress, and thus draw the conclusion that some races and cultures are better than others. This is an artificial superiority, which has been proven wrong by anthropologists, sociologists, archaeologists and historians through scientific studies.

In fact an impartial study of human society will show that many cultures that once were highly developed socially and technologically have vanished through the passage of history. Egypt was the center of a great civilization for over 3,000 years. So were the Chinese and Indian civilizations. The Greek and Roman civilizations, on the other hand, lasted less than 1,000 years. History again proves that when the Greek and later the Roman cultures were at their peak, the people of Northern Europe lived under rather primitive conditions. After the decline of the Roman Empire, the Arabic-Islāmic culture and later the Pan Islāmic-Turkish culture, dominated the world. Lamenting on the decline of Muslims domination and the subsequent renaissance of the West, Rashid Rida observes:

---

[62] Whitehead, A. N., *Science and the Modern World*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1953), p. 250.

"A civilization had to stand on more than just its economic and political dimensions: it needed some underlying moral precepts and ethical values to sustain its progress. In the past, Muslims had created their own civilization by following the teachings and moral precepts of Islam, which contained the values and intellectual principles necessary for progress. As the proper understanding and adherence to these principles had decreased with the passage of time, the Muslim world stagnated and fell under the control of despotic rulers. Western civilization embodied some of the moral values that stood behind its advancement and thus enabled the Europeans to dominate the Muslims. In order to correct this situation, the Muslims needed to regain the values they had lost and, at the same time, avoid those destructive elements of Western civilization that could contradict their traditions and prevent their progress."[63]

While appreciating the West for its achievements, Rida also registered some harsh criticisms against it. He says that,

"The West appeared…to possess those positive moral values and ethical habits that the Muslim world has lost. However, despite the West's appearance as a source of direction and guidance for the East, it also held some subversive values that were incompatible with Islamic traditions and ethical values."[64]

He criticized some Europeans for their moral laxity and excessiveness in satisfying such desires and whims as drinking alcohol, gambling, and extravagance. Moreover, power and interest were major European values in both internal and external relations[65]. In his view, "Europe respects nothing but strength; it does not recognize right without strength nor does it submit except to strength."[66] Even among themselves "the Europeans respect each other due to the presence of a balance of power, mutual interests and to avoid harm."[67]

This keen observation is prophetically true under the present realities. There seems to be a calculated and concerted effort by one culture to impose its

---

[63] Shahin, Emad Eldin, *Through Muslim Eyes: M. Rashid Rida and the West*, (Virginia: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993), p. 65.
[64] *Ibid.*, p. 66
[65] *Ibid.*
[66] *Ibid.*
[67] *Ibid.*

values and will on other cultures to pursue and safeguard its own interest at the expense of others. This tug-of-war for cultural dominance will not be helpful in promoting healthy cross-cultural encounters. This will lead to clash of cultures. What is happening in the name of Clash of Civilization is indeed a Clash of Values even though it is not so much a clash over "Jesus Christ, Confucius, or the Prophet Muhammad as it is over the unequal distribution of world power, wealth, and influence."[68]

Cross-Cultural Interaction between Islamic and Western Cultures

The relation between the Islamic East and the Christian West goes back to as early as the beginning of the Prophetic period. The Prophet had pragmatic but principled relations with both the Jews and Christians in Arabia. He even wrote to the Byzantine ruler inviting him to Islam. His faithful successors had similar orientations with the Christians and Jews. They granted them the Qur'ānic status of *ahl al-kitāb* and held them with respect and reverence. With the conquest of the western territories, particularly Spain, by Muslims over the post-Prophetic millennium has resulted in serious interaction between Muslims and the West and Islam became a major participant in Western history. Commenting on the Western response to Muslim dominance, Nawwab says that "Europe responded both militarily and theologically."[69] The climax of European military response resulted in the defeat of Muslims at Tours, near Poitiers in 732 by the grandfather of the famous Charlemagne, Charles Martel. Despite this defeat, the four hundred years or so of Muslim rule Spain witnessed great religious tolerance among Jews, Christians and Muslims, among Arabs, Berbers and Europeans. This tolerant co-existence, according to Nawwab, "resulted in an unparalleled flowering of literature, music, science, trade, architecture and comparative religious studies."[70] This paved way for the birth of culturally amalgamated architectures like Cordoba's Great Mosque, Seville's Alcazar and Granada's Alhambra. Cities like Fez, Cairo, Jerusalem, Baghdad, Istanbul, and Sarajevo were standing testimony to the harmonious coexistence of multi-religious communities during the Muslim rules. An impartial study of the remnants of the city structures in these cities

---

[68] Fuller, Graham, "The Next Ideology", *Foreign Policy*, no. 98 (Spring 1995), p. 150.
    In response to this Clash of Civilization theory as propounded by Huntington, the Muslim world has put forward three projects as alternatives to it: "Islam Hadari" by Malaysia; "Enlightened Moderation", by Pakistan; and "Alliance of Civilizations" by Turkey. For details see the article, *"Alliance of Civilizations" The Global Peace Project of the 21st Century*, by Dr. Serdar Demirel, Issues & Challenges of Contemporary Islam and Muslims, pp. 435-449, (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2009).

[69] Nawwab, Shaikh Ismaʻil Ibrahim, The *Historical Setting of Muslim-Western Relations*, special paper presented at the International Conference on Muslims and Islam in the 21ˢᵗ Century: Image and Reality, organized by International Islamic University Malaysia, (Kuala Lumpur, 4-6 August 2004), p. 4

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 6

reveals even today the truth of the above fact. In contrast, sadly, this is not happening in the historical and modern cities of Christian Europe even in this time of enlightenment.

Apart from such cultural fusion, the intellectual brotherhood that existed between the Islamic and Western scholars has been a single distinguishing factor behind the European Renaissance. Sadly this brotherhood did not translate into the politico-religious realism of the prolonged re-conquest of Spain by the Christians which culminated in the capture of Granada in 1492. What followed was a calculated campaign of misinformation, disinformation and distorted imagination of Islam and Muslims. This continued ever since and in 1699 began the slow process of colonization of Muslim lands. The crusade mentality with which the West deals with the Islamic world is very evident in many of its major decisions against Muslims.

No one could best describe the non-Muslims, particularly the western attitude towards Islām and Muslims, then a well-known Danish politician who once proclaimed that, "Islam is like poison….and a threat to the Western cultures"[71]. This is not an isolated statement of some chauvinistic fanatic. A cursory glance at the Western media reveals that such statements are made on calculated ideological confrontation, reflecting a serious bias against Muslims in respect of their values pertaining to all aspects of their lives including history, culture, religion, etc.

This is happening despite the progress man has made in this era of otherwise enlightenment. All their efforts are aimed at cultivating, nurturing and galvanizing international hatred and hostility towards Muslims by projecting Islām as the only barrier to international stability and peace. This is a fair statement if one considers the difficulty the thieves and decoys would feel about the presence of police and other law enforcing agents in checking their activities. But the irony is that, as usual, these law enforcing people themselves, due to material poverty or other reasons of temptation or frustration, become part of those syndicates such that they are lured into carrying out the same activities of those thieves and decoys in kidnapping, hijacking and destroying innocent lives. Which leaves the actual criminals innocent of the crimes and they begin to preach high moral values to others. The end result is that Islām gets the bad name and Muslims are hated everywhere, whereas these criminals become policy makers, human rights advocates and even heads of states. Like it or not this is the harsh reality. This hatred towards Islām has even extended to all other religions, such

---

[71] Quraishy, Bashy, *"Multi-culturalism… - threat or enrichment?"* Retrieved from on 04-11-2009: http://cultures.dk/no/25/22mctoe.html,

that they view religion as the root cause for all peace-less-ness of this world. There may be some grain of truth in such assertions, since religions do not share a uniform stand on many issues. Some religions, for instance consider man as evil by nature, while others declare man born sinless and noble. What makes man evil or vicious is his immediate environment and surroundings, where he is nurtured to be individualistic with total disregard for others.[72]

In the West individualism takes precedence over collectivism, forgetting the fact that man cannot live in isolation without being linked to his fellow being. But this is not true when one studies the foundation of Christian values embedded in the Western society on which the entire European humanism is built. Sadly, these values have been forgotten or simply ignored as irrelevant to contemporary thinking and living. As a result religions have lost their relevance to guide man and man need no longer have to be held responsible for the society. Commenting on the plight of modern man, Professor Siddiqui, writers that he is

> "spiritually homeless; he has completely lost contact with the Absolute and hence forgotten how to judge as a man in function of the Absolute. Science has robbed him of his "sense of the sacred", of "the chances for the beyond", and has left him groaning under the weight of matter and machines. The most advanced scientific and technical civilization of the world has ever known, present itself as a "strange medley of civilization and barbarianism". The perennial values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness have increasingly been divorced from the realities of life and nature, so much so that man today finds himself entirely at the mercy of the blind forces of chance and the biological urges of the will to power. Man once believed that God has created him in His own image. Science and technology have undermined this belief. No longer it is God but the contingencies of science and technology which decide what man is, what intelligence is, what value is. This world is sick, because men are suffering from a repressed need to believe. "Dead are all gods, let superman be our god", is the slogan of modern man. It is on this basis that he wants to reform the world. But his "attempt to make a better world on the basis of

---

[72] "كل مولود يولد على الفطرة فأبواه يهودانه أو ينصرانه أو يمجسانه"
"Every child is born according to the inner nature of good value (al-fiṭrah), so it is his parents who make him a Jew, or a Christian or a Magian". Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad bin Ismāʻīl. Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. ed. by Muṣṭafā Dīb al-Būghā, 3rd edition, (Bayrūt: Dār Ibn Kathīr al-Yamāmah, 1987), vol. 1, p. 465, ḥadīth no. 1319.

a worsened humanity, can only end in the abolition even of
what is human and consequently the abolition of happiness
too. Reforming man means building him again to Heaven, re-
establishing the broken link, it means plucking him from the
kingdom of passions, from the cult of matter, quantity and
cunning, and re-integrating him into the world of the spirit and
serenity…."[73]

These are some of the drawbacks of both the individuals and society.
There is no point in acknowledging the problems without trying to rectify or even
to change the course that lead to such deviations. Certainly these cannot be
counted as progress, at least in the moral sense. Thus those who admire the West
for many of these remarkable achievements are spellbound to see the equally
strong trend towards moral decadence and spiritual bankruptcy. To them the West
represents an anomalous society and they begin to compare their traditions and
customs with the Western ones. "This comparison" says Bashy,

> "is not a conflict, as some in the West claim, but an effort on
> the part of these people to understand and possibly adapt.
> They look at individual freedom and admire it, but at the same
> time, they emphasize that the freedom they need is both
> "freedom from" and "freedom to". Freedom from injustice
> and inequality as well as freedom to express their values,
> cultures, their higher creative potential as well as their
> responsibilities to one another. When confronted in Western
> society with hostility and racism, many tend to turn to their
> faith for support and reaffirmation of their identity. But
> turning to one's faith should not be taken as a threat to
> Western culture. The increasing hostility, both in the media
> and in public, towards Ethnic Minorities, especially with
> Muslim backgrounds, is very disturbing and alarming. These
> people find themselves in a sad situation. A feeling of total
> helplessness, despair and powerlessness has already taken its
> hold. This, in turn, is creating militancy and aggressiveness
> among some of the Ethnic Minority youths." [74]

Thus, Bashy feels that, "an open mind, acceptance of other cultures,
respect for one's traditions, and the belief in the shared destiny of human kind is

---

[73] Siddiqui, Professor B. H., "Concept of Value in Islamic Thought", in *Dar*, *op.cit.*, p. 45.
[74] *Ibid.*.

desperately needed"[75]. Certainly such multicultural setting is an asset particularly when they provide the ambience and immense opportunity for the cross-fertilization of values, whereby others learn the values of one another. This will definitely pave the way for better understanding. Søren Kierkegaard, the great thinker and religious scholar of Denmark said in 1857: "If one wishes to help others, then it is not enough to understand them, but one must also understand, what the others understand."[76] This is indeed true for cross-cultural understanding.

While lamenting on the erosion of values in the world Von Wright traces the cause as follows:

> "As long as a culture or human community acknowledges a source of legitimacy for its shared values, the question of acceptance of those values does not arise. This was, by and large, the case as Christian religion set the standards of valuation in matters of proper behaviour. But with the lost of authority in matters of truth, the authority of religion also in questions of value became the object of critical doubts. Western philosophy after the Renaissance has been in search of a new ground of morality. As in science, and inspired by its example, this ground was sought in reason too. But unlike the search for truth by science, the search for new values has not been very successful. With time it has tended to the view that value-judgements, as distinct from factual ones, are mere expressions of emotive attitudes reflecting the likes and dislikes, the ambitions and lusts of human individuals or groups." [77]

The erosion of traditional basis of values in religion and the futility of the efforts to establish a new one in reason, in combination with the overpowering enhancement of the instrumental value of science, according to Wright,

> "has tended to remove altogether from the sphere of rational thought questions relating to moral and other forms of what philosophers call intrinsic value. A state of value-vacuum or

---

[75] *Ibid..*

[76] Quoted by Quraishy, Bashy, *"Multi-culturalism - a wishful thought"*: The answer to whether Denmark has always been a mono-cultural society or not, lies in a close examination of history, with non-Danish eyes threat or enrichment?" in *Djembe*, no. 23, July 1998. Retrieved from on 04-11-2009: http://www.djembe.dk/no/23/20mcawt.html

[77] Von Wright, Georg Henrik, *The Tree of Knowledge and Other Essays*, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993), p. 242.

even value-nihilism has come to prevail. It can be regarded as the deepest source of confusions and uncertainties which are characteristics of the present cultural situation.

Symptomatic of this state is also the resurgence of new forms of fundamentalism. Some of them are of Christian inspiration. Others seek in ancient Oriental wisdom a cure for the inquietude of the western mind. Some are purely escapist and narcissist. Others look forward to a New Age of mutual aid and loving brotherhood of all men."[78]

Among these fundamentalist creeds, he also classified the belief, called scientism, that science and technology by themselves can solve the problems for which their advancement is to a great extent responsible and adjust us to the life-style of a new era in the history of mankind. Thus he observes that the "rational faculty of man which made him the measure of all things will eventually also make him Lord of his own destiny. But, if the rational faculty is shrunk and limited to the instrumental value-dimension of science and technology, I think this belief is a serious illusion."[79]

Thus he feels that value has been "exorcized from the sphere of reason, and rational thought from the sphere of valuation"[80]. Thus excessive "skepticism about values has resulted in value-nihilism, and exaggerated faith in the power of reason has encouraged scientistic fundamentalism."[81] This "dialectic antagonism between the two cultural traditions which have nourished Western culture has in the end produced a cleavage which threatens it with chaos and decay."[82] It is high time that they take stock of what has gone wrong and be prepared to accommodate values from others which might cure their sickness. It is a known fact that in the field of homeopathy there are medicines derived from poisons that are prescribed for chronic diseases. Perhaps Islāmic values as a poison can cure the chronic diseases affecting the West and prevent their decay. Many cultures have accepted Islāmic values as their values. Likewise Islām has accepted values of other cultures that are in agreement with its principles. It is not a problem at all.

In fact the development after the post-independence of colonized Islāmic lands has encouraged the flouring of a new era in the cross-cultural

---

[78] *Ibid.*
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] *Ibid.*, p. 246.
[81] *Ibid.*, p. 247.
[82] *Ibid.*.

interaction between Islām and the West. Adding to the earlier Muslim migrants to the lands of their colonizers, more and more westerners are embracing Islām and trying their best to adapt themselves to the teachings of Islām while at the same attempts are also made to bring Islam within the cultural frame of the West. This has created some significant tension and is causing increasing excitements in cross-cultural discussions. There is a need to accommodate cross-fertilization of religio-cultural values for the greater inter-civilizational relations. In this regard the role played by Muslims in the West is crucial. If they, in their effort to be part of the West, innovate, in the name of accommodation and tolerance, anything alien and foreign to the spirit of Muslim civilization, they stand to lose the moral support of the Muslim the world over and their contribution will be marginalized and they may have no effect on the rest of the Muslim world. However, if they find a working symmetry in their relations with the West in such a way that they preserve their vital links with the Muslim religious and intellectual traditions, their contributions will certainly benefit and enrich the Muslim thought and life everywhere. To achieve this Muslims have to be an essential part of the West. They need to understand the West in the way the West understands itself.

Conclusion

What we have seen above is the Western prejudices towards Islām and Muslims. This does not mean that the attitudes of other non-western non-Muslims towards Islām and Muslims are any better. Muslims everywhere are treated with contempt and their rights are usurped under one pretext or the other. Why are we so hated? What is wrong with our values? Even non-Muslim leaders have given their "*fatwās*" that there is nothing wrong with the teachings of Islām, but it is the Muslims who are causing the problems. Is it a fair statement? Coming to think of it I found that they might be correct in their statements, if we take the Muslims attitudes towards non-Muslims. We have increasingly adopted an exclusivist-elitist approach, by taking comfort in the first part of the Qur'ānic verse "you are the best people ever created"[83] and forgetting its second part of "for the benefit of mankind."[84] We cannot benefit others if we build borders around us and stay within it, thinking that we will be safe and expecting others to come to us, without embracing others beyond our own frontiers. Only by embracing others, without embarrassing one's self and others, we would be able to enjoin good values and prohibit bad ones[85], thereby becoming true believers. Explaining this verse Allama Yusuf Ali says,

---

[83] *Al-Qur'ān*, 3:110.
[84] *Ibid.*.
[85] *Ibid.*.

"The logical conclusion to the evolution of religious history is a non-sectarian, non-racial, non-doctrinal, universal religion, which Islam claims to be. For Islam is just submission to the Will of God. This implies (1) Faith, (2) doing right, being an example to others to do right, and having the power to see that the right prevails, (3) eschewing wrong, being an example to others to eschew wrong, and having the power to see that wrong and injustice are defeated. Islam therefore lives, not for itself, but for mankind. The people of the Book, if only they had faith, would be Muslims, for they have been prepared for Islam. Unfortunately there is Unfaith, but it can never harm those who carry the banner of Faith and Right, which must always be victorious."[86]

Accordingly, this means Muslims must be championing the cause of good values and denouncing bad ones, regardless of their sources. We must be the first to condemn bad values of fellow Muslims. Many of us are silent in this respect. Is it because of the *ḥadīth*: the Muslim is one from whose action and word another Muslim is safe?[87] This *ḥadīth* should not be cited as support to defend criminals who happened to be Muslims. Criminals have their own religion – that is the religion of crime. As such they should be dealt with accordingly. If Muslims do not have such value – that is to enjoin the good and prohibit the bad, they cannot be the citizens of a multi-cultural society. If the multi-cultural society happens to be a Muslim majority country, then such criminals should be given exemplary punishments, so that the non-Muslims will take our words and actions seriously with respect.

---

[86] Ali, Allama Yusuf, *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary*, (USA: Amana Corp.., 1983), p. 151, note 434.

[87] "المسلم من سلم المسلم من لسانه ويده" See, Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, p. 13, hadīth no. 10; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 1, p. 48, hadīth no.171.

Özet:

Çok kültürlü Toplumda İslâmî Değerler

Bugün Müslümanlar bütün dünya coğrafyasına dağılmış bir vaziyette yaşamaktalar. Kimi ülkelerde çoğunlukta kimi ülkelerde de azınlıkta bulunmaktalar. Tarihte de durum böyleydi, ancak küreselleşmeyle beraber farklı inançlardan tamamen izole edilmiş türdeş topluluklar kalmadı denebilir. İslâm'ın toplum hayatına dair dinamik bir fıkıh anlayışı vardır. Değişen toplumsal koşulları dinî sâbiteler perspektifinden yorumlamakta, Müslümanca kalmayı ve Müslümanca yaşamayı birey ve toplumsal düzeyde muhafaza etmek için gerekli esnekliği gösterebilmektedir. Bu meyanda her ferdin içinde bulunduğu toplumsal koşullara uygun olacak bir modeli olabilir. Hz. Peygamber'in siretinde gördüğümüz beraber yaşama modelleri de geliştirilmeye açıktır. Bu modellerin dinamik ve doğurgan karekterinden yola çıkarak ara modeller geliştirilebilir. Müslümanlar ilkeler zemininde beraber yaşamanın taraftarı olmalı, beraber yaşamayı arzulayan farklı kesimlerle diyalog içerisine girmeli ve onlarla beraber bunun önemine dair farkındalık oluşturmalıdırlar. Bu makale çok-kültürlü toplumda ötekileşmeden beraber yaşamanın yollarını irdelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslâm, değerler, çok kültürlü toplum yapısı, Batı, ilkeler.