

## **INTRODUCING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN INTER-FAITH DIALOG**

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The concept of Human Rights is as old as religion itself. Human rights may be generally defined as those rights which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings. Human rights and fundamental freedoms allow us to develop fully and use our human qualities, our intelligence, our talents and our conscience and to satisfy our spiritual and other needs. They are based on humankind's increasing demand for a life in which the inherent dignity and worth of each human being are accorded respect and protection. Their denial is not only an individual and personal tragedy but also creates conditions of social and political unrest, sowing the seeds of violence and conflict within and between societies and nations.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, sometimes religious leadership is also involved in the abuse of Human Rights in the name of God or Salvation. Conversion seems to be the only purpose in world religions especially in Christian missions and Islamic D' awah. The right to be loved and respected seems to depend upon the acceptance of certain religious believes. Being created by God sometimes is not enough to be considered as human being unless one is labeled as Christian, Jew or Muslim.

Therefore, we need to review our traditional interpretations of the Holy Texts and our missionary attitudes towards each others to join hands in promoting Human Rights education to improve the quality of humankind.

### **CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM DIALOGUE: WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DISCUSSING?**

If we critically analyze the history of Christian-Muslim dialogue, especially the last two hundred years of the Islamic and Western societies, we will see that the Christian-Muslim Dialogue has been mainly focused on these following-theological issues:

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Islamabad Club, Pakistan

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5. Holy Quraan Soray Maeda (5:44).
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8. S. K. Kuthiala, Chapter XII, Religious Values, Conflict and Economic Development: Toward Civility, Peace and Democracy, University of North Florida 29 Jan (2006).
9. The Encyclopedia Brittanica says that "*Muhammad is the most successful of all Prophets and religious personalities*".

CHARLES MILLS

As the chief of the family of Hashem and as the cousin and son-in-law of him whom the Arabians respected .... it is apparently wonderful that Ali was not raised to the Caliphate immediately on the death of Muhammad. To the advantages of his birth and marriage was added the friendship of the Prophet. The son of Abu Talib was one of the first converts to Islamism and Mohammad's

favourite appellation of his was the Aaron of a second Moses. His talents as an orator, and his intrepidity as a warrior, were grateful to a nation in whose judgement courage was virtue and eloquence was wisdom." An history of Mohammedanism p. 89

UNITED NATIONS

Nahj al-Balagha contains a long letter (letter 53) given to Malik ibn Ashter when he departed to succeed Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, in which Ali gave thorough instructions on how to establish and uphold a government. The United Nations urged the Arab nations to use that letter as a model. <sup>ref</sup>

ECONOMICALLY FREEDOM IN PAKISTAN:

The Government of Pakistan provides same facilities and supported to Muslims and Non-Muslims investors throughout the world. There are many huge name's companies successfully, profitable business running in Pakistan e.i.

- \* Cook and Pepsi from United State of America
- \* Kandekey Fridge Chicken from United State of America.
- \* MacDonnell from United State of America.
- \* Telinor Communication from Ireland.
- \* Pizza Hut from Italy.
- \* A series of P&G from United State of America.

Muhammad the Prophet, there is Muhammad the General; Muhammad the King; Muhammad the Warrior; Muhammad the Businessman; Muhammad the Preacher; Muhammad the Philosopher; Muhammad the Statesman; Muhammad the Orator; Muhammad the reformer; Muhammad the Refuge of orphans; Muhammad the Protector of slaves; Mohammad the Emancipator of women; Muhammad the Law-giver; Muhammad the Judge; Muhammad the Saint.<sup>8</sup>

### NON-MUSLIM'S POSITIVE VIEWS ABOUT THE HOLY PROPHET (PEACE BE UPON HIM):

#### PHILIP KHURI HITTI

Valiant in battle, wise in counsel, eloquent in speech, true to his friends, magnanimous to his foes, he became both the paragon of Muslim nobility and chivalry (futuwah) and the Solomon of Arabic tradition, around whose name poems, proverbs, sermonettes and anecdotes innumerable have clustered."

#### WILFERD MADELUNG

"In face of the fake Umayyad claim to legitimate sovereignty in Islam as God's Vicegerents on earth, and in view of Umayyad treachery, arbitrary and divisive government, and vindictive retribution, they came to appreciate his honesty, his unbending devotion to the reign of Islam, his deep personal loyalties, his equal treatment of all his supporters, and his generosity in forgiving his defeated enemies." *The Succession to Muhammad pp. 309-310*

#### THOMAS CARLYLE

"noble-minded...full of affection and fiery daring. Something chivalrous in him; brave as a lion; yet with a grace, a truth and affection worthy of Christian knighthood" *May 8, 1840*

beliefs in society. It also includes the rights of groups to worship God as they wish in community, to run schools, hospitals and other institutions, to publish and possess sacred literature, and order their internal affairs.<sup>6</sup>

The provision specifically says that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance. The right to education in schools and universities, the right to have a job, the right to work in government agencies and many other rights have the same fate for those excluded in the constitution."<sup>6</sup>

#### IMPORTANT NOTE:

Religious and political writing are full of such examples. In Hinduism, the Brahminic conception of an ordered hierarchy, managed by a learned elite, was espoused. Confucius had a notion of a responsible aristocracy. Greeks had the idea of a direct democracy based in city-states. Roman conception of enlightenment and the idea of representative government is characteristic of modern European thought. The Christian concept of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth resulted in Inquisitions. The Islamic concept of Allah, the Merciful, led to Holy Wars and chaos. The Communist concept of dictatorship by the proletariat brought repression. There are more extreme forms of tyranny and anarchy, found both in the Orient and the Occident.

But the success was not the result of mere accident. It was not a hit of fortune. It was a recognition of fact that he was found to be true metal by his contemporaries. It was the result of his admirable and all compelling personality.

The personality of Muhammad! It is most difficult to get into the truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes. There is

Our obedient prophets and men of learning and jurists for it was desired from them to preserve the Book of Allah and they were witnesses to it, then fear not people, but fear Me and do not accept mean price for Our Signs. And whoso judges not according to what Allah has sent down, they are the persons who are infidels."(5:44)<sup>5</sup>

### **ABOUT THE CENTER FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM:**

The Center for Religious Freedom is a self-sustaining division of Freedom House. Founded in 1941 by Eleanor Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie<sup>6</sup> to oppose Nazism and Communism in Europe, Freedom House is America's oldest human rights group. Its Center for Religious Freedom defends against religious persecution of all groups throughout the world. It insists that U.S. foreign policy defend Christians and Jews. Muslim dissidents and minorities, and other religious minorities in countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Iran and Sudan. It is fighting the imposition of harsh Islamic law in the new Iraq and Afghanistan and opposes blasphemy laws in Muslim countries that suppress more tolerant and pro-American Muslim thought.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM:**

Religious freedom is pivotal to a free society. Thomas Jefferson called it the "first freedom." And it is first in another sense: freedom of thought, conscience and religion is the prerequisite for the exercise of all other basic human rights. In theory and practice, free expression, freedom of press and freedom of association depend on the prior guarantee of a free conscience.<sup>6</sup>

### **RELIGIOUS FREEDOM HAS TWO DIMENSIONS:**

Religious freedom has two dimensions. It belongs to individuals and also to religious groups. It includes a person's right to walk down the street wearing a cross, a yarmulke or a headscarf, or not to do so, and to express and live out one's

fed, the naked clothed and the wounded or diseased treated medically irrespective of whether they belong to the Islamic community or are from among its enemies.

When we speak of human rights in Islam we really mean that these rights have been granted by God; they have not been granted by any king or by any legislative assembly. The rights granted by the kings or the legislative assemblies, can also be withdrawn in the same manner in which they are conferred. The same is the case with the rights accepted and recognized by the dictators. They can confer them when they please and withdraw them when they wish; and they can openly violate them when they like. But since in Islam human rights have been conferred by God, no legislative assembly in the world or any government on earth has the right or authority to make any amendment or change in the rights conferred by God. No one has the right to abrogate them or withdraw them. Nor are they basic human rights which are conferred on paper for the sake of show and exhibition and denied in actual life when the show is over. Nor are they like philosophical concepts which have no sanctions behind them.

The charter and the proclamations and the resolutions of the United Nations cannot be compared with the rights sanctioned by God; because the former are not applicable on anybody while the latter are applicable on every believer. They are a part and parcel of the Islamic Faith. Every Muslim or administrator who claims himself to be Muslim, will have to accept, recognize and enforce them. If they fail to enforce them, and start denying the rights that have been guaranteed by God or make amendments and changes in them, or practically violate them while paying lip service to them, the verdict of the Holy Quran for such government is clear and unequivocal:

Undoubtedly, We have sent down Taurah, wherein is the guidance and light. According to it the Jews were ordered by

- i) "Do not let your hatred of a people incite you to aggression." (The Quran 5:2).<sup>2</sup>
- ii) "And do not let ill-will towards any folk incite you so that you swerve from dealing justly. Be just: that is nearest to heedfulness" (The Quran 5:8).<sup>3</sup>

Muslims are asked to be truthful, trustworthy, humble, kind and generous. They are asked to repel evil with goodness, control their anger, and be forgiving. Some of the sayings of the Prophet are:

- a) "To remove something harmful from the road is charity."
- b) "Charity erases sins just as water extinguishes fire."
- c) "He is not a perfect believer, who goes to bed full and knows that his neighbor is hungry."
- d) "Show mercy to people on earth so that Allâh will have mercy on you in heaven."

#### HUMAN BLOOD IS SACRED:

Human blood is sacred in any case and cannot be spilled without justification. And if anyone violates this sanctity of human blood by killing a soul without justification, the Holy Quran equates it to the killing of entire mankind. *Whosoever killed a soul not to retaliate for a soul, nor for creating disorder in the land, then it is as if he had killed all mankind. And whoso gave life to one soul, then it is as if he had given life to all mankind." (5:32)<sup>4</sup>*

It is not permissible to oppress women, children, old people, the sick or the wounded. Women's honor and chastity are to be respected under all circumstances. The hungry person must be



## **THE NON-MUSLIM'S RELIGIOUS AND ECONOMY FREEDOM IN PAKISTAN**

**Prof. Abdul Hafeez**

### **HUMAN RIGHT**

While Islam presents itself as the only way of life for people to achieve salvation in the after-life, it also teaches its followers to live up to high standards in conduct with other human beings, regardless of their religion, ethnicity, race, language or culture. The Holy Quran is highly critical of Christian beliefs in Trinity and regarding Jesus (peace be upon him) as a deity. The Holy Book is also very critical of the Jews for not accepting Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them) as messengers of God. At the same time, however, it asks Muslims to establish a social association special only to Christians and Jews. Examples of such association are permission of marrying chaste women among them and giving explicit permission to eat their food.

The verses in the Holy Quran forbid Muslims to insult anything that is viewed as a deity by any religion, regardless of whether it is a person, a stone, a stick or a tree. The verse 2:256 of the Quran says.<sup>1</sup>

Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah hears and knows all things.

Islam wants its adherents to be just for every human being.

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women; however, non-Muslims still are barred from voting for Muslim candidates who run for general seats.<sup>15</sup>

### CHRISTIANS CELEBRATED EASTER:

Christian communities in the many cities celebrated Easter with great religious favour and enthusiasm on Sunday April 17, 2006. Easter is the culmination of the 40-day Lent, which is a time of fasting, giving alms and repenting.

### SIKHS RELIGIOUS CEREMONY:

#### THE GURUDWARA NUNKANA SAHIB IN HASSAN ABDAL:

Every year thousands of Sikhs come from India calibrate their religious practices Nunkana Sahib, Hassan Abdal in the month of April. They do freely all their religious activities. The Pakistan Government provides lot of facilities and the people are love and support to them.

#### Historical Gurudwaras in Pakistan:

There are few Gurudwaras Name:<sup>16</sup>

- i) Gurudwara Nunkana Sahib
- ii) Gurudwara Chhevin Patshahi, Gujrat City
- iii) Gurudwara Janam Asthan
- iv) Gurudwara Guyru Kotha, Wazirabad
- v) Gurudwara Malji Sahib
- vi) Gurudwara Chhevin Pashahi, Rasul Nagar
- vii) Gurudwara Kiara Sahib
- viii) Gurudwara Chhevin Pastshahi, Hafizabad City
- ix) Gurudwara Bal Lilah
- x) Gurudwara Iccha Parak, Vinni, Hafizabad
- xi) Gurudwara Pattit Sahib

the population with 2.44 million adherents. Their leaders claim an actual membership of around 4 million. Most Hindus live in Sindh, where they comprise approximately 8 percent of the population. Parsis, Sikhs, and Buddhists each have approximately 20,000 adherents, while the Baha'i claim 30,000. The tiny but influential Parsi community is concentrated in Karachi. Some tribes in Balochistan and NWFP practice traditional animist religions.<sup>14</sup>

They are absolute freedom in Pakistan. No any restriction religious practices in their temples, Church and Godwaras. Synagogues etc.

Christian scriptures and books are available in Karachi and in traveling bookmobiles. Hindu and Parsi scriptures are freely available. Foreign books and magazines may be imported freely, but are subject to censorship for objectionable religious content.

The Government distinguishes between Muslims and non-Muslims with regard to political rights. In national and local elections, Muslims cast their votes for Muslim candidates for a specific geographic locality, while non-Muslims may cast their votes only for at-large non-Muslim candidates. Government officials state that the separate electorates system is a form of affirmative action designed to ensure adequate minority representation, and that efforts are underway to achieve a consensus among religious minorities on this issue.

Many Christian activists state that the separate electorates are the greatest obstacle to the attainment of Christian religious and civil liberties.

On June 28, 2001, the Supreme Court ruled that non-Muslims may vote for any candidate at the Union Council level for seats reserved for mayor, deputy mayor, laborers, farmers, and

- 5) Zimmis are not permitted to broadcast or display their ceremonial religious rituals on radio or television or to use the media or to publish any picture of their religious ceremonies in newspaper and magazines.
- 6) Zimmis are not allowed to congregate in the streets during their religious festivals; rather, each must quietly make his way to his church or temple.
- 7) Zimmis are not allowed to join the army unless there is indispensable need for them in which case they are not allowed to assume leadership positions but are considered mercenaries.

### FREEDOM OF NON MUSLIM IN PAKISTAN: RELIGIOUS DEMOGRAPHY IN PAKISTAN:

The country has an area of 310,527 square miles, and its population is approximately 154 million. Official figures on religious demography-based on the most recent census, taken in 1998-deem approximately 96 percent of the population or 148.8 million people to be Muslim, 2.02 percent or 2.44 million people to be Hindu, 1.69 percent or 2.09 million to be Christian, and 0.35 percent or 539,000 to be "other," including Ahmadi.

Non-Muslims are officially 4 percent of the population, although their leaders claim the actual figure is approximately 10 percent. Christians, officially 1.69 percent of the population or 2.09 million, claim actually to have 4 million members, 90 percent of whom live in Punjab. The largest Christian denomination is the umbrella Protestant Church of Pakistan, a member of the Anglican Communion. Catholics are the second-largest group, and the remainder belong to various evangelical denominations. The Roman Catholic diocese of Karachi estimates that 120,000 Catholics live in Karachi, 40,000 in the rest of Sindh, and 5,000 in Quetta, Balochistan. A few tribal Hindus of the lower castes from interior Sindh have converted to Christianity. Hindus are officially 2.02 percent of

Islam is the only true religion, they claim. Therefore, to protect Muslims from corruption, especially against the unforgivable sin of *shirk* (polytheism), its practice is forbidden among Muslims, because it is considered the greatest abomination. When Christians practice it publicly, it becomes an enticement and exhortation to apostasy. It is significant here to notice that according to Muraghi, *Zimmis* and infidels are polytheists and therefore, must have the same treatment.

According to Muslim jurists, the following legal ordinances must be enforced on *Zimmis* (Christians and Jews alike) who reside among Muslims.<sup>4</sup>

- 1) *Zimmis* are not allowed to build new churches, temples, or synagogues. They are allowed to renovate old churches or houses of worship provided they do not allow to add any new construction. "Old churches" are those which existed prior to Islamic conquests and are included in a peace accord by Muslims. Construction of any church, temple, or synagogue in the Arab Peninsula (Saudi Arabia) is prohibited. It is the land of the Prophet and only Islam should prevail there. Yet, Muslims, if they wish, are permitted to demolish all non-Muslim houses of worship in any land they conquer.
- 2) *Zimmis* are not allowed to pray or read their sacred books out loud at home or in churches, lest Muslims hear their prayers.
- 3) *Zimmis* are not allowed to print their religious books or sell them in public places and markets. They are allowed to publish and sell them among their own people, in their churches and temples
- 4) *Zimmis* are not allowed to install the cross on their houses or churches since it is a symbol of infidelity.
- 5) *Zimmis* are not permitted to broadcast or display their ceremonial religious rituals on radio or television or to use the media or to publish any picture of their religious ceremonies in newspaper and magazine.

*daughter of Muhammad, had committed this crime, I would have amputated her hand."*

### THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE AFFAIRS OF STATE:

It states in the Holy Quran.

*"And those who obeyed the command of their Lord and established prayer and their affairs are decided by mutual consultation and they spend something out of Our provision in Our way." (42:38)*<sup>13</sup>

The "Shura" or the legislative assembly has no other meaning except that the executive head of the government and the members of the assembly should be elected by free and independent choice of the people. Lastly, it is to be made clear that Islam tries to achieve the above mentioned human rights and many others not only by providing certain legal safeguards but mainly by inviting mankind to transcend the lower level of animal life to be able to go beyond the mere ties fostered by the kinship of blood, racial superiority, linguistic arrogance, and economic privileges. It invites mankind to move on to a plane of existence where, by reason of his inner excellence, man can realize the ideal of the brotherhood of man. The faults of the article above are entirely my own. All correct information gathered and written in the article above are entirely attributed to Allah. For He, in His Mercy and Kindness, shows these slave of His, the Right Path. A thousands blessings and Salams go to our hero, Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon HIM).

### NON-MUSLIMS OR ZIMMIS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES:

Muslims believe that the *Zimmis* are *Mushrikun* (polytheists) for they see the belief in the Trinity as belief in three gods.



**PROTECTION FROM ARBITRARY IMPRISONMENT:**

Islam also recognizes the right of the individual not to be arrested or imprisoned for the offenses of others. The Holy Quran has laid down this principle clearly:

*"And no soul bearer of burden will bear the burden of another. And if any one heavily loaded calls any other to share its load, not anyone will bear anything from its burden, even though he may be a near relation." (35:18)<sup>11</sup>*

**THE RIGHT TO BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE:**

Islam has recognized the right of the needy people for help and assistance to be provided to them. In the Holy Quran it states:

*"And in their wealth there was the right of the beggars and the unfortunate." (51:19)<sup>12</sup>*

**EQUALITY BEFORE LAW:**

Islam gives its citizens the right to absolute and complete equality in the eyes of the law.

**RULERS NOT ABOVE THE LAW:**

A woman belonging to a high and noble family was arrested in connection with theft. The case was brought to the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon HIM). And it was recommended that she might be spared the punishment of theft. The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon HIM) replied.<sup>Ref.....</sup>

*"The nations that lived before you were destroyed by Allah because they punished the common man for their offenses and let their dignitaries go unpunished for their crimes; I swear by Him Who holds my life in His hand that even if Fatima, the*

matter a divine injunction had been revealed to him. If he said that he had received no divine injunction, the Muslims freely expressed their opinion on the matter.

### FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION:

Islam has also given people the right to freedom of association and formation of parties or organizations. This right is also subject to certain general rules.

### FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE AND CONVICTION:

Islam has laid down the injunction in the Holy Quran.

*"There is no compulsion in religion; no doubt the virtuous path has become clearly distinct from the erring; then whoso does not accept devil and believes in Allah, he grasped a very firm knot which is never to open and Allah Hears and Knows." (2:256)<sup>10</sup>*

On the contrary, totalitarian societies totally deprive the individuals of their freedom. Indeed, this undue exaltation of the state authority curiously enough postulates a sort of servitude, of slavishness on the part of man. At one time slavery meant total control of man over man - now that type of slavery has been legally abolished but in its place totalitarian societies impose a similar sort of control over individuals.

### PROTECTION OF RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS:

Along with the freedom of conviction and freedom of conscience, Islam has given the right to the individual that his religious sentiments will be given due respect and nothing will be said or done which may encroach upon his right.

without providing him a reasonable opportunity to produce his defense is not permissible in Islam.

### THE RIGHT TO PROTEST AGAINST TYRANNY:

Among the rights that Islam has conferred on human beings is the right to protest against government's tyranny. Referring to it the Holy Quran says:

*"Allah likes not the utterance of evil words except one who is being oppressed. And Allah is Hearing, Knowing." (4:148)<sup>8</sup>*

In Islam, as has been argued earlier, all power and authority belong to Allah, and with man there is only delegated power which becomes a trust; everyone who becomes a recipient of such a power has to stand in awful reverence before his people toward whom and for whose sake he will be called upon to use these powers. This was acknowledged by Hazrat Abu Bakr (R.A.) who said in his very first address.<sup>9</sup>

*"Cooperate with me when I am right but correct me when I commit error; obey me so long as I follow the commandments of Allah and His Prophet (S.A.W.); but turn away from me when I deviate."*

### FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION:

Islam gives the right of freedom of thought and expression to all citizens of the Islamic state on the condition that it should be used for the propagation of virtue and truth and not for spreading evil and wickedness. The Islamic concept of freedom of expression is much superior to the concept prevalent in the West. Under no circumstances would Islam allow evil and wickedness to be propagated. It also does not give anybody the right to use abusive or offensive language in the name of criticism. It was the practice of the Muslims to inquire from the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon HIM) whether on a certain

- 3) *Musta'min* (protected one) are persons who come to an Islamic country as messengers, merchants, visitors, or student wanting to learn about Islam. A *Musta'min* should not wage war against Muslims and he is not obliged to pay *Jizya*, but he would be urged to embrace Islam. If a *Musta'min* does not accept Islam, he is allowed to return safely to his own country. Muslims are forbidden to hurt him in any way. When he is back in his own homeland, he is treated as one who belongs to the Household of War.

### THE SECURITY OF LIFE AND PROPERTY:

In the address which the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon HIM) delivered on the occasion of the Farewell Hajj, he said.<sup>6</sup>

"Your lives and properties are forbidden to one another till you meet your Lord on the Day of Resurrection." The Prophet (Peace be upon HIM) has also said about the dhimmis (the non-Muslim citizens of the Muslim state): "One who kills a man under covenant (i.e., dhimmi) will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise."

### SANCTITY AND SECURITY OF PRIVATE LIFE:

The Holy Quran has laid down the injunction:

*"O believers! Enter not houses other than you own, until you take permission and salute the residents thereof. This is better for you, haply you may be heedful."* (24:27)<sup>7</sup>

### THE SECURITY OF PERSONAL FREEDOM:

Islam has laid down the principle that no citizen can be imprisoned unless his guilt has been proven in an open court. To arrest a man only on the basis of suspicion and to throw him into a prison without proper court proceedings and