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Limitation of Human Knowledge

S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The Qur'an protests against the materialistic view of epistemology which regards human intellect as infallible and capable of encompassing all sectors or phases of reality. This concept of knowledge asserts its capacity to discern the secrets of nature as well as mysteries of the vast heavenly bodies and planetary system, lands and oceans, beings and creatures and the designs and workings of supernatural forces. It tries to plumb directly the secrets of the creation of life and unlock the mysteries of past and future. The votaries of this view of human knowledge are arrogantly proud of it although the sum total of their knowledge is no more than a speck of dust. The tragedy, however, is that this very undue arrogance, over-confidence and excessive reliance on human knowledge coupled with the contemptuous defiance and outright denial of unseen realities has been the root-cause of man's vanity and self-conceit, narrow-mindedness and fanaticism. It is, indeed, this concept of human knowledge which is responsible for belief in the primacy of matter, its indestructibility and creativeness.

It is, again, this view of human knowledge, having its roots in the aberration of human nature, which has always induced man to claim the mastership over his fellow beings and to oppress those who do not agree to this concept. All of its salient features have been brought out by the parables told in the Surat-ul-Kahf, as, for instance, its spiteful enmity with those who are blessed with a true faith and the gnosis of God, like the Companions of the Cave: its love of earthly possessions and disrespect for the poor and lowly as exhibited by the owner of two gardens: its denial of everything not adequately comprehended by the limited human intellect as illustrated by the story of Khidhr and Moses. It is not unoften that the erring knowledge of man produces an entirely false impression. Zul-Qarnain thought that the sun was setting in the spring of murky water. ■

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Wisdom of Qur'an

Give to the near of kin his due, and also to the needy and the wayfarers. Do not squander your wealth wastefully; for those who squander wastefully are Satan's brothers, and Satan is ever ungrateful to his Lord. And when you must turn away from them – from the destitute, the near of kin, the needy, and the wayfarers – in pursuit of God's mercy which you expect to receive, then speak to them kindly.

(Al-Qur'an – 17:26-28)

Man should not consider his wealth his own only. Instead, after moderately meeting his own needs he should spend it on his relatives, neighbours, and other human beings who stand in need. Man's social life should also be permeated with a spirit of sympathy and recognition of the rights of others and a spirit of mutual cooperation. Relatives should be especially helpful towards each other. The 'haves' should extend to the 'have-nots' whatever they may be in a position to provide. The concept of the rights of others should be so pervasive that a person should consider those among whom he lives to have claims against him and his resources.

If a person helps others, he should do so with a feeling that he is merely discharging the obligations he owes them rather than burdening them with a debt of gratitude. And whenever a person is unable to be of any service to some needy, he should seek the latter's indulgence at his inability to do so, and should pray to God to bless him with the means that will enable him to serve others. ■

Pearls From the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)

It is narrated by Raza'h that the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) said: "Traders will be raised on the Day of Resurrection as wicked people, except those who had adopted the way of righteousness, goodness and truth."

(Tirmidhi)

Righteousness is the key to Ultimate Success. So the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be to him) always encouraged his followers to adopt the way of righteousness in every walk of life. This hadith highlights the importance and significance of righteousness, goodness and truth in business.

While doing trade or business, people generally display purely materialistic mentality so much so that even the person regarded as 'religious' fail to deal justly and honestly as required by the religion. They neither care for what is permissible and what is not. Nor do they worry about honesty and truth. They are concerned only about earning money even at the cost of moral and religious bindings. But here the Holy Messenger has warned such traders that if they do not adopt the policy of honest-dealing and good moral conduct, they will have to face the fate of wicked people on the Day of Judgement. "In another hadith, the Holy Messenger said that the person who indulges in hoarding is a sinner. To hoard food grains and other commodities of daily necessity with a view to selling them at a higher price, when their scarcity in the market is causing great hardship to the people, is to take undue advantage of the people's difficulties. Islam considers this mentality criminal. ■

The Fragrance

The Fragrance is entering the nineteenth year of its publication. The idea for such a publication derived from the need to bring together existing literature concerning the ill effects of modernisation on our society. Such a concern has been expressed by a number of institutions and organisations in a disparate way. We thought it would be useful to collate these concerns and also have new ideas and fresh views compiled together so that their fragrance may reach far and wide.

We are aware that the fast development of science and technology has revolutionised the pattern of living in literate societies. Developments in the field of electronics have brought the world closer and TV, e-Mail and Internet systems have reduced the importance of the print media. Even though the communication revolution has created two classes of readers one who have an access to latest computer techniques and the other who still bank on books and periodicals, the latter constitutes a majority. The Fragrance is an humble attempt to cater to the needs of this class.

While we have made tremendous scientific strides ranging from nuclear explosions to cloning of living beings our moral and cultural values appear to be fast receding. Historians will agree that since the inception of this world it has always been the endeavour of man to establish his superiority over others. In this process humankind has often lost its balance. Whereas on the one hand it aims to habitate the moon on the other it craves for scientific progress towards assembling

devices of mass destruction.

The qualities which distinguish man from other living beings are increasingly getting lost in this fast drive towards scientific oneness. Man forgets that he has been sent in the world to spread peace and tranquility and not to create chaos and unrest. Great men were born from time to time to help mankind regulate their lives and lead a pure and pious life. Their areas of operations may have been confined to certain parts of the world but the message they propagated knew no physical or geographical barriers. Judaism and Christianity in their unpolluted form are not far from Islam. Coming closer to our country founders of Jainism and Buddhism too spent their lives in search of 'Truth' and spread the message of peace, friendliness and brotherhood amongst mankind. Indeed religion is a vital factor which leads one to follow the Heavenly ordain 'Do good and refrain from evils'. Through this periodical our efforts will be to spread the message of peace through the dissemination of relevant literature.

We often publish selected articles of learned litterateurs and intellectuals published elsewhere but would like to include original articles in consonance with modern themes. Writers are requested to help us in presenting the blooming flowers' the fragrance of which may travel extensively and have the desired effect. ■

S.A.

We solicit articles for publication in The Fragrance of East. Suitable remuneration will be paid to writers. We prefer receipt of articles on:
e-mail: shariq_alavi@yahoo.com
along with a hard copy, duly signed, by post.

The Role of 'Ulama' in Changing Times

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Afterwards We made those whom We chose of Our servants the inheritors of the Book, Then of them there are some who wrong themselves, And of them there are some who keep the middle path, and of them there are some who go ahead, by Allah's leave, in virtue. That is indeed great grace.

(al-Fatir 35:32)

A faith, divine teachings, a call to truth or noble ideals cannot and do not exist in a vacuum. Without role models in blood and flesh, high ideals cannot be sustained. This is amply borne out by the history of religions and morality. Had this not been the case and had it been in accord with human nature and divine laws scriptures would have descended on mountain tops with the proclamation that people should draw on these. This has not been the case, though. Allah first sends down His messengers. They are blessed with revelation. Messengers are the very embodiments of the divine message. Once 'A'ishah was asked to relate the Prophet's conduct. In reply she said: ('He demonstrated what the Qur'an is.' The Qur'an is the best commentary on his life and morals. Allah gave another special favour to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), in the words of Shah Waliullah, by making his advent universal. He brought up an entire

community to promote his message. Accordingly, the Qur'an also speaks of the advent of the Muslim community in the following passages: *And thus We have made you a community justly balanced, that you might be witnesses to mankind and that the Messenger might be a witness to you. (al-Baqarah 2:143) And: You are the best community ever sent forth to mankind. You enjoin good and forbid evil and you believe in Allah. (Al 'Imran 3:110)*

Hadith conveys the above message more emphatically, telling Muslims: "You have been sent down for making ease, not for erecting hurdles and hardship." Many Companions are on record as transmitting similar ideas. When the Persian commander asked Rub'i ibn 'Amir, the Muslim emissary, as to why the Muslims had approached Persia, his reply was in line with the Prophet's teaching: "Allah has sent us to you that by His command we may free men from their bondage to fellow human beings and make them submissive to Allah." This brings home the point that messengers are the prerequisite for a faith. A messenger should have a community trained and guided by him. These conditions were met in the case of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and his Companions. This arrangement should be in place until the Last Day.

It is evident from the Qur'anic verse quoted at the outset of this section that successors to the Prophet and bearers of the Book will last to the end of time. Islam is the destiny of mankind, for it embodies divine teachings. In one *Hadith* the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) makes this observation: "In every generation there will be just, pious people as the bearers of faith. They will avoid all extremism and accretions in matters of faith and refute the baseless notions of ignorant people." (*Mishkat*)

'*Ulama*' perform a very significant and delicate duty. Those charged with this role have indeed an onerous responsibility. On realising its magnitude one may feel so overwhelmed as to give up eating and drinking. '*Ulama*'s conduct keeps the masses on the straight way. It binds them to faith and its articles. '*Ulama*'s lapses conversely can have a disastrous effect. It can weaken their link with the public. Their immoral deeds may cause degeneration in the whole community, pushing it to declines materialism, this-worldliness, lust for power, gratification of base desires and selfish motives. As a result, the community is liable to disintegrate into numerous divisions and sub-divisions. It can adversely affect the fate of the entire country and future generations. Religious institutions, including mosques might be afflicted with such decay and decline. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is on record as saying: "Remember, there is a piece of flesh in the body; if it is sound, the whole body functions well. However, if it is

diseased, the entire body will be damaged. This piece of flesh is the heart."

'*Ulama*' occupy the same position in the life of the community as the heart in the body. Any disorder affects the body and so the community. It is worth clarifying that the reform of the community is not the responsibility of any particular group or institution. Rather, it is the role of all '*Ulama*'. If their morals are weakened by worldliness and their links with Allah are not strong enough, the masses will exceed all limits. There will be all-round corruption and degeneration. The fate of faith is linked with the role and conduct of '*Ulama*'. The moral health of a society and a country is in the hands of '*Ulama*'. If '*Ulama*' are derelict, faith will naturally grow weak. No oratory or political order can then salvage such an ailing society. Even if an Islamic state resolves to arrest moral degeneration, it cannot be successful without the active support of '*Ulama*'.

To use an analogy, reference may be made to the small driving machinery or speedometer which monitors the speed and direction of a massive ship. Any disorder in it can lead the ship astray by hundreds of miles. As already stated, '*Ulama*' should serve as the compass for the community. They should always be engaged in performing their duty. Providing they maintain a strong and close link with Allah, act sincerely, actively discharge their role and are characterised with the features special to the successors to Allah's Messengers, the future of faith is secure. Without this, no measure can ensure the spread of faith. ■

The Uniform Civil Code

- Minnatullah Rahmani

India is a country of different culture and inhibits people of different religions. Religion has been ever embedded in its soil. People of different faiths have acted upon their religious beliefs with full freedom in this country. History of the remote past, when Muslim first set foot on the soil of this country and settled along the western coast, says that this multi-religious land had freedom of restriction by the Government on the rules and traditions connected with religion and culture. The variety of culture and allegiance to various faiths did not become the cause of discord and chaos in the social set-up of its people. Muslim who came over to this land with their eternal faith and perfect culture had legal freedom not only in their modes of worship but also in respect of their own system, of personal law. Early history tells us that just as the Hindus has "Brahmins", appointed to solve their problems and affairs, so also the matters concerning the Muslim used to be decided by Muslim Quazis, who were all known technically as "Huner-mand" (the wise).

Muslim ruled over India for a pretty long time during which period also the system of prayer and worship of the non-Muslims as well as their personal laws were left intact and the affairs of the followers of different religions well settled according to their provisions of their religion. After the end of Muslim regime even during the British rule the personal laws remained intact and the Britishers during the first half of the present century gradually incorporated the Islamic laws in the Act

which came to be known as "Muslim Personal Law". This was in fact a recognition of the truth that the Muslims would not give up these laws which related to their personal and family life. It is the duty of a responsible govt. to realise the importance of these laws and provide for the security of the same.

When India became independent and a new constitution was formed for the country, the legal status of the Muslim Personal Law was duly acknowledged and the traditions of the long past and popular trends, which are based on faith, came to be honoured. It was expressly declared by the legislators in the Constituent Assembly that 'there shall be no interference in the Muslim Personal Law'.

THE PROBLEM OF THE UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

There is a talk now afoot in the country for abrogating the Muslim Personal Law and for enforcing a uniform civil code instead. "Uniform Civil Code" means the laws framed for the social and family life of the people inhabiting a particular territory. These laws encompass all matters relating to the personal and family life of every individual and the matters relating to Nikah, Talaq, Dissolution, Gifts, Wills, Inheritance and Adoption are to be decided under these laws. These laws are to be enforced without any regard to the religion, culture, traditions and customs of any person. Regardless of all such things, there is only one law under the uniform civil code for the followers of every religion. This is the law that would govern even matters relating to

Nikah & Talaq. In short all the matters which relate to personal law would come under the perview of the civil code.

In India the Uniform Civil Code would clearly mean that the Muslims in this country may have to perform Nikah & Talaq even against the mandates of their faith. In matters of wills (Wasiat) and inheritance too they shall have to follow laws other than the laws of the religion. In the same way the followers of other religions, traditions and customs shall have to drift away from their religion and abrogate their traditions thus binding themselves under a new system of law. Thus the Uniform Civil Code has clearly a system at variance with the Muslim Personal Law, which shall have no place after the Uniform Civil Code is enforced¹. In other words the Muslim Personal Law, which is based on the Quran and Sunnah, and the Uniform Civil Code can't go side by side. This fact has been explained by Mr. Gajendra Gadker (Chairman, Law Commission, Govt. of India) in his speech as follows:

"For the Muslim brotherhood Secularism declares that the matters relating to the abolition of polygamy and the subject of uniform civil code shall be decided on purely social considerations and not with reference to the Quran"¹

The reason behind this 'declaration of Secularism' in his mind may be the fact that unless the Quran and religion are not avoided completely, the plan of a secular State can't be accomplished as was also opined by an intellectual: "If any state does not frame uniform civil laws for all the citizens, it has no right to call itself a secular state."² Or, he might have come to the conclusion that "the Scripture of any religion, whether divinely revealed to man

or hummed into the ears of saints and Rishis. can't command the degree of finality in any sphere of life." Whatever, the reason, the view held by a reputed jurist and a responsible spokesman of the Government as that no dialogue can be held with reference to the Quran on the problem of the Uniform Civil Code, while the Muslim Personal Law has its foundations only on the Quran and Sunnah.

None the less it is the marvel of the constitution-makers that while on the one side they have provided constitutional guarantees to the Muslim Personal Law, they have also given the directives on the other hand for the enforcement of a uniform civil code, thereby evolving a scheme which can please both the hunted and the hunted for the time being.

THE LEGAL BACKGROUND

The history of a uniform civil law starts with this dual policy adopted by the farmers of the Constitution. It would be better first to examine that part of the constitution which relates to the Uniform Civil Code³ The directive principal under Article 44 of the Constitution lays down:

"The State shall endeavour to secure for citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India"

During the reading of Article 44 in the Parliament, debates were held at length. The Muslim members of the Parliament made demands for additions and alterations and proposed several amendments but none of these was accepted.⁴

Doctor Amedkar tried to satisfy them by his statement:

"The Govt. is being simply vested with these powers which does not mean that

the personal & religious law would be necessarily abrogated in spite of the opposition by the Muslims, Christians or any other section of the Country. No body should have apprehensions that the Govt. shall insist on it by the "simple vesting of power.

The power of the Government are practically always limited whatever be the unrestricted character given to it by words. For the Government cannot exercise its power in a way which may result in Muslim revolt. Should the Govt. contemplate to act so it would be dubbed as senseless".

It was thus that the vastness of power confirmed by the Constitution was attempted to be narrowed down by verbal assurance. The success of this endeavour can be assessed by the force in this assurance. However, Article 44 was passed by a majority of votes on the Parliament and thus the seed was sown for enforcing the Uniform Civil Code.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

While keeping in mind the legal background of the Uniform Civil Code, it would be proper to examine the historical factors so that we may be able to assess what has been the line of thinking adopted by the Government and the people responsible for legislation.

This is a fact that continued endeavours have been made to pave the way, on governmental and semi-governmental levels through different platforms, for the enforcement of the civil code. Extremists and moderate groups have been organised making efforts directly or indirectly, for enforcement of a uniform civil code. Even such associations have

been formed as have adopted this as their basic objects. These individuals groups or association although not enjoying the co-operation of the Muslim masses and people versed in the knowledge of Quran and Sunnah, are working at their own levels¹ and claim unabashed that quite a large section of the Muslims is with them.

The attitude of the Governmental authorities is also in support of the Uniform Civil Code which has been manifested by them on various occasions, For instance, when the Hindu Personal Law was being modified afresh, the then Central Law Minister, Mr. Patsker declared:

"After the coming into force of our Constitution on 26th January, 1950 we have passed the special Marriage Act and, the Hindu Marriage Act. The Hindu Law of inheritance is now under consideration of the Parliament, All these are step towards framing a uniform civil code."¹

In course of the steps taken towards framing a uniform civil code why the Hindus came first and how the Uniform Civil Code is to be enforced throughout the country had been thus explained by him at a press conference:

"The reforms now being introduced in the Hindu Laws shall be enforced among the entire population of India in the near future. If we succeed in framing laws affecting the 85% of our population, they will not be difficult to be enforced against the rest. Such a law will bring uniformity in the whole country."

This statement by Mr, Patsker is a declaration of a well designed policy. It is true that the policy has not been executed practically till now but the outlines of the

policy have never faded in their minds and from time to time assessment is being made whether the minds of the people apart from the 85% can put up with this policy or not.

In 1963, the Government proposed to appoint a commission with the object of considering amendments to the Muslim personal Law and finding out practical ways of operation. This commission could not be appointed in face of complete opposition by the Muslims and the Law Minister had to end the discussions stating that the Govt. at present does not consider it proper to bring in the amendments (in the Muslim Personal Law).² This statement itself indicates that the question is not over nor there is a change in the policy: The atmosphere is not favourable, therefore the policy will not be executed. In 1972, the Central Law Minister Mr. Gokhale again reiterated this policy, while presenting the Adoption of Children Bill, 1972 he stated in the parliament : "This Bill is a strong step towards the Uniform Civil Code"³

The statements made by the different law, ministers are in index of the Government policy and suggest that the Govt. wants to take full advantage of the Directive Principle in the matter of the Uniform Civil Code and wants a brain-washing of every individual and group for enforcing the Uniform Civil Code. But alongside, there are some, such persons also in the Government and outside the Govt. whose thinking is devoid of any regard for people's opinion and who want to enforce the Uniform Civil Code by force. These people think that "after a common family law is enforced by the Govt. with the help of the so called secular members of the parliament, the Muslims will resent for some time but the sky will not come down

on that account"¹ This was repeated with greater clarity by Mr. Gajendra Gadkar (Chairman Law Commission) as follows: "The Muslims should prepare themselves to accept the Uniform Civil Code. Should they not accept this proposal voluntarily, the law shall be brought into effect by force."²

THE REASONS BEHIND THE SUPPORT TO A UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

The details given above point to the fact that the Government has always wanted enforcement of a uniform civil code³ and for a long time past a particular section in the country, consisting of Hindu in the majority with a few Muslims has been trying brain-washing for the purpose. Some people with extremist mentality suggest the enforcement of the uniform Civil Code even by force and some want to prepare the way under the plea of reforms while others in sermonising pose advise to put up with the circumstances. But all these people with their different counsels have the same goal. Their suggestions may be different, their tones varied and their reasonings diversified, but a deeper study suggests that the object is the same and all of them will reach the same goal sooner or later.⁴

The reason behind such unity of purpose is due to the fact that their minds have been influenced by western ideas and their education and training has been on western patterns. They have their mental and practical attachment with the western society and they have studied and followed the western system of law; therefore, the Muslim personal law appears to them to be foreign to the frame of the Indian Constitution. They consider Shariat to be a thing redundant and, in their opinion, it is just a private affair of the individuals but

cannot be the law. Their western way of thinking has also rendered the traditions of the East undeserving of respect and the eastern ways and temperament have no appeal for them. The only touchstone for them is what, has been given by the West to test things. Apart from the West they have no ideology, no message, no line of thought and action. The lesson for a uniform civil code has been given to them by the West where everything pertaining to religion is a private matter of individuals, restricted to prayers and rituals only. Therefore, these people can hardly conceive of anything apart from the uniform civil code.

The important reason for the Support to the Uniform Civil Code may be attributed to enactments by the Parliament during the period 1954 to 1956, which gave a particular shape to the Hindu Personal Law, a thing quite foreign to the concept of Hindu religion. This has been the reason for touch opposition to these enactments by a fairly educated section of the Hindus, and it is also a historical fact that the then President of India, Dr. Rajendra Pd., had given his assent there with great reluctance. Right from the time the Hindu personal law came to be abrogated, minds had begun to be set for the abolition of the Muslim personal law also and for enforcing on every Indian citizen the personal laws on the same pattern as had been imported from the West for the Hindus. While the aforesaid laws for the Hindus, were under consideration before the Parliament, the well known leader Acharya Kriplani participating in the debates had said: "If India is a democratic State, I would submit that the laws ought not to be framed for any single community. Will our Government enact laws on monogamy for the Muslims?"

THE REASONINGS OF THE SUPPORTERS , OF A UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

Some of the reasonings in support of the Uniform Civil Code relate to certain provisions of the Muslim personal law and some directly concern the Uniform Civil Code. The reasonings relating to any provision of the Muslim Personal Law are not to be discussed here as they are incidental which it would be wrong to consider as the basis for settling issues. Here we have to present the substance of the arguments which directly refer to the Uniform Civil Code. From the analysis of these arguments four basic issues emerge before us.

- (i) The argument advanced from the constitutional point of view that in face of Article 44 of the Directive Principle, there should be only one civil code for the citizens of the country. These Directive Principles in the Constitutions are really the outlines which present a picture of the country's future. The Government must adopt a path which may lead to the achievement of the objective of the Directive Principle.
- (ii) India is a secular State; secularism naturally demands that the law of the land should be rid of the religious bindings and, therefore, non-religious family laws should be enforced through the Uniform Civil Code.
- (iii) Religious laws have become obsolete and their utility-importance has ceased to exist. These do not conform to the demands of the age, nor they have the capacity to solve social complications. The antique set of static teachings can't be useful for the society and, therefore, it is necessary to enforce new laws in

place of the religions laws so that a powerful society may be nursed into shape.

(iv) India has the followers of various religions and it is necessary that they should have some personal laws in order to developed among them the spirit of integration and to strengthen unity. The diversity of personal law becomes a source of differences between them causing injury to national integration.

THE REASONS AGAINST A UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

The Muslims are opposed to the Uniform Civil Code.¹ The religious minded sections of the Hindus also do not favour it.² The basic reason for the opposition by the Muslims is the fact that the uniform Civil Code conflicts with the religious teachings and in the wake of its enforcement the mandates of the Quran and Sunnah shall have to be given a go-bye in family and personal life, and such laws will have to be brought in force as will do away with the restrictions imposed by the religion and the very concept of right, and wrong (Halal & Haram) shall vanish from the personal life of individuals. Muslims are not prepared to find solutions to their family and personal problems through these laws which may come in conflict with their religion at every step.

Those who have not studied Islam and consider it to be just a collected lot of prayers, customs, and usages like other religions, can't understand the cause of opposition by the Muslims to the enforcement of Uniform Civil Laws. So also those who are not aware of the devotion of, the Muslims to their religion, can have no idea of the real force of Muslim opinion on this subject. The complete devotion of

Muslims to their faith and the comprehensive teaching of Islam don't provide any scope to them for renouncing their religious law governing their personal life, for these form an important part of their faith and they are founded on the Quran and Sunnah just as Namaz, Fasting and the other items of worship. The other reason is that the followers of every religion have some distinctive features of their cultures which mostly relate to personal laws. In some religions these are based not on religious teaching but on custom and usages or geographical factors. The Muslim have also their cultural specialties founded on the teachings of religion, which the Muslims are not prepared to give up. It is not because the Muslims have any distinctive point of view without reason or are guided by feelings of segregation. It is because these distinctions are founded on the teachings of their religion. Otherwise also, the cultural diversities and the distinctive features of the different ways in social life do not result in separatist tendencies, Separatist tendencies are manifested by lack of interest in national affairs, lack of common social contacts and aloofness from welfare undertakings. The Hindu not praying in the mosque the Muslim not performing pujas in a temple, the Christian not acting upon the Granth saheb and the Sikh who does not consider the sacred teaching of the Bible essential for him, can never be dubbed as separatist.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE REASONING ADVANCED BY THE SUPPORTERS OF THE UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

The basic arguments advanced in support of the Uniform Civil Code are not considered acceptable by the opponent to the said code, on an analysis of the points made out in support of the code it appears

that these neither have any logical force nor are in agreement with Indian temperament and society. It is proper to scrutinise the reasonings so that the other side of the picture may also be presented.

(1) The most important point involved is the constitutional aspect which has served as the very seed of the problem. As already explained in the introductory portions, the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution under Article 44 provide for the introduction of uniform civil laws but the Constitution of India also gives an assurance for religious freedom under Article 25 relating to Fundamental Rights. It guarantees that every individual will have the perfect right to accept any faith and to act on and propagate the same, The context of the Constitution runs is as follows.

“Article 25 (1) -Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice, and propagate religion.

(2)—Nothing in this Article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law—

(a) regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice.

(b) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institution of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus.

The uniform civil laws can't go on side by side with religious freedom which leads the jurist to the conclusion that the two Articles stand in conflict. These

gentlemen have discussed at length both the provisions of law i.e. the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles, and the decisions by different courts also throw light on both. It is the general trend of the judiciary and law experts that the provisions relating to fundamental rights are more important and constitute part of the complete law, while the position of Directive Principles is subservient and can't be described as the complete law. Religious freedom relates to fundamental rights and therefore, has legal superiority in its fullness and the uniform civil law can't be forced in the existence of this constitutional provision.

The Directive Principle in the Constitution might provide outlines for the makers of the Constitution, but these do not necessarily mean that the picture be completed on these outlines. The Directive Principles under the Constitution also provide for other matters besides the Uniform Civil Code, but no legal shape has been given to them nor anyone has a grievance that the said outlines have been left without completing the picture. Not only this, there are other Directive Principles which have been incorporated into law with further executive action, but later on scope has been provided in the law and provisions have been made which rendered them ineffective. “Prohibition” is a case in instance. It finds place in the directions of Gandhiji himself which he had been proclaiming again & again even before Independence; and the largest political party, the All India National Congress had also resolved before the achievement of Independence against the use of intoxicants, while the Constitution of India under its Directive Principle has clearly provided for Prohibition. Laws came to be

also framed for the achievement of the object, put the use of intoxicants has once again received full legal protection under the force of circumstances.

1. This mode for applying the law in India also suggests that the Directive Principles are not to be necessarily acted upon and in view of legal tradition it can well be said that the Directive Principles do not present any blue-print of the country's future. These might be the vision of the Constitution makers which do materialise sometimes but more often than naught the endeavour for their fulfilment touches the very borders of life and death.

2. Secularism neither demands that the Uniform Civil Code must be enforced in India nor it means to scratch out of existence the religious impressions, from every spot of the country, the tradition from the society and the religious teachings from the hearts of men. The secular state means that the Government itself shall have no religious complexion and shall not be partisan to any religion and there shall be no discrimination on the ground of believing or not believing in any religion, every Individual having the freedom to follow the religion of this choice. This is manifest from the Constitution of India, and laws have been framed having the same aspect in view. Therefore, the question does not arise that the Uniform Civil Code is the essential demand of secularism.

It can also be very well said that secularism provides a compromising via media through which the State has the right to make laws concerning general matters of the State, to participate in international affairs and to find out solutions to the problems arising in the common life of the citizens, while the individual has the right

to follow in his personal and family life the laws governing him by virtue of his religion or customs and usage. If Secularism be interpreted as anything else and be used for abolishing the Muslim Personal Law, it will be only the dictatorship of the majority but no secularism.

3. It is a fact that the religious laws are old but it can never mean that they have become frozen and have ceased to possess any utility having lost the capacity for solving social problems. Religious laws, are divided into two parts. The one relates to fundamentals¹ and the principles which don't admit of any amendment. The other relates to matters which may be adjusted according to the change of circumstances, know practices and customs and they are being even so adjusted.² In face of the existing laws classified under the second part, it would be wrong to say that religious laws have become frozen and they have lost their utility and the capacity to solve social problems.

The view point that every law becomes obsolete by antiquity, has no logical force. Neither every ancient thing becomes useless nor everything new becomes useful. The usefulness or otherwise of laws has to be judged only on the criterion whether they are capable of maintaining and developing the society on reliable foundations and with vitality. The family laws under discussion here should be judged on this principle alone. Obviously the Uniform Civil Code will be founded on the pattern of Western laws. The Hindu Code itself has been drawn up on the basis of personal family laws prevalent in the West and the outlines of the Uniform Civil Code will not be very different from them. Therefore, it can be

very well said that the laws which are being attempted to be introduced in India have already got their laboratory, we should make a study of these laboratories and find out to what extent these laws have served as means to the attainment of satisfaction and peace in family life.

This is a subject for extensive and comparative study for which there is no scope within these limited pages. But on factual grounds it must be admitted that the family life in the Western countries is crumbling into bits and personal life has lost all peace and confidence. Marriage has become a play thing and divorce a thing of fun.³ Modesty and chastity are just words confined to the pages of dictionary. Society is swarmed with children of unknown fathers and with unmarried mothers, Stark nudity and the assemblage of the nudes¹ are probably being looked upon as part of a vital society. These are the miracles of modern civilisation and the resultants of the Western family laws being enforced, If the hearts of the intellectuals have not become devoid of feelings for the losses and still possess the capability and courage to admit the evil as evil, and if they do not believe that everything new must be accepted and everything old must be hated then there is no reason why the Uniform Civil Code should be advocated denouncing the religious personal law as absolute.

4. Unity and national integration is of vital need to the country. To develop the feelings of friendship and tolerance among the different communities inhabiting India is the best national service, but to use the slogan of national integration for political exploitation is an anti-national act of the worst kind. It is wrong, and even fatal for

the future of the country, that whatever appeals to the people having a particular, mental set-up should be assumed as the demands of secularism and a medium for, national integration and what conflicts with their way of thinking should be branded as bigoted, narrow-minded and communal.

In what manner and to what extent National integration and mutual tolerance are related to the "Uniform Civil Code" can be assessed from the fact that the matters relating to the personal life of individuals have never led to conflict between any communities. No instance can be cited regarding any difference between Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians on the question of Nikah, Talaq, Hiba, Inheritance etc, for these are matters not between two communities but between two or some of the same community. On the contrary, inter-community marriages (which may constitute an article of law under the Uniform Civil Code) are likely to result in grave consequences, and on several occasions extremely serious communal tension has been generated on that account. Thus it would be correct to say in the light of facts that the personal laws of the different communities cannot injure the cause of national integration and the unity of the country.

The fact cannot be denied that there are serious problems existing which have damaged the cause of national unity and integrity and involve the further risk of damage in future. But for expediency's sake endeavours have been made continually for adjustments to suit popular temperament. The subject-matter itself has not been abolished in the name of national integrity. The language problem is one amongst them existing as burning flame which has created commotion in Assam. It

did excite Bengal and created the wide gulf of hatred and enmity between the North and the South. The extent of gulf can, be ascertained from the disturbances in the past and possibly it may lead to separation in future. Notwithstanding all these, the fascinating slogan of national integrity could not be heard on the question of language and if it is at all heard, it is just to stop the disturbance.

Under these circumstances if the opponents of the Uniform Civil Code say that the slogan of national unity and integrity are made use of only for political exploitation, they cannot be said to be in the wrong. Inter-community marriage is projected as the best recipe for national integration and communal harmony. But the undesirable consequences of different such marriages in the recent past are lost sight of while making this proposition. More than that, it is also forgotten that this recipe was adopted even by that personality who is described generally in India as the symbol of communalism, the destroyer of the unity of the country and responsible for its partition. Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinah got himself married in a Parsi family under the Special Marriage Act, which itself served as parallel legislation injuring the Muslim Personal Law and was adopted by a popular Muslim leader. But all know how far this could improve the cause of national integration. In fact experience tells us that without religious, cultural and linguistic affinities between the conjugal pair most of the marriages end in fiasco, leading very often to a divorce. The marriage that cannot bring about integration between husband and wife can hardly be expected to produce national integration.

The truth is that these personal laws do not have any adverse effect on

national integrity and the Uniform Civil Code cannot be the means for national integrity. Of course it can be the because of national discord. The laws should be so framed that all the religious, cultural and linguistic units in the country may be assured about their individual security and may participate as peaceful and active citizens in bringing strength and prosperity to the country within the frame work of these laws. This mode of legislation will be helpful in creating an atmosphere for integration. But if the various cultural, linguistic or religious, units feel their individualities being wiped out through legislation, a reaction will set in among them. They will raise their voice of protest against it and shall cease to repose any confidence in the legislators which will be damaging to the cause of national integration. The Muslims firmly belief that the Uniform Civil Code will be the means for the effacement of their cultural and social entity. As such, the Uniform Civil Code cannot be the means for the effacement of their cultural and social entity. As such, the Uniform Civil Code cannot be the means for the attainment of national integration but contains the potentiality of creating national disintegration.

In view of the above facts Muslim leaders, Ulema and Scholars are opposed to any 'Uniform Civil Code'. They think that the Muslim Personal Law provides a useful way for the solution of the problems in the personal life of the Muslims and that the Government ought to provide further convenience and legal facilities for the enforcement of the same. The enforcement of the Uniform Civil Code by abrogating the Muslim Personal Laws may be a source of appeasement to certain sentiments but this change cannot lead to any useful performance. ■

Prophet's Mission and Message:

-S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

All the Prophets who were raised, right from Hazrat Adam (AS) up to Hazrat Mohammad (SAW), strictly enjoined the renunciation of *Shirk* and adoption of *Tauheed*, because, it is Allah Almighty who is the Creator of the entire universe. It is He who has furnished the universe with all kinds of goods that might be needed. It is He who has made these goods fully usable by, and easily available to, man as a result of which every one draws mamum benefits from them throughout all his or her life and fulfils his/her needs. In fact the life of man itself is sustained by these very goods and their usability and availability. How is it, then, if the man forgets His Magnanimity and, abandoning Him, adopts some odd objects lying hither thither which he fancies can benefit him or pose a threat of causing some harm to him and starts saying: we are helped by so-and-so, our needs are fulfilled by so-and-so and such and such object is inagnuminous to us? How is it then that the man attributes the Magnanimity conferred exclusively by his Creator and Master, Allah Almighty, on him to others and asks them for fulfillment of his requirements and, abandoning his real Benefactor who is the greatest of all the benefactors and grants all kinds of beneficence, calls other petty objects his benefactor and master? How will, quite obviously, Allah Almighty, who has created each and everything and bestowed man with each and everything and continues to do so incessantly, allow all that to be perpetrated and be not angry? Hence it is the *Shirk* which Allah Almighty gets extremely displeased with. And that is something absolutely realistic, sensible and just.

That is why all the Prophets and reformers interdicted, first of all and most of all, the *Shirk*. Thereafter and along with it, they kept calling for the removal of the rot, whatever and wherever it could have got generated in the human character and morals. For example, if there was in some populace, along with the *Shirk*, some sexual depravity, as was the case with the people of Lut (AS), or some other kind of malpractices were there in vogue amidst the peoples, their Prophets prohibited them from them. In some populace, along with the *Shirk*, the practice of making pilferage while measuring and weighing was rampant as was the case with the people of Madiyan. Their Prophet prohibited his people from doing that. In some populace, along with the *Shirk*, the hauteur and the habit of harrowing the weaker sections was in vogue as was the case with Fira'aun's folks of Egypt. There Hazrat Musa (AS) was made the Prophet. He tried hard to make Firaun see the reason and put the fright of retribution from Allah in him and forbade him to indulge in *Shirk* and tyranny. In some habitations, a fondness, along with *Shirk*, for persecuting the weak and usurping the rights of others had taken root. The Prophet there prevented them from doing that, too. Likewise, whatever other vices, along with the *Shirk*, were there in the peoples, their respective Prophets restrained them from all these vices, too, along-with giving the call to adopt *Tauheed* (the Faith in Unity and Oneness of Allah) in its unassimilated form: that is to worship Allah Almighty alone who is sole Sustainer of the entire universe and all the creatures therein. ■

AIMPLB: Safeguarding the Shari'ah

- Aftab Husain Kola

Recent incidents occurring on a regular basis targeting the Muslims and other minorities have put a question mark on India's secular identity. Be it killing or harming Muslims for eating beef, for marrying a non-Muslim, for dissenting against the government's views, etc. And added to the woes is the silence of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi coupled with non-action from the authorities to act against the guilty. This has shattered the confidence of Muslims. Presently, the Indian Muslim community faces tougher times than ever before. The primary duty of the Indian government is to ensure protection of the life and liberty of all its citizens. With Digital India taking off, and trying to create a peaceful ambience for outside investments, India should not let go the unprecedented opportunity that will take it to a growth trajectory. But will this happen if India does not address the intolerance issue right now grappling the nation? And now the talk of adopting uniform civil code for India is already making the rounds. India is a constitutional republic based on a very good and robust constitution. According to last census held in 2011, the percentage of Muslims in total population was 14.2 per cent. Lakshadweep, an union territory, has the

maximum percentage of Muslim, i.e., 96.2; some of the states with considerable Muslim population include Jammu and Kashmir 68.3 %, Assam 34.2 %, West Bengal 27 %, Kerala 26.6 %, Uttar Pradesh 19.3 %, Bihar 16.9 %. There are 90 parliamentary constituencies where Muslim population is about 20 percent, where they can pretty much make the political parties agree to address the basic issues of the community. The representation of Muslims in administration and political spectrum is pitiful while Muslim leadership is not playing its role as expected of them. This has raised a pertinent question: Is there any organisation that will guide and direct the Indian Muslims to a path of reforms and development? An organisation that will take up issues concerning them?

Indian Muslims do have several organisations working for its welfare but they need to shore up its performance in order to win the maximum confidence of the Muslim masses.

The most powerful and the apex organisation of the Muslims of India is the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB). The organisation which has representations from different Muslim groups was established at a time when

then Government of India was trying to subvert Shari' ah law applicable to Indian Muslims through parallel legislation. The designs were foiled to the most extent. Originally established in 1972 end to protect the Muslim personal laws in India, the organisation came as a godsend to the Muslims of India who were being battered from all sides. Muslim personal laws are the first target of extremist Hindus in their assault on Muslims and other minorities.

The formation of AIMPLB was a defining moment in the history of India for the Muslims. This was the first time in the history of India after the Khilafat Movement that people and organisations of Indian Muslim community belonging to various schools of thought came together on a common platform to defend Muslim Personal Law. First such meeting was convened at Deoband in Uttar Pradesh on the initiative of Hazrat Maulana Syed Shah Minnatul- lah Rahmani, Ameer Shari'ah, Bihar & Orissa and Hazrat Maulana Qari Mohammad Taiyab, Muhtamim (rector), Darul Uloom, Deoband, India's oldest and largest Islamic Institution. The meeting decided to hold a general representative convention at Mumbai. Therefore, a historic convention was held at Mumbai on December 27-28, 1972. It showed unity, determination and resolve of the Indian Muslim community to protect the Muslim Personal Law. The Convention

unanimously decided to form All India Muslim Personal Law Board which reflects the true demographic diversity of the community. Some of the primary objectives encompass:

- To take effective steps to protect the Muslim Personal Law in India and for the retention, and implementation of the Shari' ah Act;
- To strive for the annulment of all such laws, passed by or on the anvil in any State Legislature or Parliament, and such judgments by courts of Law which may directly or indirectly amount to interference in or run parallel to the Muslim Personal Law or, in the alternative, to see that the Muslims are exempted from the ambit of such legislations.
- To promote awareness among Muslims about the laws and teachings of, and rights conferred and duties cast by Shari' ah in the sphere of their family and social life, and to publish and disseminate literature for that purpose;
- To publish and popularize the personal laws of Muslims as laid down by Shari'ah and to prepare a comprehensive framework for their implementation on and observance by the Muslims;

- To promote good-will, fraternity, and the feeling of mutual cooperation among all sects and schools of thought among Muslims, and to generate the spirit of unity and co-ordination among them for the common goal of safeguarding the Muslim Personal Law.

The architects of this movement to protect Islamic Shariah in India, Hazrat Maulana Qari Taiyab Qasmi and Hazrat Maulana Syed Shah Minnatullah Rahmani were elected founder President and General Secretary of the Board respectively. Those who followed Moulana Qari Tayyab as president include India's two illustrious scholars, Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi Maulana and Mujahidul Islam Qasmi and currently Moulana Sayed Mohammed Rabey Hasani Nadwi, the rector of Nadwatul Ulama, heads the organisation.

Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi Maulana was indisputably one of the greatest exponents of Islam while Mujahidul Islam Quasmi was a renowned Islamic jurist. Among the general secretaries, Maulana Syed Shah Minnatullah Rahmani was at the helm of affairs till his death in 1991. He was followed by Maulana Syed Nizamuddin who took great interest in the Board's working and ably performed the duties till 2015 when he passed away.

Basically formed to safeguard Muslim personal law from external threats and strive for social reforms amongst Muslims the Board took other causes as well depending upon its relevance as it progressed. The AIMPLB attempted to counter efforts to interfere in the Shari' ah or through parallel legislation and achieved good success though more needs to be done on this front. Some serious issues which dog the Muslims are nefarious campaign against madrasas (Muslims religious schools) and mosques.

It was during the time of Emergency (1975) the other major test of the Board came in. Forced sterilization of males as a measure for family planning was rampant and even the expression of dissent was unpardonable. At that time when nobody could speak out a word against the government, a meeting of the AIMPLB executive committee was held on 17-18 April 1976 in Delhi. A resolution was passed in this meeting against compulsory sterilization and the Shari' ah stand was explained in detail.

Then came the Shah Bano case in 1986. The AIMPLB took the issue head on and started a historic movement throughout the country. A delegation led by the Board chairman met the then prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, on 30 July 1985. During 1986 Board members met the prime minister

three times and tried to apprise and convince him of the stand taken by Muslims. Finally, the government passed Women's Rights Act on 6 May 1986 which scrapped court's judgment and restored the Islamic law of maintenance.

Another problem confronting the Board in the form of a new law for subjecting Awqaf's income to tax in April 1980. The Board took a serious notice of this law. Syed Minnatullah Rahmani and Dr Yousuf Najmuddin met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi along with a delegation and were successful in convincing her that the application of this law to Awqaf properties will not be fair.

The AIMPLB has consistently worked for the community and taken note of every significant development. Since the demolition of the Babri Mosque in December 1992, it has also assumed the responsibility of the issue and has formed a committee that actively follows this case in both political and legal fields.

Taking a very serious note of recent anti-Muslim developments the AIMPLB has swung into action again.

AIMPLB's working general secretary, Maulana Mohammad Wali Rehmani said recently the Board will soon launch a countrywide movement to protect the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of India. It

was a follow up action as the Board discussed various issues concerning the onslaught on the religious freedom in the form of Yoga, Surya Namaskar (sun worship) and distortion of school text and history books. An action plan to counter all these is put in place and the campaign has been titled, 'Save Religion and Constitution'. During the campaign seminars and symposiums all over the country in different cities and centres will be organized and would urge people to contribute in strengthening secular aspects of the country and to uphold the present Constitution.

Maulana Rahmani said secularism is the backbone of the pluralism in India that is under danger by the growing attacks on minorities. Without naming any regime he alleged here that after the change of power at the Centre, attempts are being made to promote a particular religion at the cost of secularism. He said that Article 28 of the Indian Constitution promises a secular state to its citizens and that some of the government's recent steps are against its spirit.

If its track record is any indication, then the AIMPL is poised for a greater glory. ■

Islamic Brotherhood

- S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Last, but not the least dominant trait of Muslim social life is the international brotherhood, a transcendental religious and spiritual affinity cutting across all the barriers of race, language and nationality, to which a Muslim feels irresistibly drawn on account of his religious teachings. He, undoubtedly, loves the country to which he belongs: deems it an article of faith to defend its interests and lay down his life for its sake; but this does not stand in his way of taking interest in the welfare of other Muslims whom he considers as members belonging to one and the same family. This concept of human brotherhood is like a celestial light that guides the Muslims in the darkness of racial prejudices and national hatreds: it teaches them to hate none but love all. Their interest in the affairs of the other Muslims consists of a pious wish for their well-being, a feeling of sorrow for their misfortune, and moral support to them when they need it: this is in no way a stumbling block in their way to patriotism and love for their own country. They consider it a duty enjoined by justice and humanitarian ideals, embedded in their religion and a means of strengthening and furthering the interests of their own country. Nothing bears out this assertion more clearly than the Khilafat Movement launched by the Indian Muslims under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Ali Brothers, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abdul Bari and other freedom-fighters. The wonderful spectacle of Hindu-Muslim unity and the tremendous popular upsurge for the freedom of the country produced by the Khilafat Movement would be still fresh in the memory of many a persons in the country. The object of this movement was to restore justice to the Turks and to preserve Khilafat as much as to liberate their own country from the foreign yoke. The same political consciousness and feeling of sympathy for the Muslims of other countries has been responsible for the keen interest shown by the Indian Muslims in the Palestine problem. There is no denying of this concern of Muslims for the humanity at large, and their co-religionists in particular: it is a characteristic of the message of Islam which must be taken into account for a better understanding of the Muslims' attitude and behaviour. ■

How Islam Spread In India

- Firas Alkhateeb

Source: Lost Islamic History

Today, there are over 500 million Muslims throughout the Indian subcontinent (India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), making it one of the largest population centres of Muslims in the world. Since Islam first entered India, it has contributed greatly to the area and its people. Today, numerous theories about how India came to be such a largely Muslim land exist. Politically, some (such as the Hindutva movement in India) try to make Islam seem foreign to India, by insisting it only exists because of invasions by Arab and Persian Muslims. The truth, however, is far from that.

The Earliest Muslim Indians

Even before the life of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) in the 600s, Arab traders were in contact with India. Merchants would regularly sail to the west coast of India to trade goods such as spices, gold, and African goods. Naturally, when the Arabs began to convert to Islam, they carried their new religion to the shores of India. The first mosque of India, the Cheraman Juma Masjid, was built in 629 (during the life of Prophet Muhammad) in Kerala, by the first Muslim from India, Cheraman Perumal Bhaskara Ravi Varma. Through continued trade between Arab Muslims and Indians, Islam continued to spread in coastal Indian cities and towns, both through immigration and conversion.

Muhammad bin Qasim

The first great expansion of Islam into India came during the Umayyad Dynasty of caliphs, who were based in Damascus. In 711,

the Umayyads appointed a young 17 year old man from Ta'if to extend Umayyad control into Sindh: Muhammad bin Qasim. Sindh is the land around the Indus River in the Northwestern part of the subcontinent, in present-day Pakistan. Muhammad bin Qasim led his army of 6,000 soldiers to the far eastern reaches of Persia, Makran.

He encountered little resistance as he made his way into India. When he reached the city of Nerun, on the banks of the Indus River, he was welcomed into the city by the Buddhist monks that controlled it. Most cities along the Indus thus voluntarily came under Muslim control, with no fighting. In some cases, oppressed Buddhist minorities reached out to the Muslim armies for protection against Hindu governors. Despite the support and approval of much of the population, the Raja of Sindh, Dahir, opposed the Muslim expansion and mobilized his army against Muhammad bin Qasim. In 712, the two armies met, with a decisive victory for the Muslims. With the victory, all of Sindh came under Muslim control.

It is important to note, however, that the population of Sindh was not forced to convert to Islam at all. In fact, for almost everyone, there was no change in day-to-day life. Muhammad bin Qasim promised security and religious freedom to all Hindus and Buddhists under his control. For example, the Brahman caste continued their jobs as tax collectors and Buddhists monks continued to maintain their monasteries. Due to his religious tolerance and justice, many cities regularly greeted him and his armies with people dancing and music.

Patterns of Conversion

The successive waves of Muslim armies penetrating into India followed much the same pattern. Leaders such as Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad Tughluq expanded Muslim political domains without altering the religious or social fabric of Indian society.

Because pre-Islamic India was entirely based on a caste system in which society was broken into separate parts, conversion to Islam happened in a step-by-step process. Often, entire castes would convert to Islam at a time. This would happen for many different reasons. Often, however, the equality Islam provided was more attractive than the caste system's organized racism. In the caste system, who you are born to determines your position in society. There was no opportunity for social mobility or to achieve greater than what your parents achieved. By converting to Islam, people had the opportunity to move up in society, and no longer were subservient to the Brahman caste.

Buddhism, which was once very popular in the subcontinent, slowly died out under Muslim rule. Traditionally, when people wanted to escape the caste system, they would move to the major population centres and convert to Buddhism. When Islam became an option, however, people began to convert to Islam instead of Buddhism, while still leaving the caste system. The myths of Islam violently destroying Buddhism in India are simply false. Buddhists were tolerated under Muslim rule and no evidence exists that shows forced conversions or violence against them.

Wandering teachers also had a major role in bringing Islam to the masses. Muslim scholars traveled throughout India, making it their goal to educate people about Islam. Many of them preached Sufi ideas, a more mystical approach to Islam that appealed to the people.

These teachers had a major role in bringing Islam to the masses in the countryside, not just the upper classes around the Muslim rulers.

Did Islam Spread by Force?

While some claim that Islam's huge population in India is a result of violence and forced conversion, the evidence does not back up this idea at all. Although Muslim leaders replaced Hindu kings in most areas, society was left as is. Stories of forced conversion are very few and often not credible enough to warrant academic discussion.

If Islam spread through violence and warfare, the Muslim community today in India would exist only in the areas closest to the rest of the Muslim world. Thus only the western part of the subcontinent would have any Muslim population at all. What we see instead is pockets of Islam throughout the subcontinent. For example, Bangladesh and its 150 million Muslims are in the far east, separated from other Muslim-majority areas by Hindu lands in India. Isolated communities of Muslims exist also exist in western Myanmar, central India, and eastern Sri Lanka. These communities of Muslims are proof of Islam spreading peacefully throughout India, regardless of whether or not a Muslim government existed there. If Islam spread by force as some claim, these communities of Muslims would not exist.

Conclusions

Islam is an integral part of India and its history. As the Indian subcontinent remains today a multi-ethnic and multi-religious place, it is important to understand the position Islam has in the region. The political claims that some making regarding Islam as if it is an invading religion and foreign to the people of India need to be defied with the truth of Islam's peaceful spread throughout India. ■

Muslim Philosophers And The Intellectual Sharing During Middle Ages

- Tauseef Ahmad Parray

Considering carefully the history of ideas, the relationship between Muslim world and Europe (West) is not one of 'Clash of Civilizations' and of conflict, but of co-operation, of ongoing communication and intellectual sharing as the communication between Islamic and Western civilizations has continued throughout the history, especially in the medieval period.

With the beginning of Abbasid era (in 750 CE), the Islamic Empire opened a new era in the domain of science and literature: the many sided cultural influence produced the early phase of the real scientific age of Islamic culture. The contribution to various fields/branches of knowledge - Medicine, Philosophy, Chemistry, Astronomy, Mathematics, History, Geography, Law, Theology, philology, etc. - by the Muslim scholars was great and impressive. A galaxy of brilliant scientists, philosophers, and scholars emerged during this age, making valuable contribution to the culture not only of Islam but of the whole world; directed their minds to every branch of human study and revolutionized thinking, feeling and action of man by the supremacy, power, and might of their pen.

As a galaxy of Muslim scholars made valuable contributions to various branches of knowledge, so their legacy is vast (and to recount in a few pages is very much difficult). For example, the contribution of such prominent personalities, viz, Al-Kindi, Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd and Al Ghazzali; such Arabic (Art) writings like Alf Laila wa Laila, Kalilah wa Dimnah, Sindbad, Ali Baba, Ruba'iyat of 'Umar al Khayyam etc. of the same period which have not only contributed to the European thought and culture but have influenced many great personalities of Europe (West) as well. They provide example and evidence both of cultural diffusion from Islam to Europe as well as of tolerance that the relationship between civilizations is not one of clash or domination, but rather of mutual relationships, co-existence, interdependence and brotherhood.

Prominent Muslim Philosophers of Medieval Period:

Muslim philosophers of this period were people of enormous scholarship and versatility, carrying on original thinking and research in various branches of knowledge (besides translating works of Greek philosophers, like Plato, Aristotle, etc.). They were able to develop their own system of thought in

various spheres of knowledge of the time. Al Kindi, al Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Abu Ma'shar al Falaki (Albumazar), Ibn al Haytham (Al-hazen), al Ghazali, Ibn Bajja (Avenpace) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and the like of these celebrated philosophers had built the strong and unbreakable link between nations and between civilizations. They paved the way for the release of reason from its strict confinement by pointing out that God does not create anything in vain. Holy Qur 'an in Sura Al Anbiya (21: 16) declares: "We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them for a (mere) play."

For example, the writings of Al-Kindi (801-873 CE) - unanimously hailed as the first Arab Muslim philosopher - on philosophy, astronomy, mathematics, politics and medicine, contributed widely to the European thought and culture. His works on Aristotle's *Novum Organon* were utilized by Roger Bacon and his contemporaries included Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas. Ibn Sina (980-1037 CE) - referred as 'Avicenna' in the Western literature - was an encyclopedic philosopher of universal learning, who surpassed all his predecessors in the fluency and the meticulousness of his style. Many western scholars including A. Maurer, Augustine, Frederick Charles Copleston and Parviz Morewedge provide remarks

appreciating the greatness of Ibn Sina. For Augustine, Ibn Sina's philosophy is a "highly personal achievement, ranking among the greatest in the history of philosophy". Similarly, for Copleston, "the greatest Muslim philosopher of the eastern group is without a doubt Avicenna or Ibn Sina, the real creator of a scholastic system in the Islamic world". Ibn Sina's *Qanon fi al- Tibb* (Cannon of Medicine), *Kitab Shifa'* (the Book of Healing), and *Kitab al-Najat* (the Book of Salvation) are among the great Encyclopedias of his philosophy which influenced the medieval European universities for centuries. His ideas left a strong impact on future Eastern and Western thought.

Ibn Rushd (1126-1198 CE) - who is referred as 'Averroes' in the Western literature - was another celebrated philosopher of medieval era, whose works are voluminous and on various fields of knowledge: Jurisprudence, Medicine, Philosophy, Astronomy, Physics and Grammar, etc. St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 CE) was greatly influenced by him. Many great personalities of medieval Europe translated the works of Ibn Rushd thereby showing his impact, influence and his contribution. By the end of 12th century, the most of his works were translated into Latin, some by Gerard of Cremona (1114 -1187 CE), Robert Grosseteste (d.1253 CE) and thus entered the mainstream of European

thought and culture, and the impact of his works was long to be felt. Thus, it is the commentaries of Ibn Rushd that led to his influence on Europe. Al-Ghazzali (1058-1111 CE) - the most famous Muslim philosopher, jurist and theologian - with his clarity of thought and force of argument was able to create a balance between religion and reason. He contributed in diverse fields of knowledge, and his most famous books include Tuhafat al Falasifa (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), Ihya al 'Ulum al Din (The Revival of the Sciences of Religion), 'al Munqidh (the Saviour), etc. Al Ghazzali's various works were translated into European languages and thus, entered the medieval European culture and thought. His theological doctrines penetrated Europe, influenced European scholasticism and several of his arguments seem to have been adopted by Archbishop Raymund I (1126-1151 CE) and by St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1294 CE) in his discussion of authority and reason.

Muslim Thought and the 'Age of Reason':

Consequently, the age of reason in Europe was certainly not isolated from the contribution of Muslim philosophers and their contribution to European thought and philosophy. As Muslim philosophers were also people of science and were much concerned with

the relationship between the Creator and the creation; the universe; life and humanity; so it is difficult to consider that the age of reason in Europe could have emerged/developed from vacuum.

Roger Bacon (121-1294 CE), St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1294 CE) and Robert Grosseteste (d.1253 CE) present a perfect picture of philosophers whose works are influenced mainly by Islamic philosophy, its subjects, aim and the language in which this philosophy was written. They learned much from al-Farabi's logical and political treatise and borrowed much of Ibn Sina's ontological scheme. Aquinas' Summa Theologica and Bacon's Opus Maius bear the influence and the impact of Islamic philosophy upon them. The 'theory of ignorance' of Roger Bacon was basically developed from Islamic and Christian sources. The word 'Ignorance' and its derivations are mentioned in the Qur'an as well as in the Old Testament. ('Ignorance' (jahl) and its derivations are mentioned in the Quran in 2: 273; 4: 17; 6: 35; 7: 199; 11: 46,47; 12: 33; 39: 64).

By way of conclusion, I would like to argue that there have been strong connections between Islam and the West with regard to the world of thought, philosophic and rational speculation, and that the link between Islam and the West is unbreakable. Communication between Islamic and Western civilizations continued throughout history.

What is there then to stop such a peaceful and productive connection from existing today? What is there then to change the natural course of such a harmonious relationship between these civilizations?

When we consider carefully the history of ideas, it seems that the relationship between the Muslim world and that of Christian Europe was not one of a 'Clash of Civilizations', but of ongoing communication and intellectual sharing. Furthermore, it is safe to argue that medieval Islamic philosophy was instrumental in the revival of philosophizing in Europe in the middle ages. By developing an original

philosophical culture by these Muslim philosophers, had a considerable impact on the subsequent course of Western philosophy. The medieval period also provides examples and evidences - both of cultural diffusion from Islam to Europe as well as of tolerance - that unfold and reveal that the relationship between civilizations is not one of clash or domination, but rather of mutual relationships, co-existence, interdependence and brotherhood. ■

(Tauseef Ahmad Parray, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Islamic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Aligarh, India)

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pillars i.e. Prayer, Zakat, Fast and Hajj. It is, however, wrong to say that no space has been set apart for moral conduct and behavior in this Islamic structure. While exhorting the Muslims to observe prayer, it has been said that it forbids indecency and repugnant things (29: 45). Fast teaches us piety and self-control. Similarly Zakat inculcates in us the sentiments of sympathy, cooperation with our brothers who are in need or difficulty. Hajj is also a means of cooperation and help for our companions of Hajj and reforms our character by enforcing discipline in us without which the Manasik-e-Hajj (rituals of Hajj) cannot be performed accurately. It is clear that the main aim behind these fundamental articles of Faith is to reform the morals in the believers and foster the sentiments of mutual love and cooperation and sense of realization for each other's help in need. (Siratun Nabi)

It is obvious from the above mentioned Traditions of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that we are responsible for our respective deeds. To do away with evils, to do righteous and virtuous deeds and call people towards the right path should be a bounden duty of us. For we have been created for this noble cause. As the holy Qur'an says: "You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind. Enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong." (S. 3, A. 110) The Holy Prophet said: "Allah will help a slave as long as that slave helps his brothers." ♦

How To Be A Good Human Being

- Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Our stay in this world is transitory. Muslims believe that what they sow and cultivate here, would be rewarded in the Hereafter. Accordingly it is imperative to perform good acts and avoid evils. The service to humanity is the greatest form of adoration. It should be kept in mind that merely to feed the poor and to clothe them are not sufficient. On the contrary its ramifications are quite broad. Besides giving help to the destitute, all humanitarian works should be considered as service to humanity. We should save people from oppressions and atrocities irrespective of their religious affinity.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Help your brother whether he is oppressed or oppressor. His companions asked, how could we help if he is oppressor? The Prophet replied: "Stop him from oppression".

As human being great responsibility lies on us. If a person does not share other's sufferings and woes, he lacks human values. In this context Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH)'s thought-provoking words are worth quoting. He says: "The heart which does not feel pain of others is not a human heart; it is the heart of lion. The eye which does not become wet is not a human eye; it is the eye of a daffodil. The forehead which does not become wet with the perspiration of

penitence is not a human forehead; it is a piece of rock. The hand which does not move forward to service humanity is virtually paralysed and lifeless. The claw of a lion is better than that hand of a person which cuts the throat of another human being." (Islam An Introduction, p. 153)

H. Rahman Khan, a noted scholar, had rightly said: "As an outcome of the materialistic concept of life mankind today faces crisis, which perhaps has no parallel in history. This crisis, pervading all the spheres of human life, has taken the form of universal revolt against religion. A psychological analysis of this situation reveals that it is the end-product of a basic feeling of insecurity. The world today stands at the edge of destruction. The threat of atomic war hangs over our heads. This humanity, if it wants to survive, has no option but to break away from the concept of materialism and humbly look up to the Divine guidance for peace and prosperity in the world. Choice between destruction and survival must be made some day sooner the better."

This menace (Materialism) has stopped us from doing acts of reformation and amelioration. Today corruption and other evils are rampant in the society. No one raises voice against them nor try to stop them, whereas the prophet said: "Whoever amongst you sees an evil he

should try to change it by his hands (i.e. using force) and if he can not do that he should use his tongue (to condemn it). And if he has not that much courage at least he should realize in his heart that it is bad and this is the lowest stage of Iman." (Muslim)

Holy Prophet in above mentioned Tradition has stated three stages of reformation. 1. If one sees an evil, one should change it by one's hand; 2. If one dares not to do so, one should use tongue; 3. If one has no courage to use tongue, one should realize in one's heart that it is bad and this is the lowest stage of Iman. No doubt, if we keep this saying of prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in view and act accordingly, a lot of evil practices may come to an end.

By doing social service we may attain pleasure of God. Service to mankind is service to God. Hence we should earn more and more virtues and preserve a great deal of provisions for the Day of Judgement. The holy Prophet says: "Feet of children of Adam would not move on the Day of Judgement until they reply five questions:

1. In which work he has spent his precious life?
2. How he utilized his knowledge?
3. From where did he obtain his livelihood and in what ways and by what methods he spent it?
4. How he spent his physical and mental energies and finally:

5. What portion or percentage of that goes in favour of Allah"?

According to Islam, every person is responsible for his own' work. The holy Qur'an says: "Nor can a bearer of burdens bear another's burden." (S. 35, A 18). The Holy Prophet said: "Beware, everyone of you is a shepherd and every one of you is answerable with regard to his flock. The caliph is shepherd over the people and he shall be questioned about his subjects as to how he conducted their affair. A man is a guardian over the members of his family and shall be questioned about them as to how he looked after their physical and moral being. A woman is a guardian over the household of her husband managed the household and brought up the children. A slave is a guardian over the property of his master and shall be questioned about it as to how he safeguarded his trust. Beware, everyone of you is a guardian and everyone of you shall be questioned with regard to his trust." (Muslim) He further said: "Allah created three things with His Hand. He created Adam with His Hand; He wrote the Torah with His Hand and He created Firdaus (Paradise) with His Hand. He then said; "By my Glory, neither a drunkard nor a dayyooth will live in it". The companions asked: "a Messenger of Allah, we know the drunkard, but who is the dayyooth?" He replied: "One who consents to evil in his family."

According to some Ahadith, after Iman, the edifice of Islam is built on four

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The Noxious and Pernicious Effects of Drinking Wine on the Human Body

- Hothaifa Ahmad Alkharrat

The arrival of the religion of Islam brought with it guidance and enjoins its followers to preserve and protect the following five fundamental principles, their religion their soul, their reason, heritage and properties. It deems it an unlawful violation to offend these principles in any way and forbids the infringement or deterioration of them to any degree be it minor or major.

There is no greater violence to these five fundamental principles, no greater wound to their existence than the effects produced by the drinking of wine. There is no more noxious substance that carries even within its own name such harmful traits.

Scientists continue to uncover new dimensions of the harmful effects of alcoholic beverages. From time immemorial until the present day scholars have identified and witnessed the devastating effects of the harmful substance. The drinking of wine is one of the forbidden activities, along with gambling, the dedication of stones and divination described in the Qur'an as being connected with the works of the Devil. (Q5:90).

Drinking alcoholic beverages continues to attract the earnest attention of students and researchers, in

particular for its many harmful effects on the individual, on families and on society. Our paper however for the present will limit itself to the inquiries of a strictly medical nature, as it would be beyond the scope of this study to address all the many possible approaches to the multifarious effect of alcohol.

Wine and similar beverages belong to a large family of chemicals, organic compounds generally known as Alcohols. Chemical textbooks describe them as colourless liquid poisons. They are flammable, evaporate quickly, have a pungent taste and are easily dissolved water or oils.

The detrimental effects of wine-drinking appear on many tissues of the body. No organ is safe from its damaging effects. In this paper we will present this damage, in turn, on each of the bodies functional systems. We will expose the grave dangers associated with problem drinking, and its results on mind and body.

No sooner does a drinker take a swallow of wine than the molecules settle in the stomach and are quickly absorbed by the stomach and the small intestine. After this the molecules pass quickly into the blood stream which carries this poison to the various organs

of the body. This deadly poison eventually arrives throughout the body without exception.

It has been observed that the concentration of alcohol on the body is directly proportional to its concentration in the blood. This means that the concentration, along with its damaging effects, is not diluted, or weakened as it is transported from tissue to tissue, from one organ to another.

The blood circulatory system of the body carries the alcoholic beverage from the stomach to the intestines then towards the liver, from there to the heart where it is pumped to the lungs, to the brain and all the other organs of the body. It finally exits the body by being exhaled by the lungs, or eliminated in the urine. It is also eliminated through the sweat glands, the tear ducts and also expressed in the milk of nursing mothers.

The Effects of Wine on the health of the Digestive System

The effects of wine drinking show themselves on all the tissues of the digestive system beginning with the mouth. There it increases the incidence of inflammation of the tongue, a condition known as "Glossitis". This condition reduces the body's ability to absorb vitamin B. Other symptoms of this condition are difficulty in swallowing, malnutrition, atrophy of the taste buds of the tongue resulting in a weakening

of the sense of taste.

Alcohol has the well-known ability to stimulate the gastric glands of the stomach to secrete increased quantities of acidic gastric fluids. This consequently puts stress on the stomach resulting in Peptic Ulcers. The drinker may also be afflicted with acute inflammation of the stomach lining, known as "Gastritis", leading to bleeding in the digestive tract.

Other complaints often heard from drinkers of alcoholic beverages are loss of appetite, digestive discomfort, diarrhea, intestinal pain, vomit mixed with blood, nausea, and excessive belching. These all result from the repeated irritation and inflammation of the linings of the digestive tract.

A popular misconception claims that alcohol is a source of indispensable nutrients that give the body energy. In fact alcohol leaches the body of important elements, minerals, vitamins and proteins. It also inhibits the body's ability to absorb elements and nutrients, minerals, vitamins and proteins. Although it leads to a temporary illusion of strength and warmth, this pleasurable perception is a false illusion that is followed by a sense of profound regret and loss.

Moreover drinking alcohol facilitates the absorption of other noxious elements such as oils and cholesterol which are absorbed through

the cells lining the intestines. This results in the increase levels of these oils in the blood, which threatens the health of the heart and the entire vascular system.

The Effects of Wine on the health of the Heart and the Vascular System

Scientific research continues to document the effect of drinking alcoholic beverages on the health of the heart and the vascular system. It is widely known that this causes an increase in the heart rate, a phenomenon known as "Palpitation". It also plays a role in raising the blood pressure, known as "Hypertension", and causes the blood vessels near the surface of the skin to become engorged in an unnatural way giving the appearance of a red congestion due to the stagnant accumulation of blood.

Comparative studies have shown the occurrence of sudden death amongst wine drinkers. This appears to be caused by a combination of the weakening of the heart muscles "Cardiomyopathy", the disruption of the rhythm of the heart beat "Dysrhythmia", and the constricting of the coronary arteries.

There are many other ways in which alcoholic beverages can weaken the health of the heart. These include an increase in the level of fat in the blood leading to increase in the level of cholesterol and triglycerides. These then play a role in the hardening of the walls of the arteries and gradually

constricting their lumen, thus limiting the supply of nourishment provided by the blood flow. This is known in medical publications as "Infarction and Ischemia".

Alcohol reduces the effectiveness and weakens the strength heart muscles. This results in a lowering of the hearts ability to pump blood through the body. It attacks the tissues of muscle fibres leading to their decay and "Degeneration". It also reduces the vitality of the muscle enzymes.

Effects of Wine on the Liver and Glands of the Body

Alcohol is one of the principal causes of various diseases of the liver. It is the cause of many destructive Metabolic Effects to the cells of the liver. Drinking alcohol increases the level of fat in the blood which leads to the accumulation of this fat in the cells of the liver. This is known in the medical literature as "Fatty Liver Disease". This gives rise to swelling and increased mass and subsequently afflicts the liver two conditions known as "Cirrhosis" and "Fibrosis". These transform the healthy tissues of the liver into an unhealthy tissue of no benefit.

The effects of wine are sometimes paradoxical. On one hand for instance, in the regulation of blood sugar level, it leads to the inability of the liver to store sugar thus creating a depletion of sugar in that organ. On the other hand it raises the blood sugar level

in the blood contributing to the condition known as "Diabetes".

Alcohol is also considered amongst the most addictive substances. It causes severe inflammation of the Pancreas. This manifests with symptoms of severe intestinal pain known as "Pancreatitis". Other symptoms of this condition include bleeding and decay of the pancreatic cells known as "Necrosis".

Drinking alcohol also causes severe disruptions of the body's Metabolism. It reduces the effectiveness of proteins by lowering the livers ability to store vitamins and minerals. A common condition of alcoholics resulting from the absence of important minerals is a delay in the healing of wounds and an overall sense of fatigue.

Alcohol also has a destructive effect on the glands of the reproductive system. Prolonged drinking eventually lead to sexual dysfunction and finally to infertility. Habitual male drinkers are prone to experience atrophy of their testes, a drop in the level of the male hormone, a reduction in production of semen as well as the malformation and dysfunction of the individual semen cells. Men also experience an increase in the production of the female hormone "Estrogen" which leads the body to exhibit female characteristics such as enlargement of the breast and loss of

body hair.

The drinking of alcohol is no less disruptive to the female reproductive system. The ovaries become emaciated, the menstrual cycles are disrupted and the incidence of spontaneous abortion increases. Breast tissue is damaged resulting in a loss of mother's ability to produce breast milk.

The Effects of Alcohol on the Urinary Tract

Alcohol increases the body's flow of liquid through the urinary tract resulting in a significant loss of water and beneficial minerals. This leads to a dryness of the tissues of the internal organs and the corresponding loss of nutritious minerals. The increase of organic oils in the blood experienced by alcoholics is another destructive effect of alcoholic drinks. The kidneys, which are responsible for eliminating waste elements, are overburdened with the function of eliminating these oils from the blood stream. They eventually become exhausted by this overwork and this may lead to their failure. This may also be accompanied, through lack of proper kidney function, by the loss through the urine of elements in the blood which are essential to the good health of the body, such as red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets.

The organs of the urinary tract of the habitual drinker are also afflicted

with Atrophy” and “Fibrosis”, as well as Stones that develop as accretions in various organs from the oily sediment. These stones are then themselves the cause of many other ailments.

Effects of Alcohol on the Nervous System

Wine targets those areas of the brain which are essential for life functions such as memory, speech, conduct and movement. The addiction to alcohol disrupts the functions of the Cerebellum which regulates our sense of balance. It causes loss of motor skills and speech skills. Thus someone who is drunk cannot walk properly, often cannot stand straight, staggering and swaying to the left and to the right.

From another approach we see that alcohol reduces the powers of our intellect, our ability to learn and our attention span. It also weakens our memory, dulls the sharpness of our concentration, and dissipates our faculty of discretion and wisdom. The drinker loses those special qualities with which God has endowed mankind such as the blessing of reason causing him to descend to the level of an animal with no restraints or self-control, those higher qualities which are a function of the Cerebral Cortex, which regulates and guides our thoughts and our senses as well as the coordination of the body's muscles.

The liver fails as it attempts to carry the burden of the alcoholic toxins

that accumulate in the blood stream of the drinker. Among these toxins is “Ammonia” which eventually reaches the brain and penetrates the cells of the brain leading to a loss of consciousness.

The increase of alcohol in the blood stream of the body eventually affects breathing control centres of the brain. In many cases this leads to a complete respiratory failure, which leads to death.

In addition to the above the habitual drinker also suffers from the following: tremors, hallucinations and generally what is known in the medical literature as “Neuropathy”, a condition where the brain is disposed towards a form of disintegration. The cells and the nerves appear to dissolve. The use of X-ray equipment reveals this loss of this brain mass.

Alcohol constricts the blood vessels that supply essential oxygen to the brain. This could result in spontaneous bleeding which may lead to death. Excessive drinking leads to a condition where the patient loses awareness and any signs of conscious activity, and falls into what is known as a “Stupor”. He loses his ability to respond to external stimuli. The five senses no longer function. A Coma or even death may ensue.

Alcohol effects on the Ambulatory System

Alcohol is known to inflict sudden and acute pain on the muscles of the

body. It also weakens and vitiates the muscle causing the cells to decay and die in a condition known as "Muscle Necrosis". This is due to the presence of alcoholic toxins in the cells of the muscle tissue. These toxins diminish the ability of blood to nourish the cells with essential elements such as potassium and magnesium which are necessary to build muscle mass.

Habitual drinkers experience a painful condition of the joints known as "Gout". This leads to inflammation of the joints and chronic constipation. The patient experiences extreme pain and deformation of the joints.

The bones become weak because alcohol leaches the nutrients necessary for healthy bone structure. They become more susceptible to breaking and to the conditions of fragility known as "Osteoporosis", and a softening of the bone matter known as "Osteomalacia".

Alcohol and Diseases of the Blood and Cancer

Alcohol brings about harm to all the parts of the circulatory system. It causes the blood cells to malfunction, and diminishes their ability to carry oxygen to the body. This leads to anemia and reduces the capability and number of white blood cells produced the body, resulting in the overall reduction of the body's immunity and increases its susceptibility to various inflammatory conditions such as Tuberculosis, and

eventually inflammation of the lungs.

Alcohol weakens the Platelets and reduces their recuperative influence. The blood vessels become fragile and easily damaged leading in many cases to excessive bleeding. Alcohol also contributes to the growth of cancer cells. The toxic molecules of alcohol such as Polycyclic Hydrocarbons. Asperigillus and Nitrosamines insert themselves into the healthy cells of the body and trigger the growth of cancer cells. From this we observe incidents of cancer in the mouth, throat, tongue, esophagus, stomach, intestines, pancreas and breast.

Psychological issues associated with Alcohol Consumption

Alcohol is no less damaging to the drinkers' personality than it is to their body. Alcohol damages the Brain Cortex which degenerates bit by bit. This brings about disjointed speech and illusory visions. The drinker loses his sense of shame and often times suffers from a loss of memory, depression, distress, insomnia and in the worst of cases this leads the patient to suicide in order to escape his painful condition.

Another disorder that results from the deterioration of the brain cells is known as "Dementia". The patient experiences auditory and vision hallucinations and imagines non-existent impressions. He becomes frightened, confused and distressed by

strange sounds in his surroundings.

The Consequences of Strong Drink on Other Organs of the Body

There is hardly any tissue in any part of the body that is not affected by the harm brought about by addiction to this pernicious fluid. We have only mentioned some of the many disorders. To mention but a few more there is the damage that occurs to the eyes, due to the degeneration of the Optic Nerve. This may cause the onset of sudden blindness or one of many other conditions such as Occlusion of the Retina and colour blindness. Alcoholics will often suffer from Psoriasis. Seborrhic Dermatitis, Eczema, Fungal Infection and discoloration of the Skin Pigmentation.

Inflammation of the pharynx leads to Pharyngitis which impedes an individual's speech ability. The teeth can be prone to decay which can lead to ulcers in the mouth and inflammation of the Salivary Glands.

The constituent elements of alcohol have the ability to cross the Placenta quickly transiting from the mother to the foetus. The mother risks the health of the unborn child as relentlessly as if she was threatening the foetus with a sharp instrument.

The mother will often experience a spontaneous abortion or may find that foetus afflicted with Growth Retardation. If they come to term the children of these

mothers will experience congenital deformities such as reduction in the mass of the head, feebleness of the ears, frailty of the valves of the heart and of the bones. The child will often be the victim of mental retardation.

Islam succeeded in bringing a great blessing to society when it called for the prohibition of wine and warned people against its use many years before the scholars of the west became aware of it and began their struggle against it. A religion such as Islam deserves to be followed and its teachings are worthy of emulation. The statements of the Noble Apostle ring true when he says "Wine is the slim of all sins" and further, "Stay clear of wine for it is the mother of all indecencies."

In light of all this it is important for us to appreciate and understand that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) lived in an age when most people were fond of drinking wine. Who could have taught him the lethal effects of alcohol on the body? Who guided him to shun this noxious and offensive evil? This could only have been inspired by the Creator of this body. How wonderful it would be for the one whom summons the people to Islam to be able to stand before them with sound mind and a healthy body as living proof of the dangers of wine, thus vindicating the salutary nature and character of the teachings of Islam. ■

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