

THE MWL JOURNAL



Vol.49 Muharram 1442/September 2020 No.1

MWL & OIC

**sign an MoU to confront
extremism and promote dialogue**





Letter From the Editor

Renewing the vision of the world based on positive coexistence

I One who looks at the world and the relationships existing in it between followers of religions and cultures will think that the conflict is the origin. There is no doubt that reality reflects such a mental picture of the world with its conflicts, wars and problems.

Most of the popular and widespread ideas and perceptions see nothing but the image of a clash between civilizations. Some thinkers and philosophers have tried to reinforce from their negative point of view that there is no understanding or dialogue between the components of religious and cultural diversity, extending from this dangerous concept even within the one country that is governed by common national unity charters.

Perhaps it is strongly noted that there is a message urging a renewal of the vision of the world based on coexistence and the values of human unity.

Within the framework of this message, the virtual forum of the Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation News Agencies was held on the first of Muharram 1442 AH, which hosted the Secretary General of the Muslim World League, Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa.

The forum renewed the presentation of the message of peace and harmony, as the opening speech affirmed that coexistence between followers of religions and cultures represents an urgent need required by everyone's interest in confronting voices of hatred and racism, as well as in confronting slogans of clash and civil strife.

It is the message that the Muslim World League carries, with continuous determination and unrelenting will.

His Excellency the Secretary General of the Muslim World League clarified the Islamic position on this issue, pointing to several things including Islam's concern for all moral values, its interest in promoting peace and positive harmony among

all, and its respect for differences, diversity and pluralism, considering that the will of Allah in this universe.

Islam also respects the human race, affirms the dignity of the human, and takes care of righteousness and charity for all. Islam attaches great importance to the unity of the human race, referring to the one human family and fraternity. Allah says, "Human beings, We created you all from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most God-fearing of you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware".

Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa recalled the Madinah Document, which included the highest civic values and preserved legitimate rights and freedoms, and focused on human fraternity and respect for religious diversity.

His Excellency also praised Makkah Document, which was issued by more than 1,200 muftis and scholars, on the 24th of Ramadan 1440 AH.

Based on this vision and the Muslim World League's belief in the inevitability of peaceful coexistence between followers of religions and cultures, and the imperative of cooperation and the strengthening of common human fraternity, the MWL has made efforts around the world to consolidate this principle. It launched initiatives, held meetings and dialogues, and made direct contributions to solving some problems and was keen to deepen the bonds of understanding, cooperation and mutual trust between followers of religions and cultures.

These blessed efforts will continue, while avoiding entering into negative debates and controversial issues, so that the Muslim World League remains an element of reform, harmony and peace, hoping for good and benefit for all.





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MWL and OIC

sign an MoU to confront
extremism and promote dialogue



“

Organizing meetings with thinkers and academics of cultures, civilizations and religions to discuss dialogue and coexistence

Makkah - MWL

“ *The Secretary General of the Muslim World League (MWL) Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa and the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Dr. Yousef bin Ahmad Al-Othaimeen, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance mutual cooperation and implement mechanisms that coordinate efforts in areas of common interest.*

This MoU aims to achieve the common goals between MWL and OIC in several areas, especially confronting extremism, Islamophobia, supporting the values of dialogue and coexistence, and introducing the values of true Islam based on moderation, tolerance and respect for the culture of the others.

The 10-article MoU specifies areas and mechanisms of coordination and cooperation, and the establishment of a joint committee to undertake the development of the executive program for projects and follow-up and evaluation procedures.

It handles the areas of coordination and cooperation concerning introducing the values and principles of Islam, spreading moderation, confronting extremism and Islamophobia, and clarifying the opinion of Islam about violent extremism, terrorism, intellectual deviation and contemporary humanitarian issues.

The memorandum deals with cooperation in the fields of Islamic work, educational, cultural, charitable and relief projects, in addition to coordinating the efforts of the two parties on issues of concern to the



Cooperation in the fields of Islamic work and educational, cultural, charitable and relief projects



Islamic nation in international forums, and exchanging experiences, information and publications.

There is an emphasis on cooperation in the field

of translating and publishing studies and research related to the contemporary Islamic reality, its problems and solutions, development issues in its various fields,

combating terrorism, extremism and Islamophobia, and spreading moderation and tolerance.

The memorandum focuses on coordination between the two parties in the fields of printing books and scientific messages that serve the issues of Islam and Muslims and highlight the correct Islamic values, the moderate approach, and peaceful coexistence in human societies.

The two sides also agreed to serve the Arabic language among non-Arabic speaking societies and groups, especially Muslim minorities.

The agreement focuses on the implementation of joint activities such as conferences, seminars, forums and lectures, and on periodic meetings between scholars, thinkers, researchers, experts, officials and professors of Islamic universities to address various emerging issues.

The two sides also agreed to organize meetings with thinkers and academics of other cultures, civilizations and religions to discuss cooperation for dialogue and coexistence and to highlight the correct image of Islam and its universal human values.



Dr. Al-Issa to UNA-OIC:

Positive coexistence is no longer an option, but a duty

Makkah - MWL

🗨️ ***His Excellency the Secretary General of the Muslim World League (MWL) Sheikh Dr. Muhammad bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa stressed that the coexistence between followers of religions and cultures is an urgent need required by everyone's interest in facing the voices of hatred and racism, and slogans of clash and civilized conflict.***

He noted that some philosophers and thinkers tried in a negative way to establish the extreme concept that there is no dialogue between the religious and cultural diversity, extending this dangerous concept even with the people of the same country that is governed by common national unity charters.

In an open meeting through ZOOM, hosted by the Union of News Agencies of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (UNA-OIC), Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa talked about consolidating coexistence and harmony between followers of cultures and religions in the presence of a number of ministerial political figures, religious, intellectual and media personalities in the countries of the Islamic world. His Excellency said that by virtue of competence and responsibility, it is important to clarify Islam attitude regarding this, referring to matters, including the fact that Islam has taken care of every “moral value” that promotes peace and positive harmony among all. Islam respected difference, diversity and pluralism, and considered that the inevitable will of Allah, and whoever argues about that is arrogant about the truth and the will of Allah in his

creation, Allah Almighty says, “And if your Lord had willed, He could have made humankind one community; but they will not cease to differ”.

Islam also respects the human race and emphasizes on human dignity, Allah Almighty said, “And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created with definite preference”. Islam has also taken care of righteousness and charity for the other, regardless of their religion, ideology, race, or color.

Allah says, “Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward

them Indeed Allah loves those who act justly”.

He added that Islam emphasized the unity of the human species, referring to the “the whole family and one human unity”. Allah Almighty said, “O humankind indeed We have created you from male and female and made you different people and tribes that you may know one another, Indeed the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you Indeed Allah is Knowing and Acquainted”. All of these main facts in the religion of Islam confirm the human bond, what it should have to preserve its peace and stability, and enhance its understanding and cooperation. Dialogue, understanding and cooperation is represented with wisdom that represents a sublime Islamic guideline, and even human love that



Many of the risks are caused by obscuring the temporal and spatial dimensions and looking out of a narrow window



Diversity requires the establishment of a positive civilized partnership that builds bridges to serve people and make them happy

must protect everyone, and encompass them with the perfection of its kindness and harmony.

Sheikh Dr. Al-Issa added that the principle of coexistence in Islam was established through a historical constitutional document,

which is “Al-Madinah Al-Monawarah” document, by the Prophet, peace be upon him. The document included the highest civil values, which preserved legitimate rights and freedoms, focused on human unity and respect for the existence of

religious diversity in the Prophet’s city. Non-Muslims, as well as the Muslims considered this document, to be one of the greatest human covenants in history. Then followed in importance, and after more than one thousand four hundred years, the Makkah Document issued from Makkah Al-Mukarramah, the universal Qiblah for Muslims next to the Holy Kaaba, on Ramadan 24, 1440 H. It was by more than one thousand two hundred muftis and scholars and more than four thousand and five hundred Islamic thinkers, representing twenty-seven sects, who came together under the um-

umbrella of the Muslim World League. This is the first gathering of all Islamic sectarian diversity throughout Islamic history, and indeed the first integrated harmony for sectarian diversity after the formation of Islamic schools. They emphasized in this document that human beings with different components belong to the same origin, and they are equal in their humanity. The proof on that is the words of Allah, “O humankind fear your Lord who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women And fear Allah through whom you ask one another and the wombs Indeed Allah is ever over you an Observer”. They also emphasized what was previously mentioned that everyone is covered by this divine honor.

His Excellency said the document pointed out that the difference between peoples and nations in their beliefs, cultures, natures, and ways of thinking is a divine destiny determined by the supreme wisdom of Allah. Acknowledging this and dealing with it with the logic of reason and wisdom to reach human harmony and

peace is better than rejecting and clashing it. The document indicated that the religious and cultural diversity in human societies does not justify conflict and clash, but rather calls for the establishment of a positive civilized partnership and effective communication that makes diversity a bridge for dialogue, understanding and cooperation for the benefit of all. It also calls for competition in the service of humankind and its comprehensive happiness, and the search for common citizenship in the service and happiness of all. The document emphasized that the origin of the monotheistic religions is one, which is belief in God alone and has no partner, and that their laws and approaches are numerous, and it is not permissible to link religion with the wrong political practices of

any of its adherents. The document affirmed that civilized dialogue is the best way for a normal understanding with others and getting to know what they have in common, overcoming obstacles to coexistence, and overcoming the related problems. This is useful in the active recognition of others, their right to exist, and all of their legitimate rights, while achieving justice and understanding between the parties, in a way that enhances respect for their privacy, and overcomes prejudices laden with history’s enemies, which have increased hatred, conspiracy theory, and the erroneous generalization of abnormal attitudes and behaviors. It stresses that history is in the custody of its owners, and no one is held accountable for the mistakes of others, regardless of those mistakes

With active and tangible effect, coexistence goes beyond the realm of theory and the ideal

in history, and within any religion, ideology, policy, or nationality. Allah says, “That is a nation which has passed on, it will have the consequence of what it earned and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do”. Allah says, “And what was the position of the generations who have passed before; he said the knowledge thereof is with my Lord in a record My Lord neither errs nor forgets”.

Dr. Al-Issa indicated that in the belief of the Muslim World League in the inevitability of peaceful coexistence between followers of religions and cultures, and even in the necessity of cooperation and the strengthening of common human unity, efforts were made around the world to consolidate this principle on the ground. That is through practical initiatives, effective dialogue meetings, and direct contributions to solving some problems based on religious or ethnic backgrounds, including that was at the direct invitation of the governments of some countries. The Muslim World League was also keen to deepen the bonds of understanding, cooperation

and mutual trust between followers of religions and cultures, and implemented effective practical programs, in addition to the calls announced around the world to promote the principle of positive national integration in countries of religious, ethnic and cultural diversity. Dr. Al-Issa pointed out that the Muslim World League faced in this (and with its soft power) all voices of hatred and extremism and entered into scholarly and intellectual dialogues supported by evidence that proved to everyone the soundness of its steps in this. Also in facing of some ideas and voices arising from the disappearance of the truth, or entrenched ignorance, or extremism and isolation from the world and retreat in the framework of a

closed collective mind. He added that in all of this, the Muslim World League reviews the religious and logical support for the necessity of coexistence with the importance of overcoming its obstacles. Rather, in pursuit of optimal work, the MWL is keen on the quality of this coexistence to be in the fullest way, and has presented a number of initiatives and proposals to ministries and all the national integration bodies, whether governmental or civil, in many countries. “We have partnered with a number of specialized and influential think tanks to support this project, and we have taken important and strong steps in order to break the wrong stereotypes embedded in the concepts of some people of different religions, ethnicities and cul-



***The “dilemma of dialogue”
lies in the courtesy meetings,
the absence of a participant
base, and the failure to come
up with a practical project***



The success of each dialogue depends on its strengthening of the positive civilization alliance through effective practical programs

tures. We are fully convinced that positive coexistence among all is not an option that can be taken or left, but rather it is an inevitable religious, moral and humanitarian duty.” His Excellency wondered about how the process of life is organized among people without their understanding, coexistence, and cooperation. Therefore, among the tasks of our noble Prophet, peace be upon him, when he

came to Madinah which had religious diversity, was to establish the values of coexistence among all through that document that we talked about. True coexistence must have a tangible and commendable effect and be based on the foundations of justice and mutual love, and fulfill its requirements; otherwise, it would be a theory, confined to activation, or an ideal image in the imagination, or just an ink on the paper of the conference outcomes, appeals and statements.

His Excellency detailed that coexistence transcends the degrees of distinction when it is an inspiring model for all, and in order to achieve its goals, these things must be in it. Firstly, complete belief in the will of Allah in the difference, diversity

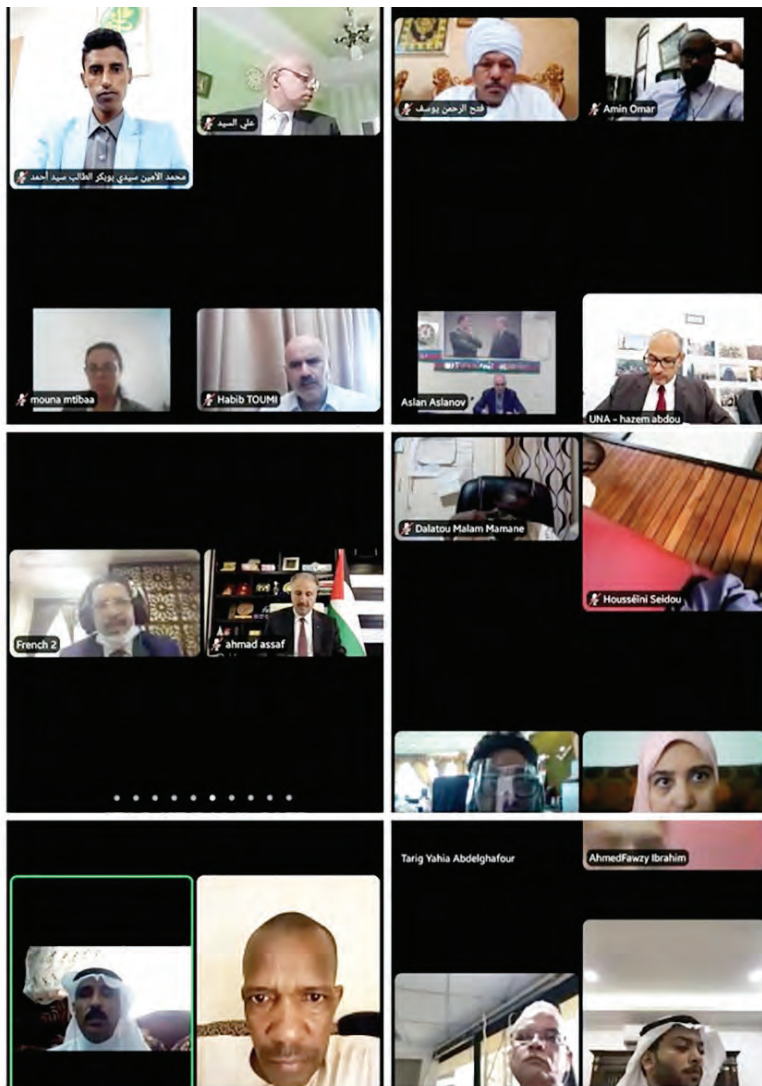
and plurality among human beings, and that difference applies even within the adherents of the same religion and culture (in the diversity of degrees of this difference). Secondly, belief in the oneness of human origin and that humanity is one family. Thirdly, giving priority to the supreme interest of the common bond among all, including the national interest and the interest of the peace of our world and the harmony of its societies, preserving its stability and national tranquility, with the consolidation of the bonds of love between them. Fourthly, promoting national dialogues on all-important issues, as well as dialogues between followers of religions and cultures. These dialogues must be effective as they are based on the commonality that brings together the national spectrum, which is the supreme interest of the country and the unity of its values and goals. The atmosphere of dialogue between followers of religions and cultures must prevail with transparency and complete clarity. The unresolved issues that the courtesy sessions conceal are the main reason for the ineffectiveness of these dialogues on the ground,



The coexistence model is elevated when it inspires everyone



Extremism is active in employing the inevitability of discord among human beings to build buffer walls without achieving their common interests



and these dialogues must result in joint work projects, after identifying defects, needs, points of reinforcement and sustainability. Fifthly, it is important in the dialogue between followers of religions and cultures to put common ground in front of everyone, agree to work on them, and also put points of difference in front of everyone and an understanding about them.

Dr. Al-Issa added that it is necessary to invite independent partners with competence in making effective dialogue in order to support it in a manner similar to independent arbitration committees. To monitor the course of dialogues, guide them and stop them if they deviate from their correct course or end to results that do not achieve the logically required ambition of each dialogue. It is also imperative that the effective results of each dialogue be announced, and timetables set for implementing its decisions, with the designation of those working in the field of implementation to determine responsibility. He stressed the need for these results to include strengthening the human, moral and civilizational alliance between the follow-

ers of religions and cultures and standing with practical and effective enthusiasm in front of all voices of hatred and slogans of clash and religious and civilizational conflict.

His Excellency said that Islam has affirmed a strict rule, which is that there is no compulsion in religion, and that the truth is clear to those who want to follow it, but no one is forced to do so. Moreover, that extremism is active to make the inevitability of the difference between human beings a buffer wall between their interests and a reason to ignite hatred and extremism, and the resulting repercussions for each other that may reach critical situations of crisis and confrontation. As happened throughout human history in its painful chapters, whose deep and correct readings proved that they were never truly expressing the truth of every law. It was not rational in its understanding or behavior, regardless of its excuses or even the degree of its sincerity. This alone is not enough with its importance, as it is necessary to have religious, intellectual, and political awareness. He added that many errors, risks and negative critical attitudes are

caused by concealment from the temporal and spatial dimensions of the issue, as well as not having the surveys necessary to study the case, its dimensions, and its effects. This means a loss of adequate visualization by looking from one window. Because of this, the fulfillment of the objectives of Shari'ah is lost, and this matter greatly harms the reputation of the religion if it is attributed to it by a legal person. As in our Islamic world and elsewhere, few are against coexistence between followers of religions and cultures, against dialogue of civilizations, against peace and harmony of religious, ethnic and cultural diversity. There is no doubt that most of the risks assumed in the name of religion are caused by absence

from the temporal and spatial dimension. Who looks from one window does not see another in his horizon, and differs from someone who looks from several windows. The capacity of the survey enhances the ability of the legal scholar to achieve the goals of the Shari'ah that came to reform the world and in favor of religion.

His Excellency concluded by stressing that the Muslim World League is a global organization of Islamic people that distances itself from engaging in political issues except for those that were clearly conceived in all its aspects, even after a while. It works to be an element of reform, harmony and peace within and outside the Muslim World and wishes good and benefit to all.



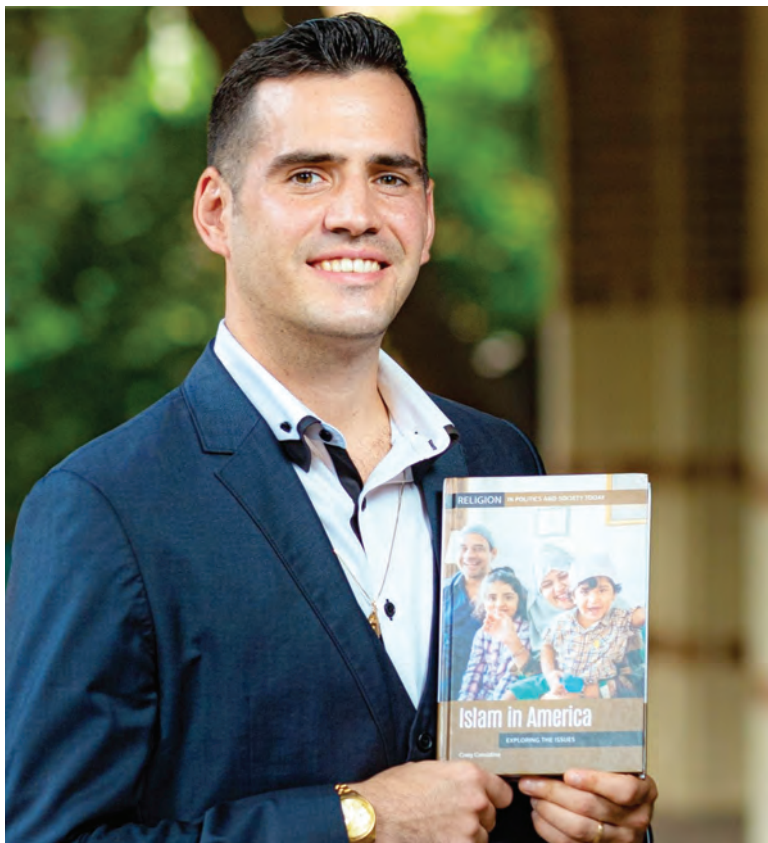
The goals of coexistence are based on the belief in the existence of difference and the unity of human origin, and giving priority to the interest of common ties with the effectiveness of dialogue

Dr. Craig Considine:

It is inaccurate to say spread of Islam is a threat to Western values and civilization

Interview by Abdelhakim Guemaz

🗨️ *A prominent American academic researcher spoke highly of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and described him as a moderate and rational man. In an exclusive interview to the Muslim World League Journal, Dr. Craig Considine said Prophet*



Muhammad was an educator, a diplomat, father, friend, general, lawgiver and a statesman. He told the Journal that the West view the Prophet often as a misogynist. Dr. Considine presents through his work a new perspective and insights into Prophet Muhammad's life. Here's the interview.

When and why did you first have interest in Islamic studies?

My interest in Islamic studies started when I was a freshman in college. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 and Afghanistan in 2001 had occurred; both wars interested me in the light of international relations as an academic discipline in the post-9/11 world. There were many questions in my head at the time – why did 9/11 happen? Did Al-Qaeda’s actions reflect Islamic teachings? Are the Islamic civilization and Western civilization at odds with one another? I had little, if any, knowledge to answer these questions. I grew up in Needham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston. When I was a sophomore in high school in 2001, Needham had a population that was approximately 98 percent Christian. I had no social or cultural context to make sense of 9/11. The media narratives that emerged on that tragic day were mostly sensational – for example, “Muslims hate Americans,” and “the Islamic world condemns American values,” to name but a few. I had an inclination that the media coverage was not really explain-

ing or providing the reality of the situation about Muslims worldwide.

Why did your study on quarantine and hygiene in Islam catch the attention of the Western world, in your opinion?

The article that I wrote on Prophet Muhammad’s recommendations for dealing with something like COVID-19 was published by a Western media outlet (Newsweek), but it did not really catch the attention of “the Western world.” Muslim individuals, communities, and organizations living in Western countries appreciated and showed interest in the piece, but the overwhelming majority of the media coverage on the article came from the so-called “Islamic world.” I think Muslims worldwide were surprised by my article because I am an American Christian and the piece was published by a major media outlet based in the United States. It is not often that a white, Catholic from Boston, Massachusetts speaks highly of the prophet of Islam.

Do you think these values can change the stereotype of Islam in the West?

The Newsweek article focused on one particular story that could help to transform the way that Muhammad is viewed among Westerners. The story is related to Muhammad’s interaction with a Bedouin man in the Arabian Desert.

The Bedouin man, who was traveling with Muhammad, had gotten off his camel. Muhammad asked him, “Aren’t you going to tie your camel?” He was suggesting to the Bedouin man that leaving a camel untied ran the risk of the camel running away. The Bedouin man replied to Muhammad, “I have faith in God to protect the camel.” The prophet then told him: “Tie your camel first and then place your trust in God.”



Understanding the historical context in which the Qur’an was revealed to the prophet provides a deeper understanding of Muhammad’s decision-making



Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are like three different branches on one tree. Each branch may have a different length and shape, but all branches are nourished by the same roots



What was Muhammad teaching?

Perhaps he meant that human beings should have a healthy balance of reason and faith. Muhammad was a rational and moderate man, but he also knew that there were certain things that only God controlled, hence why the Prophet needed faith.

Muhammad was a wise man who served in many roles including as an educator, diplomat, father, friend, general, husband, lawgiver, prophet, statesman, and theologian. He is too often viewed by Westerners through the prism of misogyny and violence. My work seeks to provide a fresh and timely perspective on his life and legacy.

Through your study on Islam during this short period, how did you find this religion?

For me personally, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are like three different branches on one tree. Each branch may have a different length and shape, but all branches are

nourished by the same roots and tied to the same source.

I also appreciate the strict monotheism of the Islamic tradition and Muhammad's teachings as they pertain to anti-racism, civic nation building, cultural hybridity, freedom of religion, racial equality, and religious pluralism. His vision for the Ummah is similar to the ideal image I have of my own country (the United States); that is, a nation rooted in constitutional principles like democratic values, freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, ownership of private property, and social equality as well as equity.

What do you think about the Holy Qur'an?

I love what the Qur'an says about Jesus, Mary, and other Biblical prophets. The concept of Ahl AlKitab, or the People of the Book, provides a sorely needed point of unity for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. I also love the emphasis that the Islamic holy



It is important to understand the context in which the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad. Certain verses pertain to particular events that the early Ummah dealt with at a given point time

text places on the importance of compassion, humanity, justice, and mercy. Furthermore, it is important to understand the context in which the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad. Certain verses pertain to particular events that the early Ummah dealt with at a given point time. Understanding the historical context in which the Qur'an was revealed to the prophet provides a deeper understanding of Muhammad's decision-making as well as Islamic principles and values at large.

How do you answer those who consider the spread of Islam as a threat to the Western world values and civilization?

It is inaccurate to say that the spread of Islam is a threat to Western values and civilization. In fact, the truth is the exact opposite – Islam and Muslims are positive influences on Western values and civilization, and it always has been. Take, for example, the actions and views of the U.S. Founding Fathers. George Wash-

ington, the first U.S. president, welcomed Muslims to migrate and travel to the United States. Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, owned a copy of the Qur'an to learn about the Shari'ah and how it may relate to American laws. Benjamin Franklin, the famous diplomat and inventor, invited the grand mufti of Constantinople to preach the Islamic faith in Philadelphia.

There is another important example from the U.S. that shows how Islamic values and Western values are actually intertwined. In 1931 Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the thirty-second president of the United States, asked a German American architect to create a monument in the U.S. Supreme Court chamber. The purpose of the monument was to highlight the U.S.'s commitment to the rule of egalitarian law and to recognize the greatest lawgivers in the history of humankind. Muhammad was among the sixteen historical figures chosen by Adolph A. Weinman, the German architect. Muham-

mad's presence in the U.S. Supreme Court chamber symbolizes the synthesis between Islam and the West.

Has your book “The Humanity of Muhammad: A Christian View” met with acceptance by the American public in particular and the Western public in general?

A lot of American citizens have praised the book, but most of the attention and coverage is happening outside of the United States. I have done major interviews with Al Jazeera (Balkans), Al-Mayadeen (Lebanon), Capital TV (Pakistan), Rubawah (Iraq Kurdistan), but I have yet to do a single interview with any Western outlet. Overall, the response has been generally positive, as documented in the reviews it has received on Amazon.com in the United States. I think people appreciate the hope, relevance, scholarship, and simplicity of the book.

What do you think about those who accuse Islam of being hostile to human rights?

It is bias and historically inaccurate to say the Islamic faith is hostile to human rights. Muhammad allowed the Christians of Najran to pray in Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi in Madinah around 630. This is a clear example of both freedom of conscience and freedom of religion. In 622, the Prophet of Islam helped to create the Constitution of Madinah, which allowed the Medinese Jews to retain their faith and live safely in an “Islamic state.” Muhammad arranged to purchase the freedom of Bilal Ibn Rabah, a black African slave who was often tortured for following Muhammad's teachings. Bilal ended up becoming one of the main leaders of the early Ummah. Moreover, in his Fare-



Muhammad clearly said that all human beings, regardless of ethnicity or race, are to be treated equally in a just society



well Sermon, Muhammad clearly said that all human beings, regardless of ethnicity or race, are to be treated equally in a just society. These points only scratch the surface of Muhammad's position on human rights.

According to your estimate, how effective is your address to the West (in a western approach) with some of the hadiths of the Prophet of Islam to bridge the points of view between religious followers?

I receive many messages from people of diverse religious backgrounds who say that



Islam and Muslims are positive influences on Western values and civilization, and it always has been



my words about Muhammad have given them a deeper appreciation and respect for the Islamic faith and Muslims at large. I am doing weekly Zoom webinars for interfaith audiences that are interested in learning more about the Prophet's life and legacy and how it applies to our world today. Most of the backlash that I receive actually comes from people who identify themselves as Muslims. Some Muslims do not like the way I talk about Muhammad; others try to discredit my reputation by saying that a Christian should never teach Muslims

about the Prophet. These kinds of responses have been happening for many years now, so they do not really bother me; they certainly did not distract me from publishing material. My love of knowledge is deep.

How could trust be built between the West and Islam, especially with the abuses that Islam is exposed to?

Building trust occurs over time; it is not always easy to develop and it takes energy as well as conviction.

I often tell audiences and students that the best way to build trust is through a process that I call DEUCE. This acronym stands for dialogue, education, understanding, commitment, and engagement.

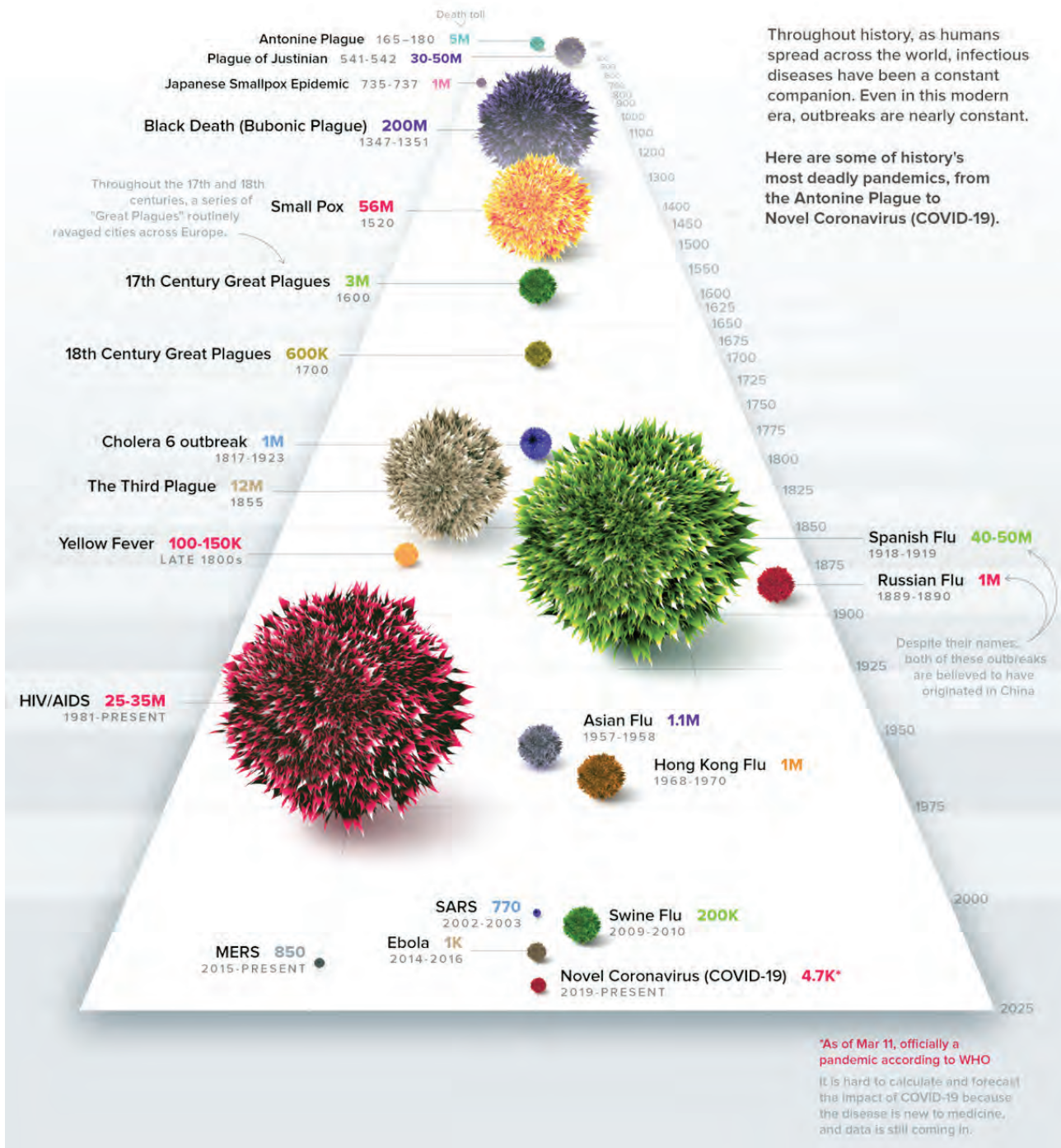
Trust begins when people start talking to each other in search of religious similarities and shared experiences. Our common humanity, rather than our perceived cultural or religious differences, should be the focus of our initial conversations. Once people have started the conversations and developed rapport, then they can move on to properly educating one another. Education does not happen out of thin air; it happens once people have been able to see themselves in other communities and peoples.

Beyond education is understanding. When we are able to understand each other's experiences and views, we are able to move forward and transform our societies. After conversing, educating, and hopefully seeing eye-to-eye, human beings from diverse backgrounds can then commit themselves to shared goals and projects.

Once all these stages are completed, peoples and communities can engage alongside one another to make the world a better place, one that is more compassionate, just, and peaceful.

HISTORY OF PANDEMICS

Pan-dem-ic (of a disease) prevalent over a whole country or the world.



History of plagues over centuries

By Dr. Muhammad Salim

🗨️ ***Plague is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Yersinia Pestis*. Symptoms are fever, weakness and headache. Such symptoms begin one to seven days after exposure. There are three forms of plague. The bubonic form is when the infected person develops swelling in lymph nodes. In the Septicemic form, tissues may turn black and die. However, the pneumonic form occurs when the patient develops shortness of breath, cough, and chest pain.***

Bubonic and septicemic plague usually spread by flea bites or handling an infected animal. While the pneumonitis plague is raged among people through the air via infectious droplets, the plague case is diagnosed by finding the bacterium in fluid from a lymph node, blood or sputum.

Patients at high risk may be vaccinated. People exposed to a pneumonic case of plague may be treated with preventive medication. Such treatment is represented in antibiotic and supportive care. Antibiotics include a combination of gentamicin and fluoroquinolone. The death risk with treatment is about 10% while without treatment is about 70%.

There were 600 cases reported annually on the global level. In 2017, most cases are reported to be in countries such the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, and Peru. In the United States, infections are found in rural areas, where the bacteria are believed to circulate among rodents. Histori-

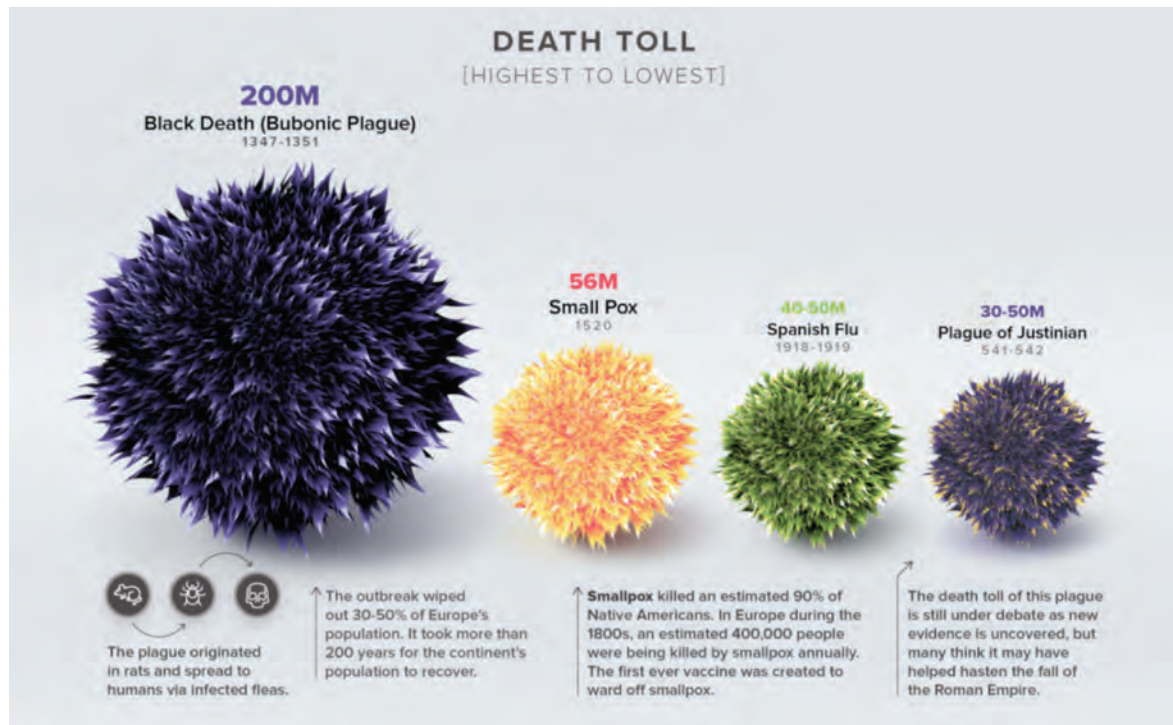
cally, plagues occur in large outbreaks, with the most famous one being the Black Death in the 14th century which claimed souls of more than 50 million people. Following is a numeration of the plagues that occurred throughout centuries.

The Antonine Plague

This is known as the plague of Galen (a Greek physician who lived in the Roman Empire), which broke out in 165 AD. It was an ancient plague brought to the Roman Empire by the troops returning from campaigns in the Near East. However, Scholars suspected it to have been either a smallpox or measles. It might be the cause of the death of the Roman Emperor, Lucius Verus who was the co-regent of Marcus Antoninus after whom the plague was named.

The Plague of Emmaus

Also known as the plague of Amwas, the plague of Emmaus occurred in 639 in the



town of Emmaus (Amwas) in Palestine (under Bilad al-Sham during the Islamic Caliphate Age). The town had been struck with the plague after its conquest by the forces of the Caliph Omer Ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him), and upon setting a military camp there. It is a very famous plague in the early Islamic era, because of the death of many prominent companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This outbreak claimed the souls of 25,000 people.

Justinian Pandemic

This one was focused in the city of Constantinople. There were 5,000 deaths per day in the spring of 542 CE. The death toll was over a third of the city population. The victims were too numerous to be buried. Corps were stacked high in church as the Christian doctrine prevents disposal of these corps by cremation. Three years later, the

plague raged through Italy, South France, Rhine Valley and Iberia. Then, it spread as far as Denmark, Ireland, Africa, Middle East and Asia Minor, killing 100 million people in Asia, Africa and Europe. There were major outbreaks of the plague in Europe and Middle East over the next 200 years. It reoccurred in Constantinople, Ireland, England and also raged in Iraq, Egypt and Syria as well as Mesopotamia.

The Black Death of Europe

The term "black death" was not used until later, however, in 1347, it was known as the "Pestilence or Pestilentia". It is derived from the Latin term "atra mors" which means dreadful death, translated later into Black Death.

It is a great plague that occurred in Europe and was brought to Crimea of Asia Minor by the Tartar (or Tatar) armies of Khan Janibeg,

who had sieged the town of Kaffa (now Feodosya) in Ukraine on the shores of the Black Sea. The plague of the Black Death reached Marseille, Paris and Germany including Spain, England and Norway. It also hit Eastern Europe and was carried away by the Tartar armies to reach Russia and India.

Black Death was symptomized in tumors in groin and armpits in size of an apple or an egg. Then it changed into black spots on the arms or the thighs with both men and women alike.

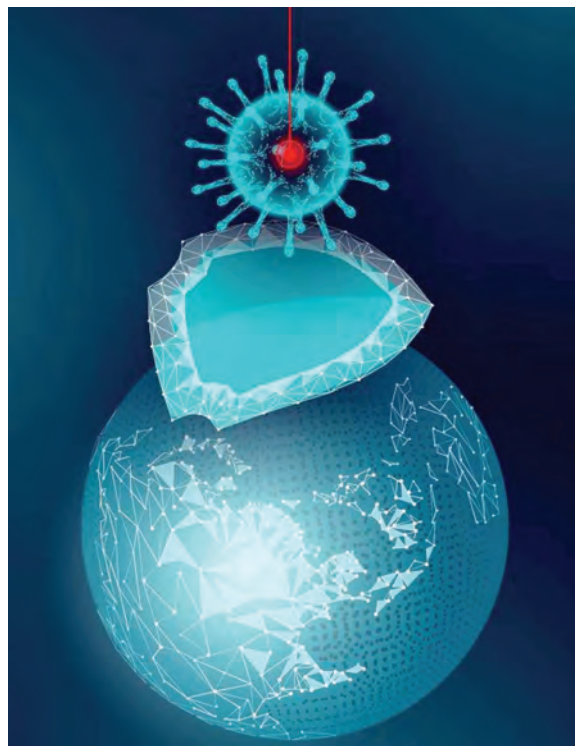
In Florence, Italy, half of the city population died where the Italians called the epidemic “Mortalega Grande” i.e. Great Mortality. Corpses were thrown into large pits. People died with rapidity that no proper burial or cremation could be done. There were putrefying bodies in their homes and in the streets. There were no clergy to perform burial rites.

There are no remedies for this pandemic disease except for inhaling aromatic vapors from flowers plus herbs. There was shortage of doctors, therefore, quacks appeared to sell useless cures and amulets as being claimed to offer magical protection.

The Black Death killed a quarter of the population of Europe that was more than 25 million and another 25 million in Asia and Africa. Mortality rates were higher in the cities of Florence, Venice and Paris. There were virulent infection epidemic diseases such as smallpox, infantile diarrhea and dysentery.

Quarantines:

In 1374, on re-emergence of another epidemic of the Black Death in Europe and for taking precautionary measures, Venice established various public health controls, such as isolating victims from healthy people; preventing ships with disease from landing



at port. In Venice, suspected travelers from the Levant and Eastern Mediterranean had to spend forty days in a quarantine to make sure if they were well. This period of 40 days was related to biblical and historical references, such as the Christian Observance of Lent (the period for which Christ fasted in the desert) or the ancient Greek doctrine of “critical days” which held that contagious disease would develop within 40 days of exposure. Most countries in Europe established quarantines in the 14th and 15th centuries. Habsburg established a cordon sanitaire, i.e. a line between infected and clean parts of Europe which ran from the Danube to the Balkans. It was manned by local peasants with checkpoints and quarantine stations to prevent infected people from crossing from Eastern to Western Europe. Doctors who attended infected patients wore peculiar leather costumes to protect them from the plague. They wore a protective garb head to

COVID-19: 5 THINGS TO KNOW AND DO



feet with leather or oil cloth robes, leggings, gloves and hood, a beak like mask with glass eyes and two breathing nostrils which were filled with aromatic herbs and flowers to ward off the

miasma (bad scent).

London Great Plague

A pneumatic plague occurred in Europe and England in 1665. It reached its peak in September of that year when

7,000 people per week died in London alone. A fifth of London population (around 100,000) died. Rebuilding timber and hatch houses of London with brick and tile reduced the number of rats' normal habitat and contributed in the end of the epidemic.

The Third Pandemic

A plague re-emerged in the remote province of China, Yunnan in 1855. It reached Hong Kong and spread to Bombay. By 1900, it reached all ports on every continent carried by infected rats travelling by international trade routes on the new steamships. The first major outbreak occurred in Sydney, Australia and spread through to the other cities of the continent. It was confirmed that rats were the source of the epidemic and their fleas were the vectors of the epidemic. The third pandemic raged throughout the world for the next five decades and it ended only in 1959, causing 15 million deaths. Also, there had been outbreaks of plague in China, Tanzania, Zaire, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

The Spanish Flu

The Spanish flu, also known as the 1918 flu pandemic, was an unusually deadly influenza pandemic. Last-

ing from January 1918 to December 1920, it infected 500 million people – about a quarter of the world’s population at the time. The death toll is estimated to have been anywhere from 17 million to 50 million, and possibly as high as 100 million, making it one of the deadliest pandemics in human history.

Actually, there have been innumerable epidemic of plagues throughout history; however, the pandemic of the 6th, 14th, 20th and 21st centuries have had the most impact on human society, not only in terms of great mortalities, but also on the social, economic and cultural life of people.

The 21st Century Epidemic Diseases:

- **H5N1:** This is a bird flu, an avian influenza of a viral infection not only infected birds, but also humans. It first appeared in geese in China, in 1996, then it was caught by people during a poultry outbreak in Hong Kong. It infected wild birds in more than 50 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

- **An Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)** that occurred between 2002 to 2004, caused by SARS-Cov. It first appeared in Foshan,



Guangdong, China, and it killed over 8,000 people worldwide.

- **N1H1:** This is swine flu. It is an influenza, a virus which contains unique combination of flue not previously identified in animals or people. It is so called because people who caught it had direct contact with pigs. It appeared first in Mexico in 2009. It is associated with the outbreak of the Spanish Flu in 1918.

- **Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).** This disease was firstly identified in Saudi Arabia in 2012. It is caused by MERS-Cov. It is also known as camel-flu.

- **Covid-19 Pandemic:** This is the current Coronavirus which firstly appeared in the city of Wuhan, China in December 2019. It is a pandemic ongoing disease caused by acute respiratory

syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-Cov2). It is declared to be a globally public health emergency on 30th January 2020 and recognized as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. As of 11 April 2020, there are more than 1.69 million cases reported in 210 countries resulting in 102,000 deaths and more than 376,000 people recovered.

Although the course of development of communities and nations was changed several times in terms of preventing the recurrence of pandemic plague, such as the development of the Germ Theory and the science of Bacteriology as well as public health measures, such as quarantine, and antibiotic such as streptomycin, yet, plague today is still an important and serious threat to the health of both people and animals.

Biblical reference frameworks of contemporary Dutch translators of the Qur'an

Dr. Tijani Boulaouali

🗨️ *This is the summary of the dissertation that I defended at the KU University of Leuven in Belgium, with which I earned my PhD degree in the Arabic and Islamic Studies on October 28, 2019. This work is written in the Dutch language, because it is originally centered on the contemporary translations of the Holy Qur'an into Dutch.*



It should be noted that this dissertation was supervised by Professor Abd Alrahman Alswlainman from the Faculty of Arts and Professor Pierre Van Hecke from the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies. This dissertation investigates the role that Biblical reference frameworks have played in the creation of the three modern Dutch Qur'an translations of Johannes Kramers (1956), Fred Leemhuis (1989) and Eduard Verhoef (2015). The research consists on the one hand of a theoretical part in which a number of themes (religious translation, Arabic translation tradition, Qur'an translation, inimitability of the Qur'an, etc.) are treated from a historical and theological point of view. On the other hand, a translation analysis of the research corpus is performed, in which forty-four Quranic concepts are examined etymologically, terminologically, theologically, exegetically and comparatively. This research aims to contribute to the study of the Qur'an as the essence of the Islamic religion. Understanding the Qur'an depends on the nature of the Qur'an translations produced. How can the transla-

tor translate the Qur'an text correctly, how can he or she bring the original meaning of the Qur'an closer to the reader. This research is aimed at different target audiences: Muslims and non-Muslims, teachers and students, consultants and imams and others. The forty-four examined Quranic concepts are carefully selected. They cover all kinds of aspects of Islamic theology and jurisprudence that ordinary (non-) Muslims need to understand the truth of the Qur'an, which is indispensable for interfaith dialogue. This research is not limited to a certain discipline. In principle, the intention is to analyze the possible impact of the Biblical reference frameworks on the three Qur'an translators mentioned above, but the nature of the research body requires combining elements from different disciplines. It is impossible to approach the research question from a single angle. In addition to translation studies, there are linguistics, theology, exegesis and history. The boundaries between these disciplines are blurring. There are no visible lines in between in this study. You start with history and you

end with theology. You deal with translation studies and you suddenly find yourself in exegesis. This theoretical and thematic inter- and multidisciplinary approach requires a multidimensional methodology. In addition to establishing a corpus-based qualitative approach, qualitative literature research is also conducted, using descriptive, analytical and comparative methods. This study reveals that the Dutch translations of the Qur'an made by modern Arabists have undergone an apparent shift from a purely apologetic instrument to defend their own (Christian) faith to an intellectual mechanism with the aim of getting to know Islam. These translators have the same Christian background. The Biblical reference framework that is rooted in their upbringing and thinking, will normally also be present in their translation of the Qur'an, but not in the apologetic sense of their predecessors. That is, they were fully aware of "the importance" of the Bible in approaching the Qur'an, because both writings are of the same monotheistic origin, and have various narrative, ritual, moral, and eschatological parallels.

An education that is in sync

BY AFTAB H. KOLA

“ There has been an increasing awareness among Muslim students about the need to pursue higher education. However, Muslims in many parts of the world, especially in the subcontinent and the GCC countries, are yet to look beyond certain conventional courses. The main reason for this is the lack of career counselling at the right age, as well university courses that are not in tune with industry requirements.



Consider this report: “Eight out of 10 Indian engineers are not employable in any position in the knowledge economy”. Though this figure does not necessar-



Programs such as Blockchain Developer, Artificial Intelligence Specialist and JavaScript Developer are the top three jobs



ily apply to any one community, Muslims are also part of this group. Hence, it is imperative that a strategy be immediately chalked out to implement new generation programs. And it is high time that education budgets of the countries in the subcontinent and the GCC were restructured in such a way as to include programs in emerging areas of importance, and relevant courses were designed for higher education institutions.

Though universities in a few countries, sensing employment opportunities in the emerging trades, have taken some steps in this direction, most are yet to catch up with those in the West where new programs and courses are being regularly introduced and old courses are being re-oriented to meet the new market demands.

A good number of studies and reports have said that higher education in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region has fallen short of expectations and has not addressed adequately the aspirations of the younger generation. Across the region, though governments have been increasingly paying attention to investing in education and nurturing youth with skills that focuses on equipping them for the jobs of the future, these new programs have not had adequate response! The primary challenge before the education sector in the region is to provide education that fits today’s requirements as also that of the future.

Here, to their credit, it must be said that for regional governments, the education sector has continued to remain one of the top priorities despite the economic slowdown. According to Alpen Capital’s GCC Education Industry reports, “With the region’s governments gravitating towards a digital future, it is important to impart skills



that enable today's digital natives – the young people – to become competent and be trained for professional jobs in diverse sectors from Advanced Manufacturing to Artificial Intelligence (AI) and more.”

Importance of counselling

The Muslims in India are yet to come to terms with the new age courses as they lack proper counselling. India is educationally well off in terms of the availability of colleges and universities, but the Muslims in the country are still hanging onto courses like regular medicine, conventional engineering and management courses. Programs such as Block-Chain Developer, Artificial Intelligence Specialist and JavaScript Developer are the top three jobs for Indians in 2020 as per a LinkedIn report. These programs, however, remain anathematic to Muslims.

Other top 15 emerging IT-related jobs (in 2020) include Robotic Process Automation Consultant, Back-end Developer, Growth Manager, Site Reliability Engineer, Customer Success Specialist, Full Stack Engineer, Robotics Engineer (Software), Cybersecurity Specialist, Python Developer, Digital Marketing Specialist, Front-end Engineer and Lead Generation Specialist. While tech jobs rule the list, soft skills such as Account Management and Customer Retention are also becoming critical, signifying the importance of human intervention at every level of digitization. Universities urgently need to introduce courses like Bioinformatics, Computational Linguistics and Cognitive Science.

Liberal arts that include an eclectic blend of subjects from different disciplines such as the Humanities, Science and Commerce have also suddenly gained in demand.



New frontiers in healthcare

Another field that opens huge opportunities for jobs is the healthcare industry. And with the emergence of Covid-19, newer courses are being explored and even introduced to meet the industry expectations.

The GCC healthcare industry has been moving at a reasonably good pace thanks to the initiatives being adopted to strengthen coverage, services, as well as the increasing healthcare expenditure by public and private players, and leveraging of technology.

A number of nations are encountering a slew of challenges concerning medical workforce - how to meet the public demand for healthcare and maintain sufficient number of general practitioners; how to fill up shortages in the specialty sectors and ensure even distribution of doctors across the population, etc.

In the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC),

factors such as the growth in healthcare expenditure, the need for more hospital beds in view of the increasing population, and the craving for more healthcare professionals are increasingly worrying the states. Hence, there is not a better time than now to amply demonstrate the critical role that proper education can play in public health.

Take for instance a course in Healthcare Engineering. It has become a priority now as it is a multidisciplinary specialty that focuses on taking healthcare forward through engineering approaches that involve both healthcare and engineering professionals. Then there are new courses such as Home Health Assistance, Geriatric Care Assistance, Social Psychology, Telemedicine, etc., to name a few.

The largest education sector in the GCC, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, recently approved a new universities law in response

The Benefits of eLearning



Regardless of any concerns, online education has made great strides in recent years. In the latest surveys, 77.84% of respondents reported having taken online courses and 47.79% said they would be willing to. So is online learning the future of education?



to the new direction that the country is taking in order to develop its institutions, systems and mechanisms of work. This law is of particular importance to other education regulations, as it is primarily responsible for preparing the people of the country for its development.

Experts have been harp-

ing on the need for the universities to change their traditional approach to education and adapt syllabi that suit today's labor in order to remain relevant, and to provide students the skills required in the rapidly changing industrial scenario. They have appealed to all regional universities to reinvigorate

their programs and strategies in order to keep pace with the changing nature of the regional economy and the world in general. The universities in the region should focus on the emerging fields of study, and make a strategic shift towards research-based learning in order to be in tune with today's markets.

Medical colleges in the region are required to be proficient in handling disruptive technology (disruptive technology is an innovation that significantly alters the way consumers, industries or businesses operate. A disruptive technology sweeps away the systems or habits it replaces because it has attributes that are recognizably superior), understand the economics of healthcare, have the skills to work with and handle large and diverse teams, be ethical, demonstrate empathy, and be abreast with the rapid developments taking place in medicine.

There are many innovations being introduced in medical education to prepare professionals for the complex and rapidly changing healthcare system, and these need to be adapted as early as possible.



Engineered for the future

Though engineering education is growing by leaps and bounds, there still exists a disconnect between higher education and the productive sectors. Initially, the basic streams of engineering were Electrical, Civil and Mechanical, but that soon expanded to include Computer Science, Telecommunications, Chemical, Automobile and Biomedical, besides others. Of late, interdisciplinary engineering streams have become popular. These include Mechatronics, Nano Science, Robotics, Fiber Optics, Metallurgy and Aerospace and Marine Engineering. Emerging technology is shaping engineering study with courses on Artificial Intelligence, Photonics and Optical Signal Processing, Robotics and Machine Learning, Cloud Computing

and Virtualization Technology, Mobile Computing, Game Design and Augmented Reality, and Big Data Analytics, to name a few.

Careers in management sector

These days, management studies have been triggering a lot of excitement as it is constantly evolving with innovations coming up regularly. The range of the courses is continuously expanding and contracting, driven by industry needs. Though there are hundreds of programs available in India and the GCC countries, students from the Muslim community are still hankering after the marketing field. It is time they pursued MBA programs that include specialization in Data Analytics or Applied Data Science, Product Development and Technology Management,

Digital Enterprise Management, Supply Chain Management, Tourism Development, Hospital Administration, Entrepreneurship, Family Business, Business Consulting, etc.

Focus on agriculture

Agriculture too is a major source of employment. GCC countries are now in a diversification-of-economy mode, and have identified agriculture as a key area to promote their economies. Hence, education programs on agriculture will certainly help generate the required manpower in this sector. And Agri-Business Management is turning out to be the blue-ocean-option among MBA courses.

By way of conclusion it can be said that it is of vital importance that the Muslim student community in the subcontinent as well as the GCC countries adapted well to the innovative changes being adopted by the universities around the world in compliance with the changing needs of the industrial and labor sectors, if they are to advance intellectually and economically. Or else, they will be left behind. And that is something that the community can ill afford at this juncture.



Revisiting Hijrah in the Time of Transnational Mobility

K.M.Alavudheen Hudawi Puthanazhi

“ *The concept of migration can be defined as a place to place movement of people, many of them in a large cluster or too long distance. Migration in history has happened on a large scale as it still continues in diverse forms. Both the voluntary migration such as the resettlement with one’s region, country or beyond, and the involuntary movement like human trafficking and ethnic cleansing have reasons and objectives of their own.*



***Hijrah in Arabic term
denotes migration
and the one who
migrates is Muhajir***

Obviously, large migrant movements of people from conflict or war-affected regions and less developed territories to the more peaceful or advanced cores have been happening around the globe. At a time when administrators and policymakers are struggling to propose durable solutions regarding how to rehabilitate the immigrant population in a better way, a revisit into the highlights of historical migration made by the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) seems to be highly significant.

Unlike the migrations motivated by the temporal and ephemeral intentions and benefits, the Migration (Hijrah) of the early Muslims from Makkah to Madinah in the early seventh century AD was a migration away from harm, persecution, oppression, polytheism and disbelief to peace, security, justice and Islam. It was a migration towards protecting the new message of Islam

and establishing a fresh society by which Islam would flourish and spread all over the world. What does migration mean?

Historically, the human race has migrated for various purposes. Human beings, as recorded from the earliest history, have always moved from 'one country, locality, and place of residence to settle into another'. We tend to migrate from the homes of our families or guardians into our own homes. We migrate between regions, cities and towns. We also migrate between countries. Migration has, thus, turned out to be a normal process in all ages and places.

Hijrah in Arabic term denotes migration and the one who migrates is Muhajir. The Islamic tradition contains two related terms as well: Ghurba and Gharib. Though both terms carry a connotation of being strange in a certain place, each of them differs slightly in meaning as the term hijrah in-



volves permanent relocation whereas ghurba can be either permanent or temporary. However, both hijrah and ghurba push man into troubles as the famous Arabic proverb means: “The stranger is blind even if he has eyes”. It points towards the helpless situation of the stranger and proposes that he is in need of assistance and direction.

In Islamic point of view, the term hijrah is intended as emigrations of the faithful to Abyssinia (later known as Ethiopia) and of the Prophet’s followers to Madinah before the siege of Makkah in AD 630. A spiritual definition given by Imam Al-Bukhari for a migrant is “the one who abstains from that which Allah has prohibited.” Therefore, migration is not just about leaving one’s home or land; but it has a wider impact, and hence it becomes essential for every Muslim to become an emigrant.

A Peep into the History

The migration of human beings has taken place in various times and forms under a number of situations. They involved tribal, national, class, and individual levels. Causes have been climatic, political, economic, religious, or simply the love of adventure. Its grounds and consequences are primal for the study of ethnology, political and social histories, and political economy as well. Historically, Ethiopia (Abyssinia or Al-Habasha) is known as the “Haven of the First Migration or Hijrah”. The meaning and the significance of Hijrah is embodied in the Islamic calendar from its inception. The Islamic calendar represents a history of the everlasting struggle between truth and falsehood, faith and blasphemy, freedom and oppression, light and darkness, and peace and war.



The first hijrah of the companions and relatives of the Prophet to Ethiopia observes the birth of freedom of expression

The first hijrah of the companions and relatives of the Prophet Muhammad to Ethiopia observes the birth of freedom of expression and beliefs, whereas, the second migration of the Prophet Muhammad to the Madinah celebrates the end of oppression.

Thanks to both migrations in the history of Islam, it laid a strong foundation in the world as a global religion. Ever since that experience, the Muslim community, wherever they settled, shifted from minority to majority, from weakness to permanent strength, from tribalism to universal brotherhood that knows no defined political boundaries.

According to Muhammad Haykal, the author of the “Life of Muhammad” the Prophet Muhammad trusted that his followers and relatives would be better off if they migrate to a country where the dominant religion was Christianity as it has Jesus, the son of Mary, as its prophet. He was never afraid that his companions would convert and give up their faith in favor of any other established religion.

The Prophetic Hijrah

In Makkah, during the pilgrimage season of AD 620, the Prophet met six men from the family of Banu Khazraj in Madinah, introduced to them the doctrines of Islam,



and recited to them portions of the Qur'an. Impressed by the prophet's preaching, they embraced Islam. In the Pilgrimage of the next year, five of them brought seven others with them. These twelve members informed the Prophet about the need for the gradual establishment of Islam in Madinah, and took a formal pledge of allegiance with the Prophet as it became renowned as “The first Pledge of Al-Aqaba”. In the pledge, they promised to accept him as a Prophet, to worship none but one God, and to renounce certain sins such as theft, adultery and murder. At their request, the Prophet sent with them Mus'ab ibn 'Umar to teach them the instructions of Islam. Biographers viewed that the efforts of Mus'ab ibn 'Umar were successful in preaching the message of Islam and bringing people under the umbrella of Islam in Madinah.

During the pilgrimage in AD 622, a delegation of around 75 Muslims from the tribes of the Banu Aws and Banu Khazraj came from Madinah and made the pledge of their acceptance of Islam. They also assured the Prophet of their complete support and protection if the latter would migrate to their land. They invited him to come to Madinah as an arbitrator to reconcile among the hostile tribes. This is known as the “Second Pledge at Al-Aqabah”. This event marked

both political and religious success as it paved the way for immigration of the Prophet and his companions to Madinah. Following the pledges, the Prophet encouraged his companions to migrate to Madinah, and in a span of two months, nearly all the Muslims of Makkah migrated to Madinah. Why was Madinah selected as the destination?

The migration of the Prophet and his followers to Madinah proved that the number of people who embraced Islam steadily enhanced, so did the oppositions and persecutions from tribes in Makkah. The condition became worse as the Prophet was threatened to be killed by enemies in Makkah. Hence the prophet decided to go to Madinah by putting a halt to the hardships of Muslims in Makkah as they were subjected to the hatred comments and pelting of stones and trashes.

The Prophet's decision to migrate to Madinah was further supported by the request that came from the natives of Madinah. They wanted the Prophet to migrate to their town in order to stop the ongoing tribal warfare. The Prophet's peace-making skill prompted the people in

Madinah to go to him with such a request. Therefore, the Prophet asked his companions to migrate one by one to the city of Madinah, which was a multicultural and multi-religious space.

Lessons Learned from Hijrah

The Qur'an speaks of oppressed and weak people on earth and suggests that they could migrate from their oppressed positions to another land of God. The verse says, "Was not the earth of God spacious enough for you to flee for refuge?" (Surat An-Nisaa, Verse: 97). The verse indirectly suggests that those who have authority should take care of refugees since it speaks of God as the owner of the land. According to Islamic teachings, every part of the earth is God's land.

The first thing that the Prophet did in Madinah was to establish foundations for an interconnected society where people could live peacefully with one another. Muslims had made up only fifteen percent of the total population in Madinah at the time when the Prophet arrived in the city. There, he was successful in bringing out a peaceful life to the conflicting tribes through



the Constitution of Madinah or Madinah Charter, an important document that he developed, and which ensured equality between all members of society regardless of their religious background.

Undoubtedly, the Muslims who migrated from Makkah were financially weak because they had to leave everything behind at their native place. Their poverty and weakness were to be solved through the wisdom of the Prophet. In order to integrate immigrants with the local Muslims, the Prophet declared brotherhood between every immigrant and local Muslim, and he asked the local Muslims to help the immigrants. Such a unique



approach with the direction of the Prophet created two important groups in the history of Islam who became the subjects of praise in the Qur'an: Muhajirun (immigrants) and Ansar (helpers).

Ansar shared their money and their farms with their brothers to the extent that the immigrant Muslims received legal rights from the inheritance of their Ansar brothers. If one of the Ansars dies, his Muhajir brother would be his heir. Some of the immigrants were very honorable and did not want to ask for help. Instead of asking for the assistance they would say: "Show me the way to the marketplace."

The brotherhood which the Prophet declared among

them brought prosperity and solidarity to the immigrants. It also helped to create a warm environment for them and to strengthen the social bonds. Considering the modern-day needs of immigrants, the Prophet successfully solved two major problems that immigrants faced through this declaration of brotherhood: shelter and food. It helped immigrants to stand on their own feet. The most interesting part of this brotherhood is that it was not bound by force but by conviction.

The tradition of brotherhood that the Prophet established prevented several possible conflicts. It prevented animosity based on tribalism and racism. It also prevented arrogance based on wealth. Compassion and respect developed between immigrants and helpers. One can argue that this declaration of brotherhood can be considered one of the most important and exemplary practices of integrating disparate fragments of society in human history.

Particularly, in recent years, immigration laws have become much more severe. That what one can see and learn from historical events in Islam is that administrators can provide a

warm and good environment for immigrants in order to integrate them with the regular citizens as the Prophet did showcase a great model in Madinah. It is very important for the future of the world to strengthen the relationships between the native citizens and newer immigrants, as well as between immigrant employees and their employers.

Conclusion

Hijrah, the migration of the Prophet Muhammad and his followers from Makkah to Madinah, marks a significant turning point in the history of Islam. It laid down hundreds of models for the entire human race to come. One important model among them was of providing mutual help as vividly shown in the practice of the Prophet with regard to immigrants in the early history of Islam. It can be taken as an example for our modern-day approach to migration policies and immigrants. The Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet contain many examples of peaceful societies made of immigrants as well as regular citizens. The Prophet says, "You cannot be a real believer unless you want for your brother what you want for yourself."



About Muslim scholars' translations and meanings of the Noble Qur'an

By Dr. Hassan Azzouzi

🗨️ *There is no doubt that when the intelligent reader reads the Portuguese translation of the meanings of the Qur'an, published in the Muslim World League (MWL) Journal 646, he will be astonished and at the same time proud of the enormous efforts and noble sacrifices made by some sincere non-Arab scholars and preachers in far corners of the globe.*

As for the interested reader, he will highlight the importance of the article and the dialogue through which the editor-in-chief of the MWL Journal revealed to us a topic that has its attractiveness and temptation. We are accustomed to seeing the Editor-in-Chief highlight such exciting and interesting topics from time to time.

The interested reader of the article must conclude a set of observations and ideas that may differ and vary according to the size of the meditation and the level of analysis of the indications and statements in Dr. Othman Abu Zaid's dialogue with Sheikh Aminuddin from Mozambique who spent four decades translating the Noble Qur'an into the Portuguese. It is the dialogue created by the interlocutor in a fine literary template covered by flow and spontaneity on the one hand and the desire on the other hand. That in exploring what is in the quiver of the one being interviewed, who carried the concern of a great scholarly project falls within the framework of the concern of the Islamic call in non-Islamic regions.

There is something tempting to pursue the topic of dialogue based on some of the facts and attitudes that the translator Sheikh has reported to us. As we will address some of these issues that are related to it in the context of talking about the problem of translating the meanings of the Qur'an in its relation to the field of the Islamic call in this recent era.

At the outset, it is necessary to clarify the great media impact of articles and press surveys, which highlight our unknown talents and competencies that are credited with contributing to the civilized building of the nation in remote areas and within societies in which Muslim minorities suffer from a severe shortage and scarcity at the level of sources of Islamic culture that help to consolidate the religion and its good representation and as-

simulation.

There is no doubt that informing the Islamic public opinion of such pioneering and constructive initiatives that are supported by unknown scholars would achieve more than one gain in terms of publicizing the efforts exerted locally in silence and tranquility. As well as at the level of mobilizing feelings of solidarity and solidarity in the countries of the Islamic world, governments, organizations and charitable bodies in order to provide the necessary material and moral assistance, this Sheikh Amin al-Din, after four decades of effort, is still looking for those who adopt the publication of his Qur'an translation.

Moreover, by carefully pondering over the value of the scholarly project that the Mozambican Sheikh has undertaken in the development of a Portuguese translation of the meanings of the Qur'an, we cannot fail to mention the importance and status of the Qur'anic translations carried out by Muslim scholars in recent decades. Here, it must be recalled that at the time of Orientalism's glory, orientalist were the ones who - for the most part - translated the Noble Qur'an with a fanatic intellectual background and a biased scholarly spirit that undermined the noble Qur'anic meanings and the lofty rhetoric and miracles it implied. Therefore, these Orientalist translations and their character of distortion and lack of clarity of the Qur'anic meanings became dominant and widespread. The encouragement of some Western colonial governments for Islamic and African countries helped to spread and empower them, and Sheikh Aminuddin from Mozambique referred to this matter regarding his country when he said, "The translations issued under the supervision of the Portuguese colonial government are for non-Muslims and cannot be relied upon. For many mistakes in the translations". However, after the decline

of the luster and glory of Orientalism and the emergence of an Islamic scientific trend in the field of initiative to translate the meanings of the Noble Qur'an by Muslim scholars, it is correct to say that the Muslims of the world today are able to translate the Qur'an in a correct manner. Here it is necessary to mention the great efforts made by King Fahd Glorious Qur'an Printing Complex, which for more than three decades has provided dozens of translations of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an in various languages and dialects. Before 1985, when King Fahd Glorious Qur'an Printing Complex was established, the Muslim World League had a great pioneering role in encouraging, providing and publishing Qur'an translations in multiple languages.

In his speech, Sheikh Aminuddin explained that the Portuguese language in Brazil differs from the Portuguese language spoken in African countries. Accordingly, the translations of the meanings of the Qur'an spread in Brazil are in harmony with the levels of understanding, perception and communication in Portuguese in the Portuguese colonies in Africa. This requires that the translator must be a citizen scholar who



The MWL had a great pioneering role in encouraging, providing and publishing Qur'an translations in multiple languages.

has experienced the methods, structures and formulation of the foreign language as it is in circulation. In addition, about the extent of the influence of the local African dialects on the composition of the foreign language, thus becoming slightly different from the levels of circulation of the same language in other regions.

While this aspect is important, it is important to emphasize convincing Muslim scholars themselves to

translate the meanings of the Qur'an for the benefit of their audiences. Thus, what is primarily required in a constructive and purposeful translation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an is achieved, which is mastery of the language into which it is translated, then the ability to understand the meanings of the verses and their intended guidance and rulings while fulfilling the Qur'an's goals and objectives.

Here it is necessary to



***The strict use of expressions that
are exaggerated in strangeness
and vagueness***

point out the defects of translations made by those who do not take into account the nature of the masses nominated to read the translation. The strict use of expressions that are exaggerated in strangeness and vagueness, the use of complex and abstaining methods, and the selection of abandoned words in the translated language, all of this does not fulfill the main purpose of translating the meanings of the Qur'an, which is mainly manifested in the endeavor to bring the intent of Allah Almighty

closer to understanding its meanings and simplifying its statement and interpretation. This cannot be achieved, unless the translator is aware of the conditions of those to whom he is going to translate, and is familiar with the legal sciences and the arts of translation, with sincerity of intention for Allah Almighty and seeking reward from translating the words of Allah Almighty. As long as the responsibility for translation and the trust in transmitting Quranic meanings and teachings and interpreting them

in another language. All of this would make the Qur'anic translation more influential in the field of introducing the truths of the Noble Qur'an and calling for its teachings and rulings to be represented in their brightest and most sincere form.

This confirms the seriousness of the matter of translating the meanings of the Qur'an if we bear in mind that the Muslim scholar - unlike the orientalist researcher - must know that he is targeting his work to two groups of people. The first group is the non-Arabic speaking Muslims, as the Qur'an translation presented to them is the only way to know, understand and comprehend the words of Allah Almighty, and this segment falls within the framework of what is known as the nation of response. The second group are non-Muslims (the nation of the call), who are expected and hoped that the effect of the Qur'an translation that they receive will be to recognize the message of the Qur'an, the truths of the Qur'an, and the sublime facts. It is known that the reason for a large proportion of embracing Islam is reading a translation of the meanings of the Qur'an. Here we understand the importance of the translation made by

the Muslim scholar because he is highly qualified to take into account all the conditions required to achieve these two dimensions. Here, I recall, for example, the wonderful Qur'anic translation by Sheikh Muhammad Hamidullah Al-Haidarabadi (1908-2003 AD), who was in Paris. He was the gateway for hundreds of French to embrace Islam, as it is known in French cultural circles. Therefore, it is not surprising that King Fahd Glorious Qur'an Printing Complex chose his famous translation more than thirty years ago, in printing and publishing in the Francophone countries.

The assertion that translations of the meanings of the Qur'an in various foreign languages are produced and directed by Muslim scholars is a clear message that the time when orientalist used to translate the meanings of the Qur'an into their own languages is over, and that there is a wide diligence of Muslims to do this noble task. This may be either by individual initiatives, such as the Portuguese translation made by Sheikh Aminuddin, which he mentioned that he is looking for a publisher, or under the direction and assignment of organizations and competent entities. Here it should

be noted that the Orientalist initiatives to carry out translations of the Holy Qur'an have significantly declined in the last three decades and gradually disappeared. As for the French language, for example, the translations of the famous French orientalist Jacques Berque, René Khawam, André Chouraqui were published for one year (1990). Since that year we no longer hear of the issuance of translations by the Orientalists, but on the other hand many French translations appeared by Muslim scholars and researchers, such as the Moroccan Muhammad Al-Shiyazmi and the Egyptian Zainab Abdulaziz and others.

What drives more attention to Muslim scholars' translations of the meanings of the Qur'an into various languages is that the reader of the translation, whether from non-Arabic speaking Muslims or non-Muslims who are eager to know the truth of the Islamic religion, is not convinced that access to the data and teachings of the Noble Qur'an is through the orientalist. Rather, he longs to receive that from the scholars of Islam and his people, as they are, of course, the most capable of achieving the integrity of transmission, conveying the spirit of Quranic



meanings, and highlighting the secrets and shades of the Quranic miracles.

The concern to take into account the nature of the target audience, and work to correct the intention during the translation, by invoking the duty of the Islamic call, which is not limited to one group without another, and is not restricted to a limited extent or a specific party. All these considerations can only be invoked and activated by the Muslim translator who is convinced that his work in translating the meanings of the Qur'an definitely aims to achieve broad horizons for introducing the Qur'an's truths and rulings to non-Arabic speaking Muslims on the one hand and towards non-Muslims on the other hand. This double view of the diverse



target audience is what was included in the question of the Editor-in-Chief of MWL Journal to Sheikh Aminuddin, and his answer was, “There are many Muslims and non-Muslims alike who need such Qur’anic translations made by Muslim scholars”

The Muslim scholar’s translation of the meanings of the Qur’an is based on a correct Islamic approach based on a set of considerations and foundations, including:

- Work in order to address the mind, conscience in the hearts of readers, especially among non-Muslims, while making sure that the translation method takes into account the skill in moving the innate motives of good among the readers.

- The translator understands his task in translation,

and knows what he aims to do by translating the meanings of the Noble Qur’an.

- Giving great importance to the areas of determining the correct belief and clarifying the legal rulings and highlighting all of this through the translated Qur’anic verses translated in a clear manner close to all the segments to which the Qur’an translation is directed.

- Ensuring that the Muslim translator knows how to reach the truths and secrets of the Qur’an and transmit them in another language to the other, giving them the greatest amount of influence and effectiveness.

- Taking into consideration the thinking style of the receiving audience to which the Qur’an translation is directed, as it is certainly an audience whose religious, perceptual and cultural standards vary, as well as the different nature of its ideological and intellectual fabric.

Thus, it can be said that the Western orientalist, who is governed by an external doctrinal and ideological view, cannot take into account these methodological foundations in his translation of the meanings of the Qur’an, nor can he think of them, nor bring them up in

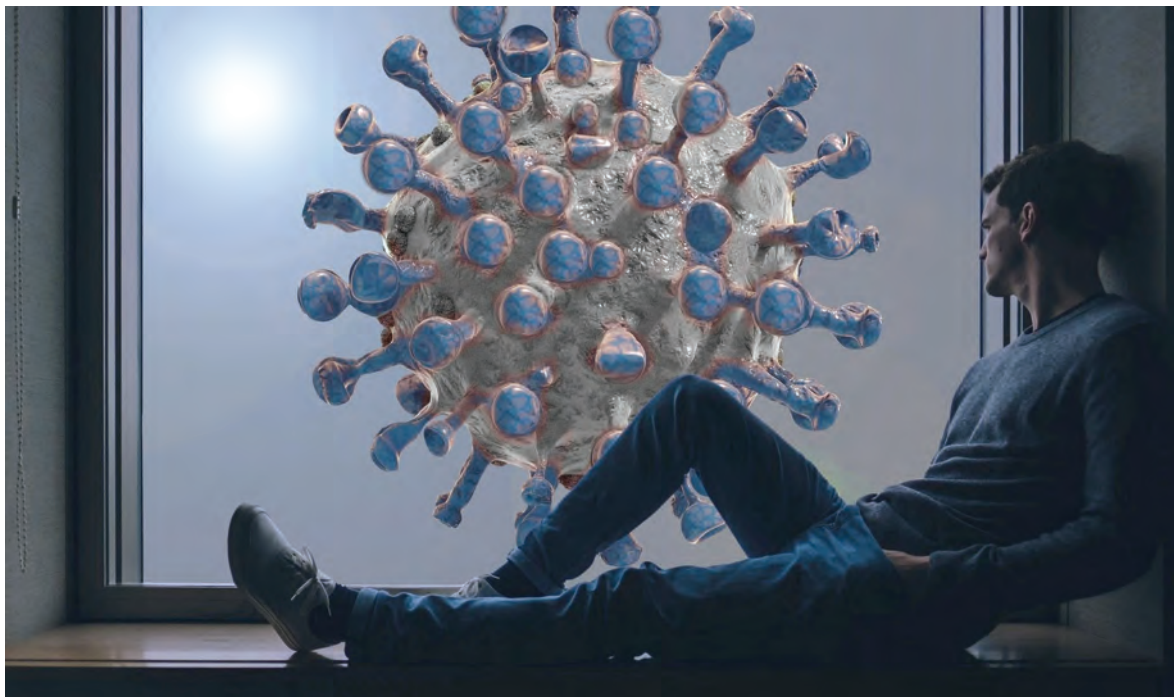
his work.

In conclusion, those in charge of matters of the Islamic call and what falls within its framework must produce translations of the meanings of the Qur’an in various languages, and work to encourage the initiatives undertaken by Muslim scholars and researchers, and support them financially and morally. This is a guarantee of the integrity of the translated Qur’an text from any distortion, as well as a closer and more meaningful communication of Qur’anic facts and meanings. It should be noted here that since the task of translating the meanings of the Noble Qur’an is one of the noble and dangerous tasks given that it relates to the words of Allah Almighty, the encouragement of collective actions and institutional initiatives and the overcoming of individual attempts should be given full attention. This was confirmed by Sheikh Aminuddin in the press interview referred to above, from which we set out to present a few ideas that were intended to emphasize the importance and feasibility of Muslim scholars, without others, to translate the meanings of the Noble Qur’an.

Coronavirus worldwide impact on individuals and societies

Prof. Mahmoud Dhaouadi

☞ *all accounts, the coronavirus pandemic is a very unusual disaster worldwide event. It has drawn health specialists to be on the frontline to reduce the death tolls and the rates of infectious patients especially in advanced societies.*





***ordinary social
interactions within and
between societies will
never be the same***



Some of these societies and others are forced more than once to have a wide-spread lockdown for weeks. The USA and the UK are leading samples. Consequently, the concern of social scientists with this crisis should be a first class issue that must be analyzed not only in quantitative prisms but also in qualitative per-

spectives. This action may be of greater humane importance for the enhancement of the state of the world on the planet earth today and tomorrow.

**Number one concern
of social sciences**

The coronavirus pandemic has struck at the very basic social parameters of human

collective existence: social interaction. The slogan 'stay home' has become the key message in most countries. That is, normal social interaction is seriously put on hold worldwide. In the absence of discovering soon a credible treatment and vaccine as the WHO and the world countries wish, ordinary social interactions within and between societies will never be the same. New future coronavirus waves are hardly excluded. Its global current presence and its potential continuity for the coming years might become part of the mainstream of people and societies' pattern of life. There are different outcomes resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. Sociologically, the alarming situation of this pandemic requires the invention of new intellectual tools, concepts, paradigms etc. to deal with and analyze the new state of social interactions within societies and between them. For instance, the sociological heritage on social interaction of Erving Goffman (1922-82) needs to be re-examined and may be modified in order to study social interactions and their subtleties within the corona contexts. Social science field research is called for to

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC'S IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT



study the current social and the psychological impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on people behaviors and the different dynamics of societies, which have experienced the corona crisis since December 2019. The magazine 'Scientific American' has focused in its issues (June and July 2020) on the social and psychological impact of the coronavirus pandemic on people. The title of one of its articles in the July issue is (The Biggest Psychological Experiment: what can the pandemic teach us and how the people respond to adversity? pp.34-41). In turn, the June issue underlined the stress to which are exposed physicians and nurses in public

and private health service hospitals and clinics. Societies must today preview the scenes of social life in the world if no radical treatment is found in the coming few months or years. To deal with the consequences of the pandemic, the findings from these studies would innovate a new kind of social sciences of different creed from the present mainstream one. Other major features of the

Corona pandemic are unfolded in its impact on social solidarity in societies. Western advanced societies are described as individualistic oriented where the new media networks have recently hardened the core of that individualism. The ethics and practice of social distancing and other anti-corona measures favoring social isolation are bound to strengthen individual-

Societies must today preview the scenes of social life in the world if no radical treatment is found

ism and loneliness not only in these societies but also in Non-Western societies as well. The worldwide damage to normal social interaction among individuals, groups, collectivities and societies is more than obvious. By their insights on the behaviors of individuals and the dynamics of large and small groups, sociology and other social sciences should seriously come to the help of individuals, groups and societies to make good social psychological accommodation to the corona reality.

Climate change and hate speech

Two related enormous problems to the coronavirus pandemic are worth outlining: climate change and hate speech. The coronavirus pandemic is explained by some analysts as the outcome of human behaviors on earth and beyond which have led to the pollution of the globe which in turn have their negative impact on the climate change and the likely emergence of new dangerous viruses as some current theories point out and they take the Chinese city of Wuhan as an example where the coronavirus has initially emerged.



Whatever the cause of the latter, the globalization of coronavirus infection represents a puzzling and a dazzling challenge that invites modern scientists to be more humble and modest in the exercise of their disciplines by wisely not to create at the outset problems which they find later difficult to solve.

As to the phenomenon of hate speech around the world, it is likely to be on the rise during and following this pandemic. Hate speech is defined as a statement, which demeans, brutalizes and excludes people and discriminates against them on the basis of their religions, colors, genders and ethnicities. Its source is usually a feeling or an attitude unfavorable or hostile toward a person, a group or

an entire society or civilization. It is expected that the coronavirus will be added to the list of items causing hate speech. Citizens from COVID-19 strongly affected countries will face more discrimination and hate speech as they travel outside their countries. As such, the industry of tourism will be hit very hard throughout the world in the coming months and years.

These are only very limited insights on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on today and tomorrow societies. The mapping out of the details of the current and future changes are beyond the reach of this article. Volumes of books and encyclopedias are indeed needed to possibly and reasonably cover this matter.

Environmentally friendly

Indonesian mosques raise citizens' awareness

Nizar Abdulbagi Ahmed

Although Indonesia has been known for a long time for its huge quantities of forest trees that grow in the swamps, most of these trees were cut down and removed in preparation for the cultivation of food crops instead. This prompted many imams and scholars to move and demand that this action should be stopped as it will lead to environmental damage and increase rates of global warming. Many worshipers

gather in mosques every Thursday after Maghrib prayer to recite the Noble Qur'an then pray for the dead. The (newsbreak) Site noted that the imam of Tanjung Makmur town, on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, recently took advantage of the gathering of worshipers to ask them not to destruct the environment, noting that burning lands is the main reason for damaging soil and losing its fertility, in addition to the damage it causes to the environment due to greenhouse gas emissions.





Speaking to worshipers, the imam pointed out the disadvantages of land-burning practices that could ignite forest fires in Indonesia. He said that this is forbidden by the Shari'ah due to the damage resulting from it, and that the toxic fog emitting from the fires raging in the Southeast Asian region is spreading and exposing the population to serious health risks that may lead to death, and also affecting animals.

Continuous efforts

To sensitize the local population about the dangers of burning agricultural lands and uprooting forest plants, the Center for Islamic Studies at the National University launched a program in cooperation with the Council of Indonesian Scholars, which attracted hundreds of scholars and imams in an educational course on the importance of caring for the environment. The program urges the scholars and imams of mosques to urge people to stop those acts.

Fakhruddin Mangungaya, an environmen-

talist at the Center for Islamic Studies at the National University, says that clerics play a crucial role in the lives of people in Indonesia. Fatwas issued by the Council of Scholars and promoted by Muslim imams and scholars may contribute to urging farmers to stop burning agricultural lands, adding that scholars and imams played a big role in persuading the villagers in Sumatra and Clementan Islands to preserve agricultural lands and plant local trees. The Council of scholars issued a fatwa stating that it is not permissible to burn lands or reaping benefits from this.

Modern mosques

A study conducted by the University of Kent, UK, several years ago, indicated that speeches and religious lessons that promote preservation of the environment contributed to raising awareness of the environment and increasing concern for it among the public. Jane MacKay, the university's senior researcher, says that religion and spiritual beliefs have the ability to influence people to



preserve the environment. She also said that introducing people to the concepts inherent in the Islamic religion, such as looking after the land and not disturbing the natural balance affects the worshipers, especially women, and urges them to take steps to preserve the environment.

The Indonesian Council of Scholars attaches great importance to environment. During the past years it issued six fatwas on environmental issues, such as water management, the protection of endangered animals, and the burning of lands. It contributed to the launch of environmental friendly mosques that are managed according to Islamic environmental ethics. These mosques include a sustainable water management system whereas their imams give speeches urging worshipers to preserve the environment with lessons drawn from Quranic verses with scientific explanations.

Increased awareness

Indonesia now has over 100 environmental friendly mosques. Fakhruddin Mangungaya says Islamic environmental ethics are spread-

ing widely, especially on the island of Java, and that the efforts of those mosques helped governments and organizations in promoting efforts to conserve the environment, such as a fatwa to protect endangered animals. The fatwa contributed to raising awareness among farmers about the importance of preserving the natural habitats of the rhinoceros and Sumatran tigers. These mosques attract large numbers of university students and intellectuals who organize cultural and educational events that call on citizens to sense the imminent danger that threatens Indonesia as a result of global warming and climate change, and the resulting floods, storms and hurricanes that claim the lives of tens of thousands of citizens.

Government support

Although religious speeches and lessons are an effective way to raise awareness of environmental problems in Indonesian society, many researchers have demanded the government to extend its help to poor farmers, who face many challenges, noting that religious lectures may not be sufficient in addressing these problems. They added that although burning of lands has been prohibited by law since 2014, farmers have not stopped this negative practice, as it is the cheapest way to restore soil fertility. Therefore, the government should provide small loans to farmers to help them reclaim their lands in a way that does not affect the environment. They pointed to the high cost of providing treatment for patients who develop diseases as a result of the spread of smog, as happened in the 2015 disaster, which killed many children and infected some people



A German Muslim leads a campaign to restore a synagogue

Alwaleed Jaafer Elias

A German politician of Palestinian origin surprised all residents of the capital, Berlin, by launching an initiative to renovate a Jewish synagogue that was destroyed by the Nazis in 1938. At the time, widespread riots were organized by anti-Semitic parties, in which the homes and property of many Jews were destroyed and looted. BBC Site said that due to the huge quantity of glass that fell from the facades of shops owned by Jews on 10 November 1938 on the ground,

that night was named (night of crystal), and the Jewish places of worship, cemeteries and homes were not spared from destruction and burning. The Washington Post reported that statistics varied about the number of deaths on that day, confirming that they were in the hundreds at least.

The “Frankel Over” synagogue in the Kreuzberg neighborhood was at the forefront of the Jewish places of worship that were attacked on that day, and the disasters suffered by the synagogue were not limited to what happened that night, as it was attacked again in



1944, and was completely removed in 1959. To assure solidarity between Muslims of Germany and its Jews, the activist in the Social Democratic Party, Raed Saleh, in cooperation with the head of the Jewish community in Berlin, Gideon Joufi, adopted a campaign to restore the synagogue again, in an initiative aimed to reduce tension. The initiative addressed the anti-Semitism and Islamophobia through uniting efforts to support tolerance and peaceful coexistence, especially as the initiative comes amid confirmation of government reports of a new wave of anti-Semitism in the schools of the capital, Berlin. The initiative also acquires special importance from the fact that the synagogue is located in the Kreuzberg district, which is known to be mostly Arab and Muslim. Saleh and Joufi launched a campaign of donations to complete the process of rebuilding the synagogue to be a place of worship and to meet the people of the neighborhood of all religions. Saleh says he wants to “send a message of reassurance to society, at a time

when mistrust is deepening greatly, due to the growing sentiments of Islamophobia and the new wave of anti-Semitism”. In turn, Joffe says, “We have long waited for such initiatives, and members of the Jewish community are increasingly concerned and reluctant to practice their rituals or demonstrate their religious identity”. He explained that the synagogue has been guarded by policemen since it was attacked by unknown persons in 2000 and 2002. The need to restore the synagogue has emerged after the number of members of the Jewish community in Berlin has increased in recent years. Berlin has 11 synagogues, more than 80 mosques, a chapel, and hundreds of Christian churches.

Press reports indicate an increase in attacks against Jewish students, as the anti-discrimination official in Berlin schools, Saraya Gomez, revealed that last year 12 anti-Semitic cases occurred. The head of the German Police Syndicate, Rainer Vent, also called for statistics on these facts to take place at the level of Germany, which was supported by

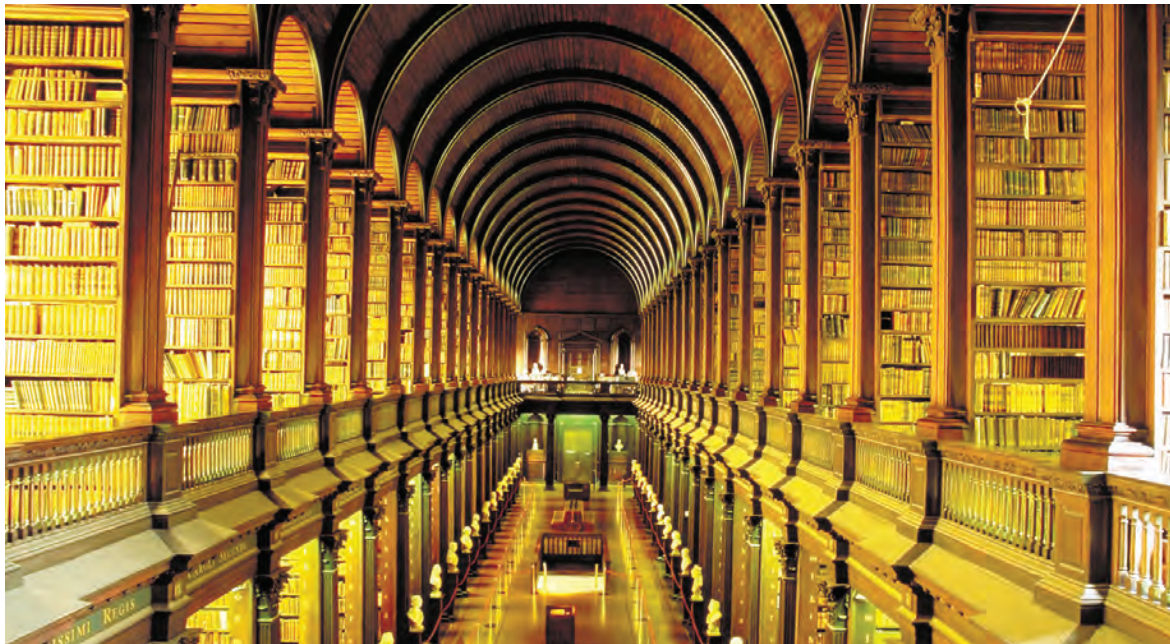


the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Speaker of the Council, Joseph Schuster, said in press statements that he hoped to create a mechanism free from bureaucratic obstacles, which was able to record violence practices in schools to provide a clear picture of the situation. "I have a feeling of increasing anti-Semitic incidents, especially in big cities." He called for mandatory reporting of any incidents related to anti-Semitism in schools.

The Central Council of Muslims in Germany proposed to send imams of mosques to schools. "We are preparing to send ten imams to the classrooms accompanied by rabbis. The imams will call for dialogue, enlightenment and mutual respect", said the speaker of the council, Ayman Mazyek, indicating that he would be happier if the Jewish associations participated in this matter, adding "Then we can start today in Berlin and then we will expand throughout Germany." Raed Saleh, who comes from a Palestinian family from the West Bank, says, "I will not

be a good Muslim if I do not defend the Jews in my city, the Christian will not be a good one if he does not intervene when someone tries to remove the veil of a woman."

The Central Council of Jews in Germany warned against apathy in the face of militancy and right-wing slogans. The council president, Joseph Schutzer, called for more seriousness in the face of racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. He added in a press statement, "There should be no hesitation in confronting the right-wing extremists and the enemies of democracy, and that there should be a red line that cannot be crossed regarding anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or racism. For the next generations, the first and second world wars are now transformed into chapters in the history book, but the crimes of the Nazis and the lessons learned strongly from them must be brought back to consciousness". He also called for more coordination between Muslims and Jews in Germany to get their rights and confront the extreme right.



Hadith Compilation and the Six Books of Hadith (Al-Kutub Al-Sittah)

By Dr. Fatima Taneem Ruknudeen

🗨️ ***The Noble Quran states – “Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the Meeting with) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much.” (Surat Al-Ahzab, Verse 21)***

Ever since the dawn of Islam, countless Muslims in different eras have been taught the Noble Qur’an and the Islamic teachings based on the practices and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which are termed as ‘Hadith’.

These Hadiths have been judiciously preserved through oral and written transmissions and are the primary source of Islamic law after the Noble Qur'an; aiding in the interpretation of many Quranic verses.

As the teachings of the Noble Qur'an were illustrated by the Prophet's lifestyle, his companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) eagerly tried to emulate the Prophet (peace be upon him) and lived their lives according to his teachings. They preserved the Prophet's life through oral transmissions and practical examples, faithfully passing on their Islamic knowledge to their followers (Tabi'een) who in turn passed it to their successors (Tabii al Tabi'een) who transmitted it to the world. These early Islamic scholars of the first, second and third Hijri centuries dedicated their lives to the collection, preservation and dissemination of the Islamic knowledge along with Hadiths among the masses. They compiled many Islamic books, with 14 famous Hadith compilations. Of them, the Six Books on Hadith 'Al-Kutub Al-Sittah' written in the 3rd Hijri century (9th century CE) became popular among the mainstream Muslims and are considered as authoritative references on Hadiths and as part of the official canon of Sunni Islam. However, the other books of Hadiths are also significantly important, with some even greater in terms of authenticity as compared to a few of these books.

The following article delineates the term 'Hadith' and traces its compilation and adds a note on the Six Books of Hadith.

The Arabic word 'Hadith' literally means 'statement.' However, in Islamic terminology it denotes 'reports of words and deeds, approval and disapproval of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).' 'Hadith' is also applied to the Books containing these reports. Although the term 'Sunnah' is used

synonymously with the word 'Hadith', the former is usually used when reporting the deeds of the Prophet while the latter is used when reporting his statements.

Hadith is mainly composed of two parts which are as follows –

- Isnad: It is the chain of Narrators through which the Hadith is transmitted which precedes and introduces the 'matn.'
- Matn: It is the actual Text of the Hadith.

History of Hadith Compilation

The first four centuries of the Hijri calendar were considered as the golden age of the Science of Hadith. During these centuries, the Hadith went through various stages in the process of its compilation. These stages are as follows –

- First stage relates to the Era of the Prophet till 10 AH.
- Second stage relates to the Era of the Prophet's companions. (1st century AH)
- Third stage is the Era of the followers of Prophet's companions (Tabi'een). (2nd century AH)
- Fourth stage is the Era of the followers of the followers (Tabi'at-Tabi'een) (3rd century AH)

Era of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

During the Prophet's lifetime, his companions were directly learning from him. They had wonderful memory and could immaculately retain whatever the Prophet said or did. However, a few of them collected Hadiths for their personal use. For instance, the Scrolls of Anas bin Malik, Abu Huraira, Jabir bin Abdullah and the 'Sahifa Sadiqa' of Abdulla bin 'Amr bin al-'As (May Allah be pleased with them all).

In addition, many of the Prophet's companions wrote his teachings and instructions on

official letters, peace treaties, etc which were later incorporated into larger collections of Hadith.

Era of the Prophet's Companions (Sahabas)

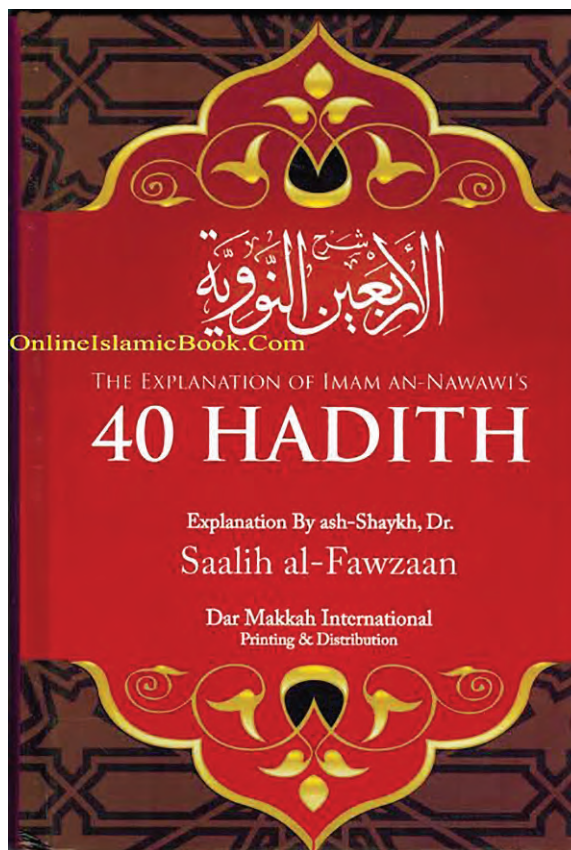
After the Prophet's demise, his companions became the source of learning for the Muslims with three main learning centers flourishing within the Islamic Empire, namely in Makkah, Madinah and Kufa whose chief teachers were Abdullah bin Abbas, Abdullah bin Umar and Abdullah bin Masood respectively. Many students of Islam flocked to these centers to learn directly from the Prophet's companions and these scholars were called Tabi'een.

Era of the Followers of Prophet's Companions (Tabi'een)

The Tabi'een scholars put great efforts in the collection and preservation of Hadiths both by oral and written transmissions. As this era witnessed the spread of fabricated Hadiths, Caliph Omar bin Abdulazeez in 100AH commanded the Islamic scholars to compile Hadiths in writing. Amongst them was Muhammad bin Shihab Al-Zuhri (died 124AH). This era witnessed the collection of Hadith with many Tabi'een scholars having written Hadiths reported by the Prophet's companions. For instance, the Scroll of Said bin Jubayr, Scroll of Basheer bin Nuhayk and the Scroll of Al-Zubair bin Muslim. However, these works were more of personal nature written as aids to memory or instructions to specific students from their authors.

Era of the Followers of the Followers (Tabi'at-Tabi'een)

The generation of Muslim scholars that learnt directly from the Tabi'een are the Tabi'at-Tabi'een who played a key role in the trans-



mission of Hadiths to the masses and in the identification and labeling of fabricated Hadiths. During this era, Hadith was systematically collected in various learning centers and written in a more organized forms with Compilations including the sayings of the Prophet's companions as well as decisions or fatwas of the Tabi'een. In addition, these scholars developed the critical Hadith discipline 'Asma al Rijal' to document the biographies and personality traits of individual narrators in the chain of Hadiths. The earliest works were compiled by eminent Hadith scholars including Imam Malik, Abdullah bin Mubarak and Sufyan al-Thawry among many others. Later on, Imam Shafi'i and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal also compiled great Hadith

works along the Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh). Still later, the students of Tabi'at-Tabi'een greatly advanced the Hadith literature by compiling more comprehensive Hadith books covering varied subjects. These third century Hijri scholars established solid foundation for sifting authentic Hadiths from weak and false ones and undertook critical research on the Hadiths narrated and compiled in the first two centuries. Some scholars regard this stage of later generation of scholars as the Era of 'Sahih'. The famous 'Kutub Al-Sittah' were also compiled during this period; although they were given this title in later centuries.

Al-Kutub Al-Sittah

The term denotes the six collections of Hadith compiled approximately 200 years after the demise of Prophet (peace be upon him) in the 3rd century AH. (9th century CE). This term was first formally grouped and defined in the 5th century AH (9th century CE) by Ibn-Al-Qaisarani. (died 507 AH/1113 CE) who also added Sunan Ibn Majah to the list of original five.

Since then, these six Hadith books have been widely acclaimed and revered by almost all Islamic Scholars in subsequent centuries; giving them their unique status in Hadith literature. Thus, Al-Kutub Al-Sittah form the fundamental sources of Islamic laws and customs after the Noble Quran.

Al-Kutub Al-Sittah with their compilers are as follows:-

1. Sahih Al-Bukhari (Al-Jami' al-Sahih) by Imam Muhammad bin Ismail Al-Bukhari. (died 256 AH/870 CE)
2. Sahih Muslim (Al-Jami' al-Sahih) by Imam Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj. (died 261 AH/875 CE)
3. Sunan Abu Dawood by Imam Abu Dawood Sulaiman bin As h'ath. (died 275 AH/888 CE)

4. Jami' At-Tirmidhi (Sunan at-Tirmidhi) by Imam Abu 'Isa Muhammad At-Tirmidhi. (died 279 AH/892 CE)

5. Sunan An-Nasa'i (Al-Sunan al-Sughra) by Imam Ahmad bin Shu'ayb An-Nasa'i. (died 303 AH/915 CE)

6. Sunan Ibn Majah by Imam Muhammad bin Yazid ibn Majah. (died 273 AH/887 CE)

Some Muslim scholars prefer Imam Malik's 'Al-Muwatta' or Imam Al-Darimi's 'Sunan Ad-Darimi' instead of Sunan Ibn Majah as the sixth book.

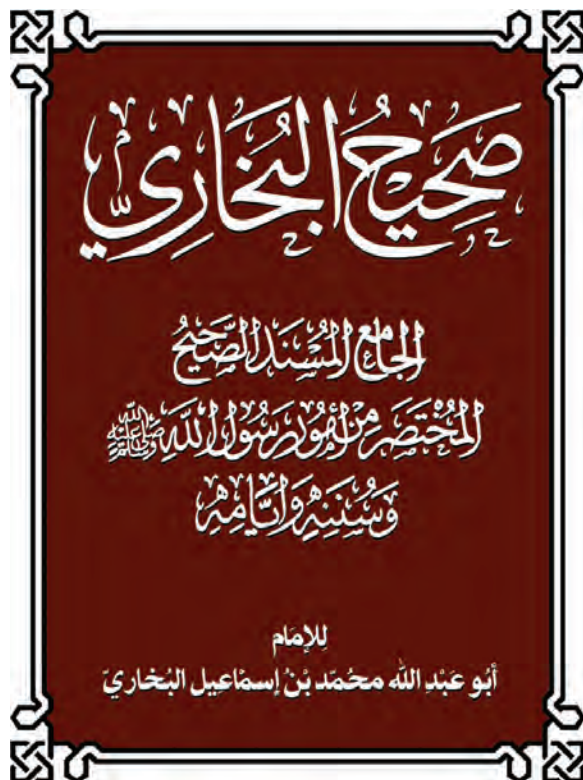
The first two books have been appended the term 'Sahih' meaning 'accredited' and are almost universally considered to be the most authentic after the Noble Quran by the Muslim scholars. The remaining four books are appended the term 'Sunan' as these contain Hadiths related to and arranged according to religious regulations.

These books have made immense contributions to the study of Hadith and elucidated the sources of Hadiths for the successive generation of Islamic Scholars who are highly indebted to the illustrious compilers. They have been translated into several languages for their dissemination among varied Muslim population.

These Kutub Al-Sittah are briefly outlined as follows:

Sahih Al Bukhari

- Considered to be the best and most authentic book of the Muslims after the Noble Qur'an.
- Compiled by Imam Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin Al-Mughirah bin Bardizbah Al-Jufri Al-Bukhari over a period of 16 years and completed in 232 AH (846 CE) although he made minor revisions to it over the next 24 years till his death.
- Originally titled Al-Jami' Al-Sahih al-Musnad al-Mukhtasar min Umur Rasool Allah



wa Sunanihi wa Ayyamihi’, meaning ‘The Abridged Collection of Authentic Hadiths with Connected Chains regarding Matters pertaining to the Prophet, His Practices and His Times’.

- The book contains about 7500 authentic Hadiths (with repetitions) which were selected from 600000 Hadiths by Imam Al-Bukhari based on stringent acceptance criteria.
- Although Imam Al-Bukhari had memorized 100,000 authentic Hadiths yet only a few were selected in his book for the sake of brevity.
- Several versions of the book are available; with minor variations, all of which have been narrated by individual narrators. Of them, Imam Muhammad bin Yusuf Al-Firabri (died 320 AH/932 CE) is the most well-known transmitter of Sahih Al-Bukhari.
- The Book is divided into 97 books, each

with numerous chapters within it. Each chapter is titled with a ruling on a particular issue within Islamic law (fiqh) and contains authentic Hadiths supporting that ruling.

- The Book’s first English translation was done by Muhammad Mohsin Khan. Recently in October 2019, the Arabic virtual Translation Centre in New York translated and published the Complete English translation of it with full chain transmission (sanad) and commentary under the title ‘Encyclopedia of Sahih Al-Bukhari’.

Sahih Muslim

- Recognized as one of the most authentic Hadith collections after Sahih Al-Bukhari by the overwhelming majority of the Muslim world.
- Compiled by Imam Abul Husain Asakiruddin Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj bin Muslim bin Ward Al-Qushayri Al-Naisapuri over a period of 15 years and completed in 250 AH.(865 CE).
- The book is highly acclaimed for its superior and scientific arrangement of its themes and chapters.
- Imam Muslim collected about 300,000 Hadiths and selected approximately 4000 Authentic Hadiths for his book based on stringent acceptance criteria.
- The book contains 7190 Authentic Hadiths (with repetitions) and is divided into 43 books on varied subjects containing several Hadiths within.
- The book is prefixed by an Introduction (Muqadama) specifying important aspects regarding transmission and preservation of Hadith.

Al-Sahihayn

The above two books Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim are collectively known as ‘Al-

Sahihayn'. Each Hadith within them had been checked for compatibility for Noble Qur'an and the veracity of the chain narrators had been painstakingly established by the noble compilers. Thus a critical and strict standard of authenticity had been established to render a Hadith authentic or 'Sahih'. However, it is important to realize that these two works are not complete, and that there are many Muslim scholars who collected other authentic Hadiths based on their standard criteria.

Sunan Abu Dawood

- One of the acclaimed authentic Hadith collections recognized by Muslim scholars.
 - Compiled by Imam Abu Dawood Sulaiman bin Al-Ash'ath bin Ishaq Al-Azdi Al-Sijistani in 241 AH (885 CE).
 - Imam Abu Dawood selected from 500,000, only 4,800 Hadiths in his book based on their superior authenticity.
 - The book contains Hadiths which are used as evidence for points of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh).
 - It consists of 5274 Hadiths in 43 books; not all of which are authentic.
- Jami' At-Tirmidhi
- One of the esteemed Hadith collection of the Islamic world known for its reader-friendly form.
 - Compiled by Imam Abu 'Isa Muhammad bin 'Isa bin Sawrah bin Musa bin Al-Dhahak Al-Sulami Al-Bughi Al-Tirmidhi.
 - It consists of Hadiths both on legal traditions as well as varied subjects including theology, history, etc.
 - The book covers major proofs of the different schools of thought (Madhahib) and has reference importance in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh).
 - The book roughly contains 4,400 Hadiths

(with repetitions) all of which are classified as authentic, weak, etc based on Imam Al-Tirmidhi's standard criteria.

Sunan An-Nasai

- An acclaimed Hadith collection taught in major Islamic institutions around the world.
- Compiled by Imam Abu Abdurrahman Ahmed bin Shu'ayb bin Ali bin Sinan An-Nasa'i.
- It is titled 'As-Sunan As-Sughra' as it is a synopsis of a larger collection 'Al-Sunan Al-Khubra'
- It contains roughly about 5700 Hadiths (with repetitions) in 52 books, majority of which are authentic.
- The book is assembled along the patterns of Imam Al-Bukhari's and Imam Muslims books.

Sunan Ibn Majah

- A prominent Hadith collection of the Islamic world.
- Compiled by Imam Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Yazid bin Al-Rabi bin Wala Al-Qazwini; commonly called ibn Majah.
- The book contains over 4,000 Hadiths in 37 books.
- Although it has many weak Hadiths, it also contains additional 1000 odd Hadiths that are not found in the other five books.

In conclusion, the dedicated and remarkable contributions of the early Muslim scholars resulted in immense development in the field of Hadith sciences. The Muslim world is greatly indebted to all these distinguished Hadith scholars whose books including the 'Al-Kutub Al-Sittah' have made it possible for the Muslims of all generations to live their lives according to the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad.

Regular fast food eating linked to fertility

London- BBC

Women who regularly eat fast food and not enough fruit are more likely to struggle to conceive, a study suggests. A survey of 5,598 women found those who ate fast food four or more times a week took nearly a month longer to get pregnant than those who never or rarely ate it.

Regular junk food eaters were also less likely to conceive within a year. Experts said this suggested a good diet boosted the chances of conceiving. However, there were some limitations to the study, including that it relied on women having to remember what they had eaten before pregnancy.

Women in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and Ireland were quizzed about what they had eaten in the month before they became pregnant with their first child.

Midwives visited the women when they were about 14-16 weeks pregnant and asked them how often they ate fruit, green leafy vegetables and fish, as well as foods, such as burgers, pizza, fried chicken and chips, from fast food outlets.

Researchers found the women who had eaten fruit less than one to three times a month took on average half a month longer to become pregnant than those who had eaten it three or more times a day.



They also calculate that the women with the lowest intake of fruit had a 12% risk of having been unable to conceive within a year, while this was 16% for those who had eaten fast food four or more times a week.

This compared with a risk of 8% in the group as a whole. Couples were excluded from the analysis if the male partner was receiving fertility treatment.

Prof. Claire Roberts, from the University of Adelaide, Australia, who led the study, said: "These findings show that eating a good quality diet that includes fruit and minimizing fast food consumption improves fertility and reduces the time it takes to get pregnant."

Al-Saqqaf Palace - Makkah

