

THE REVOLUTION OF THE TRANSCENDENCE

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1 - Introduction

1-1. Contrary to the general and common idea that Islam etymologically means submission, surrendering, servitude or even slavery, this paper tries to prove just the opposite, that Islam is a protest, an opposition and a revolution. The term *Aslama*, in fact, is ambiguous. It means to surrender to God, not to yield to any other power. It implies a double act: first, a rejection of all non-Transcendental yokes; and second, an acceptance of the Transcendental Power. Islam, by this function, is a double act of negation and affirmation. This double act is expressed in the utterance “I witness that there is no god except the God.”

1-2. This ambiguity of the verb *Aslama* and the noun *Islam* has been intentionally misused to tilt *Islam* on one of its sides, namely that of submission. Afterwards, the submission to the ruler is substituted for the submission to God, once the individual consciousness is psychologically oriented to submission. The intention of this study is to show the other aspect of *Islam*, intentionally hidden, namely the rejection, the opposition and the revolt, taking into consideration the actual needs of the Muslim Masses. Since any religion, including *Islam*, is anchored in society, it takes on the societal shape, social structure and political power of the society in question. The ambiguity of the word *Islam* is consequently a reflection of the dual sociopolitical structure of society: *Islam* as both submission to the political power and the upper classes, and as revolt by the ruled majority and the poor classes.

1-3. Therefore, by concentrating the double-meaning of *Islam* on only one of the two meanings, submission or revolt, one is not really engaging in disinterested research for the sake of formulating a theory, but is rather

involved in the choice of a practical option, whether to defend the status quo of political regimes through the interpretation of Islam as submission, or to initiate a socio-political change against the status quo by interpreting Islam as revolt. The conflict of interpretations is not a theoretical, scientific and purely academic conflict, but rather a power struggle between the ruling elite and the upper classes interested in the continuation of the status quo on the one hand, and the ruled majority and the poor class interested in social change on the other hand. This study on the revolution of the Transcendence is not only a theory but also a practice. It is a part of the research which is taking into consideration the actual state of the art in Islamic Studies.

1-4. The term “Transcendence” is used instead of the term “God”. The term “God” has been so often used with different meanings, concepts and usages that it has become unoperational, whether it be in everyday expression or in scholarly communication. It is fully loaded with conceptions and misconceptions through the repetition of its common usages, supported mostly by Dictionaries and history of religions textbooks. On the contrary, the term “Transcendence” is less loaded with misconceptions and can be used more easily in expressing and communicating any new idea such as the other meaning of the word Islam, namely, revolt, rejection, opposition and revolution. The term “Transcendence” is non-anthropomorphic, impersonal, rational, universal, non-theological, and non-sectarian. It can be understood by all rational human beings. It is a common experience in all religions. It expresses a human experience, common to every one, going always beyond the limits of given situations.

1-5. The revolt of the Transcendence can be understood by everybody, irrespective of his religion, his sect or his ideology. Although the case of Islam is specific, it can be generalized and extended to all other cases through asking the famous question: is religion the “opium of the people” or the “sigh of the oppressed”? Is the “Perception of Desirable Society” a wishful thought, an alienation from the real world, or is it an alternative ideology for the status quo, an active plan for the future? The Transcendence can then be a dialogue, a theme not only in regard to religion, but also between religions and philosophies. It offers a common ground for interreligious as well as intercultural dialogue.

1-6. Selection of Sources

Only primary sources have been used to substantiate the theoretical underpinnings of this study. The Qur’an is the first source of Islam. The

Hadith is a secondary source. For a third, Islamic disciplines include theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, and mysticism. Because traditional studies on Islamic political thought have been based primarily on theology, the result has been that the doctrine of the Imamate or jurisprudence, the qualities, the nomination and the replacement and restoration of the Imam, may have tended to concentrate on speculative argument and legal reasoning at the expense of the Qur'an. The "Revolution of Transcendence", therefore, restores the Qur'an as its primary source. Content analysis of scriptural arguments is relevant to the phenomenological description of the meanings as essences in living experiences. Exhaustive references make scholarship an end in itself. A simple, clear and evident description is sometimes more persuasive than mere accumulation of marginal notes.

2 - The Autonomy of Reason

1-2. The Transcendence is a reality that can be conceived of by Human Reason. Any affirmation beyond human reason is impossible, since an affirmation needs to be understood by reason and expressed in words. The Transcendence is not an arbitrary decision of the Will expressing a personal faith or a group choice. The Transcendence has no particularities or preferences contrary to its Universalism. The Transcendence as an act of the soul or of pure feeling is not enough as an act of cognition. A feeling is a common human experience generated in situations, while the meaning is the universal essence of these experiences, understood by human reason. That is why communication between individuals, mutual consultations and converging views are possible¹. Reflection on revelation, nature and human destiny would lead to the Transcendence as an overall reality transpiring everywhere. The Transcendence is not an external and visible object to be reflected upon by a subject, but the whole of Reality including the object and the subject together.

2-2 Reality and Transcendence

Therefore the Transcendence is a demonstrable reality, as Reason is a demonstrative faculty. Demonstration is the link between Transcendence and Reason, between Objectivity and Subjectivity. This demonstrable Truth

¹ The Qur'an uses the motto "Don't you reason?" 19 times, "in order that you may reason" 8 times, and "if you reason" twice.

and demonstrative Reason formed one element in Islamic classical logic, namely, “the negation of the indemonstrable.” Only the demonstrable can be the subject of a logical affirmation or negation. Here Demonstration is equal to Reality. Epistemology is identical to Ontology. Revelation itself is called demonstration, not a dogmatic affirmation of a simple decision of an Absolute Will. A demonstration is an act of reason, not a wishful thought. It is binding for the individual and for the society. It can include several proofs. Consequently, Monotheism can be proved and polytheism disproved. A demonstration is not only a rational formal argument, but a concrete sign. It has its practical implication in the reorientation of human action according to the universal rule of reason².

2-3. Once the Transcendence is conceived of by Human Reason, it leaves its fingerprint on it. The conceived Transcendence becomes a Reality for Reason. The Transcendence becomes the main function of Reason. Etymologically, Transcendence is from the verb *Transcendere*, which means “to go beyond”. Therefore, Human Reason can never stop in reasoning, formulating or exploring. There is no final word on anything. This is to protect reason against dogmatism and fixity and to motivate it to the perpetual advancement of learning. There are no limits, neither for Reason to know, nor for reality to be known. However, dogmatism may come out of imitation of the ancestors or human passions and desires³.

² The word demonstration (*Burhan*) appeared in the Qur’an 8 times. “O mankind! Verily there hath come to you a convincing proof from your Lord. For we have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest” (4:174). Those are their (vain) desires. Say, “Produce your proof if you are truthful” (2:111); “And from each people we shall draw a witness and we shall say: Produce your proof. Then shall they know that the truth is in God (alone) and the (lies) which they invented will leave them in the lurch” (28:75); “Or have they taken for worship (other) gods besides Him.” Say, “Bring your convincing proof.” (21:24); “(Can there be another God besides God?” Say: “Bring forth your argumentation if you are telling the truth”(27:64); “If anyone invokes, beside God any other god, he has no authority therefore and his reckoning will be with his Lord” (23:11); There are two credentials from the Lord to pharaoh and his chief” (28:32); “And (with passion) did she desire him, and he would have desired her, but that he saw the evidence of his Lord” (12:24).

³ The word “fathers,” with the three adjective pronouns “Our,” “Your,” and “their,” is used in the Qur’an 64 times especially with the pronoun “our” to indicate the imitation of the Past as a source of dogmatism. “When it is said to them: follow what God hath revealed,” they say: “Nay, We shall follow the ways of our Fathers.” What! even though their fathers, were void of wisdom and guidance” (2-170); When it is said to them: Come to what God hath revealed; come to the Apostle, they say: Enough for us are the ways we found our fathers following. What! Even though their fathers were void of knowledge and guidance” (5:104); When they do ought that is shameful, they say: We found our fathers

2-4. Since Transcendence is a Knowable Reality and since Reason is a Knowing faculty, there is no room for systematic skepticism, agnosticism, relativism or nihilism. Methodological doubt, the rejection of past knowledge, the limits of previous formulations, all are permissible in order to go beyond the spirit of the time, the language, the scheme, the image of a historical period, and the necessities of practical life in given situations. This infinite progress in human knowledge is motivated by a desire for a better and more accurate knowledge of the knowable reality and is based on confidence in human reason. Indefinite divergency is a negation of truth⁴. Conjecture is not certainty. Indefinite conjectures are not alternatives for certainty. Hypotheses do not spare science. Conjectures are related to passions and desires, while certainty is a dictum of human reason⁵.

2-5. Reason is not formal and abstract, but is linked to experiences and to the concrete analyses of data. Reasoning is only one of its functions. The Testimony of the senses, perceptions, and living experiences are aspects of human reason. That is why Transcendence is the basis not only of mathematical sciences, infinitesimal calculus and Universal Ethics, but is also the foundation of the natural sciences, based on experiences and observations of nature.⁶

doing so, etc.” (7:28); They said: Hast thou come to us to turn us away from these ways we found out fathers following” (10:78); “Behold, he said to his father and his people, what are these images to which ye are (so assiduously) devoted? They said, We found our fathers worshipping them”(21:53) They said: But we found our fathers doing thus (what we do)” (26:74); “Nay!They say: We found our fathers following a certain religion and we do guide ourselves by their footsteps” (43:22); “Just the same way, whenever we send a Warner before the to any people, the wealthy ones among them said: we found our fathers following a certain religion and we will certainly follow in their footsteps” (43:23).

⁴ “Had those who differ therein are full of doubts with (no certain knowledge) but only, conjecture to follow (4:157); “But we are really in suspicious(disquieting) doubt as that to which thou invitest us” (11:62; 14:9; 34:54; 41:45); “They are in doubt and uncertainty there advent. They are blind thereunto” (27:66). The word conjecture is used 69 times.

⁵ “They follow nothing but conjecture” (6:116; 6:148; 10:66). “They follow nothing but conjecture and what their own souls desire” (53:23); “But most of them follow nothing but fancy. Truly fancy can be no avail against truth.” (10:36); But they have no knowledge therein. They follow nothing but conjecture, and conjecture avails nothing against truth” (53:28).

⁶ The word Reason (Aql) and its derivatives are mentioned in the Qur’an 49 times, 5 times linked to the senses, especially hearing and seeing; “They will further say: had we but listened or used our intelligence (67: 10); “The parable of those who reject faith is as if one were to shout like a goat-herd, to things that listen to nothing but calls and cries; deaf, dumb and blind. They are void of wisdom” (2:171); “Nor be like those who say: “we

2-6. Finally, the Transcendence is equal to the freedom of thought. The revolution of the Transcendence appears in Human Reason as a rejection of the two opposite failures, dogmatism and skepticism, thereby making room for constant research into a focal middle, a converging point of the two extremes, *Solvitur in excelsis*⁷. The Transcendence is the convergence of the Ideal and the Real in human reason and via human action. The Transcendence is the life of the soul and the history of Reason.

3 - The Order of Nature

3-1. The Transcendence appears in Nature as a concrete manifestation. The Transcendence as an image is reflected in Nature as a mirror. Transcendence and Nature are two aspects of the same reality, the seen and the unseen, the visible and the invisible, the known and the unknown, also described by philosophers as the sensible and the intelligible, the concrete and the abstract, the material and the formal, the particular and the general, the individual and the universal, the Real and the Ideal. The unseen is not only the concrete present but also the expected future. The unseen is not only the invisible but also the unknown. The unknown is even much more important than the known in inciting human reason to further exploration of the unknown world⁸.

3-2. Since the Transcendence is the realm of Eternity, Nature is likewise. Natural laws conform and are permanent. Wisdom and Providence require a “livable” Nature with determined laws. Everything in Nature follows its natural order. The order is a manifestation of the Will. Etymologically, the word order or just measure (*Aqdar*) is from the same root as the word power (*Qudra*). The world is created according to the just measure. The

hear but listen not. For the worst of beasts in the sight of God are the deaf and the dumb, those who understand not” (8:21.22); “Among them are some who (pretend to) listen to thee, but canst thou make the deaf to hear, even though they are without understanding. And among them are some who look at thee, but canst thou guide the blind, even though they will not see” (10:42-43); “Or thinkest thou that most of them listen or understand? They are only like cattle; Nay, they are worse astray in path” (25:44).

⁷ Thus have we made of you an *Ummat*, justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations (2:143).

⁸ The World is described in the Qur’an as the World of the Unseen (*Ghaib*) and the seen (*Shhada*) 10 times. The World Unknown (*Gaib*) is used alone 54 times.

link between Qadar and Quadra is Taqdir which means the creation of the world according to the just measure (Miqdar)⁽⁹⁾.

All natural phenomena duly follow natural laws, such as appear in the movements of the stars and the planets⁽¹⁰⁾. Also, history is an amplified form of Nature, which follows its own determined laws. Nature is the history of things, and history is the nature of societies and Nations⁽¹¹⁾.

3-3. Nature reflects the Transcendence as life⁽¹²⁾. The life cycle in Nature is a manifestation of the Transcendence, a passage from life to death and from death to life as a continuous process⁽¹³⁾. Resurrection is a victory of life over death⁽¹⁴⁾. The cycle of life and death is not only in man but also in Nature, as

⁹ The word qadar appears in the Qur'an 7 times, such as "Verily, all things have we created in proportion and measure" (54:49); "Every single thing is before his sight in due proportion" (13:8).

¹⁰ "And the Sun runs his course for a period determined for him... and the moon we have measured for her mansions (to traverse) till she returns like the old (and withered) lower part of a date-stalk. It is not permitted to the sun to catch up the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. Each (just) swims along (its own) orbit (according to Law)" (36:38-40).

¹¹ The word Sunna, which means law, is mentioned in the Qur'an 16 times (13 singular and 3 plural). The Qur'anic motto is "No change will thou find in the practice (approved) of God" (33:62; 35:43; 48:23); or "No turning off wilt thou find in God's way (of dealing) (35:43; 17:77). "Many were the ways of life that have passed away before you. Travel through the earth and see what was the end of those who rejected Truth." (3:137).

¹² The word life (Hayat) and its derivatives are mentioned in the Qur'an 190 times. The cycle of life and death appears in many verses such as: He said "Therein shall ye live, and therein shall ye die, but from it shall ye be taken out (at last)" (7:25). It is he who gave you life, will cause you to die, and will again give you life" (22:66); it is he who brings out the living from the dead, and brings out the dead from the living, and who gives life to the earth after it is dead. And thus shall ye be brought out (from the dead)" (30:19); how can ye reject the faith in God? Seeing that ye were without life, and he gave you life. Then will he cause you to die, and will again bring you to yourself. Further, he has provided for your sustenance; then he will cause you to die, and again he will give you life" (30:40).

¹³ "In the rain which God sends down from the skies and the life which he gives therewith to an earth that is dead". (2:164) "And God sends down rain from the skies, and gives therewith life to the earth after its death" (16:65); "And the fact that God sends down sustenance from the sky, and revives therewith the earth after its death..."(45:5); And if indeed Thou ask them who it is that sends down rain from the sky, and gives life therewith to the earth after its death, they will certainly reply, God!"(29:63); "A sign for them is the earth that is dead. We do give it life" (36:33); "And we send down pure water from the sky that with it we may give life to a dead land..." (25:48-49). "And he sends down rains from the sky and with it gives life to the earth after it is dead" (30:24;30:50).

¹⁴ The word sign (Ayat), with its derivatives, is used in the Qur'an 382 times. The natural sign appears in: "And how many signs in the heavens and the earth do they pass

in the passage from dryness to water, from yellow to green, from the desert to agriculture, from the falling rain to the growing trees, the blooming desert, whether naturally or through Man's labor all are signs of Transcendence.

3-4. Nature is an "ensemble" of signs (Ayat), referring to the Transcendence. Nature is not denuded of significance. The signs are the link between Nature and the Transcendence. The natural sign is a concrete indicator referring to the Transcendence. Heavens and Earth are full of such signs: the sun, the moon, the stars, the lightning, the winds, and the clouds. The natural sign can be spectacular, in order to strike the senses and cause astonishment. It becomes a "miracle," an overwhelming presence of Nature, invading the senses and inviting man to think with his reason. The previous prophets, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, used such signs as manifestations of Divine Power⁽¹⁵⁾. The purpose of the sign is to stimulate man to think and to infer⁽¹⁶⁾. A sign can be also a symbol, indicating the realm of the Transcendence, an eschatological sign referring to another world⁽¹⁷⁾. Finally, the Quranic verse is itself a sign coming from the Sender indicating his presence and bringing the whole world to him again⁽¹⁸⁾.

3-5. The vocation of man on Earth is to work and fulfill God's message. Nature is good and Man is also good. The message is to preserve the

by? Yet they turn (their faces) away from them" (12:105); "Verily, in heavens and the earth there are signs for those who believe" (45:3); "On the earth are signs for those of assured faith" (51:20). 1f (such) were Our Will, We could send down to them from the sky a sign to which they could bend their necks in humility" (26:4); "A sign for them is the earth that is dead. We do give it life, and produce grain therefrom, of which I do eat" (36:33); "And in change of the winds are signs for those that are wise" (45:5); "And among his signs, he shows you the lightning, by way both of fears and of hope.." (30:24); We have made the night and the day as two (of our) signs. The sign of the night have we obscured, while the sign of the day we have made to enlighten you." (17:12).

¹⁵ "But we saved him and his companions of the Ark and we made the (Ark) a sign for all peoples" (29:15); In order that we may show thee (Two) of our greater signs" (20:23); "then after them we sent Moses with our signs, to pharaoh and his chiefs, but they wrongfully rejected them" (7:103); "And We sent Moses with our clear (signs) and an authority manifest" (11:96. 14:5; 40:23).

¹⁶ "Verily in this is a sign for those who give thought" (16:11; 16:69); "Verily in this is a sign for men who celebrate the praises of God" (16:13); "Verily in this is a sign for those who listen" (16:65); "Behold, in this is a Sign for those who are wise" (16:67).

¹⁷ "He said" O my Lord: Give me a sign. Thy sign was the answer, it shall be that thou shalt speak to no man for three days but with signals" (3:4; 10:10).

¹⁸ "These are the signs of God. We rehearse them to thee in truth" (2:1523:108); "this is what we rehearse unto thee of the sign, and the message of wisdom" (3:58); These are verses of the Wise Book" (31:2).

good by human effort, keeping the identity between Nature, goodness and perfection. The Transcendence is a process initiated by human action. That is why the revelation is a direct call for action, and action is a manifestation of faith. Faith without action is Form without Content, Word without Deed. It is also a manifestation of individual responsibility. It generates its reward according to the law of merit⁽¹⁹⁾. Action involves male and female alike, one criterion for all human beings as individuals⁽²⁰⁾. The Good Deed, which is the highest form of action, is not only a moral act related to the goodness of the doer, but also a real productive action in the world. The action is not only introverted but also extroverted, not only an expression of the piety in the soul, but also a necessity in practical life for production⁽²¹⁾. Action is the only legitimizing device for sovereignty on Earth. It is behind the birth of nations. Once action disappears, nations fall⁽²²⁾.

3-6. Nature as whole is an eschatological sign leading to the future of the world, and corresponds to a deep human desire for Eternity. The Transcendence is a breakthrough in time as a natural component in life. The present is the time for action, the past is the time of accumulated experiences, and the future is the time of consequences and results. The Transcendence is a continuous movement in time, past, present and future through human action. All consequences of human actions in the future are the results of present actions⁽²³⁾. The Transcendence, as a vision of

¹⁹ The word deed *Amal* and its derivatives is used in the Qur'an 346 times. The direct call for work is such as "And say: work (righteousness; soon will God observe your work and his Apostle and the believers" (9:105); works are connected to faith about 70 times. "Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to God, works righteousness..."(41:33); "Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good see it! And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it" (99:7-8).

²⁰ "Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, verily to him will we give a new life, a life that is good and pure..." (16:97); "And he that works a righteous deed, whether man or woman, and is a believer, such will enter the Garden (of Bliss)." (40:40); "If any do deeds of righteousness, be they male or female, and have faith, they will enter Heaven and not the least injustice will be done to them" (4:124); "Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be male or female... (3:195)

²¹ "Whoever works righteousness benefits his own soul. Whoever works evil, it is against his own soul" (41:46, 45:15); That they may enjoy the fruits of this (artistry). It was not their hands that made this" (36:35).

²² "And made you inheritors in the earth, so that He may try you by your deeds" (7:129); "And we made you heirs in the land after them, to see how ye would behave!" (10:14).

²³ "But those who are blind in this world will be blind in the Hereafter, and most astray from the path" (17:72).

the future, is a strong motivation for man to look for what is permanent and everlasting ⁽²⁴⁾.

4 - The Centrality of Man

4-1. The revolution of the Transcendence appears in man as the centre of the Universe. Everything is human. He is not a particular man belonging to specific geographical area or to an ethnic group but is man as such, the Universal Man. He is the perfect man, the knowledgeable man. The greatness of man is in his perfection and knowledge ⁽²⁵⁾.

4-2. Man has been created in the image of God Himself. He shares with him Attributes such as Science, Power, Life, Hearing, Seeing, Speaking and Willing. These Attributes may be understood literally with respect to Man and metaphorically with respect to God or vice versa, that is, literally with respect to God and metaphorically with respect to Man. In spite of this identity of image, there is nevertheless a distinction in partnership. Man is the only interlocutor of God. God spoke to Man. He sent him revelations via the prophets, his fellowmen. Man is the focal intentionality of God. God without Man is like objectivity without subjectivity, Ontology without Epistemology, Reality without Reason. The God-Man relationship is a perfect model of the Object-Subject relationship ⁽²⁶⁾.

4-3. Man is created out of nothing and the whole world has been created for him ⁽²⁷⁾. Although man is created from earth, from clay, from congealed blood, from sperm and from water, he can transcend his material creation to the Transcendental world ⁽²⁸⁾. Man is the king of the Universe. Nature

²⁴ "But best is the home in the Hereafter, for those who are righteous" (6:32).

²⁵ The word Man (Insan) is mentioned in the Qur'an 65 times in the definite singular (Al-Insan). "We have indeed created man in the best of moulds." (95:4); "Thought man that which he know not" (95:5). "He has created man. He has taught him speech and intelligence" (55:2-3).

²⁶ This meaning appears in many hadiths mentioned by the mystics, such as "God created man in his image and resemblance"; "I was a hidden treasure. I wanted to be known. I created the World. Through him, they know me. The first thing God created is Reason..."

²⁷ "But does not man call to mind that we created him before out of nothing" (19:07); Has there not been over man a long period of time, when he was nothing (not even) mentioned?" (76: 1).

²⁸ "Man We did create from a quintessence (of clay)"(23:12); He who has made everything which he has created most good. He began the creation of man with (nothing

has been created for him. Nature is subservient to him. He can discover its laws and reflects upon them for his benefit. Sun, Moon, Earth, Sea, Day and Night are all subservient to Man ⁽²⁹⁾.

4-4. Man has a double existence, fragile and solid. He is at the same time weak and strong, miserable and great. The weakness of man is not only physical, but essentially psychological. Man thinks of God only in time of danger. After danger is eliminated, God is forgotten. But the Transcendence has a permanent presence, not only in times of distress but also in comfort. When the danger is overcome, man attributes this success to himself and forgets his previous invocations. Is man so ungrateful? Man is happy when he receives something good but he becomes unfaithful and ungrateful when something bad occurs to him! Certainly man is ungrateful and unjust ⁽³⁰⁾. Man

more than) clay.” (32:7); “We created man from sounding clay, from mud moulded into shape (15:26). “He created man from sounding clay like unto Pottery” (55:14); “Doth not man see that it is We Who created him from sperm...” (36:77); “verily, we created man from a drop of mingled sperm.” (76:2); “He has created man from a sperm-drop...” (16:4); “...created man out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood” (96:2); “Now, let man think from what he is created. He is created from a drop emitted, proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs.” (86:5-7).

²⁹ The word *sakhara*, which means “to be subservient to,” is mentioned in the Qur’an 22 times. All are used in the same meaning. See H. Hanafi, *Human Subservience of Nature*, Stockholm. Sweden, 1980.

³⁰ “For Man was created weak in flesh” (4:28); “when trouble toucheth a man, he crieth unto Us (in all postures), lying down on his side or sitting, or standing. But when we have solved his trouble, he paseth on his way, as if he had never cried to Us for a trouble that touched him” (10: 12); “when distress seizes you at sea, those that you call upon, besides Himself, leave you in the lurch! But when he brings you back safe to land, and you turn away from, him most ungrateful is man”(17:67); “Now, when trouble touches man, he cries to Us. But when We bestow a favour upon him as from Ourselves, he says: This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge I have” (39:49). “Man does not weary of asking for good (things) but if ill touches him, he gives up all hope (and) is lost in despair. When we give him a taste of some mercy from Ourselves after some adversity has touched him, he is sure to say: This is due to my merit (41:50); “When We bestow favors on man, he turns away and gets himself remote on his side (instead of coming to Us). And when evil seizes him, he comes full of prolonged prayers” (51:51). “And truly when we give man a taste of a mercy from Ourselves, he doth exalt in it, but when some ill happens to him, on account of the deed which his hands have sent forth, truly then is man ungrateful” (42:48); we give man a taste of mercy from Ourselves, and then withdraw it from him. Behold! He is in despair and (falls into) blasphemy” (11:9). “Verily, man is given up to injustice and ingratitude” (14:34). Truly, man is a most ungrateful creature!” (27:66); “Truly man is a blasphemous ingrate avowed” (43:15).

is also avaricious, scared, arrogant, tyrannical, hasty, dialectical, suspicious, and impatient⁽³¹⁾. He is limited by his emotions and desires.

4-5. However, Man is also great. His greatness appears in his free will, efforts, work and perseverance. Man is productive. He strives, struggles and even suffers pain. Life is a test, a trial. Man is capable of passing it successfully, given his reason, his intelligence, his work and his perseverance. Through work and effort man can be saved⁽³²⁾. Therefore, the Transcendence is not only a theory but it is also a practice. The Transcendence is not only an Idea, a Principle or a Universal Rule but also a real structure for the individual and for society. Life is a challenge and man has accepted it freely, given his powers of reason and his free will⁽³³⁾.

4-6. Man is individually responsible for his acts. The word *Insan*, which means man, is always a singular. Man cannot be added to another man to form a plural. Human being (*Ins*) is also a singular generic term⁽³⁴⁾. The term *Unas*, which means a group of people as a specific entity, having an individual option in life, is the plural of *Insi* which means an individual human being. The group can behave individually in a distinct way, different from other groups. Every group has an individual leader who is a responsible witness⁽³⁵⁾. However, this acute individual responsibility is

³¹ "For man is given to hastiness" (17:11); "Man is created from haste" (21:37) "For man is (ever) niggardly" (17:100); "But man is in most things contentious" (18:54); "It was We who created man and we know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him" (50:16). "Truly, man is created very impatient" (70:19); "Nay, but man doth transgress all bounds" (96:7)

³² "Every man's fate we have fastened on his own neck" (17:13); "That man can have nothing but what he strives for." (53:39); "O thou man, verify thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord, painfully toiling, but thou shall meet Him." (86:6); Verily, "We have created man into toil and struggle" "Verily man is in loss, except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and (join together) in the mutual teaching of truth and of patience and constancy" (103:2-3); "That day will man say: Where is the refuge" (75:10); "That day will man be told (all) that he put forward and all that he put back (75:13); "Nay man will be evidence against himself (75:14)

³³ The challenge is metaphorized in the Qur'an as the Devil. "For Satan is to man as avowed enemy" (115; 17:53). "Like the evil one, when he says to man: deny God. But when man denies God, the evil one says: I am free of thee. I do fear God, the Lord of the World" (49:16); "We did indeed offer the Trust to Heavens and Earth and the Mountains, but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof. But Man undertook it."

³⁴ The generic term *Ins* is used in the Qur'an 19 times by opposition to another generic term *Djin*.

³⁵ The term *Unas* is used 6 times. "Every group knew its own place for water"(2:60,7:160); "Indeed men who want to be clean and pure" (7:82, 27:56); "One day, we shall call together all human beings with their respective Imams"(17:71).

the very basis of solidarity. Man is a member of a larger community. The word human being (Insan) comes from the verb Anasa, which means to be familiar with, to be compassionate towards, and to share one's feelings with. Man can familiarize himself with things, through his perceptions ⁽³⁶⁾. The highest form of sympathy is with one's parents as if they were equal viz man's relationship to God ⁽³⁷⁾.

5 - The Egalitarian Society

5-1. The revolution of the Transcendence appears in society for the implementation of social justice and the foundation of an egalitarian society. Transcendence means universal equality between all individuals in the same society. The Universality of the Transcendence is the prerequisite for the equality of individuals. The Unity of the Transcendence is the foundation of the affiliation of all individuals to One Principle. The Unity of the community is the reflection of the Unity of God ⁽³⁸⁾.

5-2. Since ownership is one of the main reasons of inequality, the affiliation of man to the Transcendence would protect him from holding something as private property. The World cannot be owned. It belongs to the Eminent Ownership of the Transcendence. The World, including Man, is in the realm of Being, not of Having. Ownership is only a social function. Man is only entrusted with what he has. What he has is only a trust or a deposit ⁽³⁹⁾. Man in relation to things has the right to use, not to misuse, and to invest, not to capitalize, to develop not to monopolize. If he

³⁶ The verb Anasa is used in the Qur'an 7 times, 3 for human beings and 4 for things. "If ye find sound judgement in them, release their property to them"(4:6); "O ye who believe, enter not houses other than your own, until ye have asked permission and saluted those in them." (24:27); "And when ye have taken your meal, disperse without seeking familiar talk." (33:53); "Now, when Moses had fulfilled the term and was travelling with his family, he perceived a fire in the direction of Mount Tur", (28:92). The same usage in 20:10, 27:7; 28:29.

³⁷ "We have enjoined on man kindness to parents" (29:8): "We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents. In pain did his mother bear him and in pain did she give him birth." (46:15); "And we have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents. In travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning. Show gratitude to me and to thy parents." (31:14)

³⁸ "And verily this brotherhood of yours is a single brotherhood and I am your Lord and Cherisher" (23:52, 21:92).

³⁹ "And spend out of the (substance) whereof He has made You heirs" (57:7)

violates this, the legal authority in the community representing the common interests has the right to confiscate, to depossess and to nationalize.

5-3. Modes of production related to common welfare cannot be individually owned. They belong to the public sector and include such things as agriculture, industry, and mining⁽⁴⁰⁾. All that comes from the Earth, beneath or above, such as raw materials, cannot be privately owned.

5-4. National Wealth cannot be left in the hands of a few persons. Wealth must circulate among all individuals belonging to the same community⁽⁴¹⁾. The Social Order will collapse in any society where there is a palace towering over a neglected well⁽⁴²⁾. The poor have a right in to the wealth of the rich, not as simple charity left to individual assessment and piety, but as a legal right in the name of the Transcendence. The inequality between rich and poor is contrary to the unity and the universality of the Transcendence.

5-5. The egalitarian society is a society without classes. A society based upon an upper and a lower class is against the Transcendence. It is a society without rich and poor, nor satiety and hunger⁽⁴³⁾. Hunger is something substantial in life, not merely an accident⁽⁴⁴⁾. The revolt of the Transcendence is against fear⁽⁴⁵⁾. Hunger is a punishment, while satiety is a reward. Hunger and satiety are symbolized by Hell and Paradise⁽⁴⁶⁾. Hunger is also coupled with nudity as an image of extreme poverty and

⁴⁰ This is the famous prophetic tradition, "People, share three things: Water, Grass and Fire"

⁴¹ What God has bestowed on His Apostle (and taken away) from the people of the townships belongs to God, to this Apostle and to kindred and orphans, the needy and the wayfarer; In order that it may not (merely) make a circuit between the wealthy among you."(59:7)

⁴² How many populations have we destroyed, which were given to Wrongdoing? They tumbled down on their roofs. And how many wells are lying idle and neglected and castles lofty and well-built?" (21:45)

⁴³ "Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil)..." (2:155); "God set forth a parable: A city enjoying security and guilt, abundantly supplied with sustenance from every place. Yet, was it ungrateful for the favours of God. So God made it taste of hunger and terror..." (16:112)

⁴⁴ Hunger is mentioned in the Qur'an 5 times, 4 times as a noun and one time as a verb. This means that hunger is substantive, not merely accidental.

⁴⁵ "Let them adore the Lord of this house. Who provides them with food against hunger and with security against fear" (106:2-4).

⁴⁶ "Then We said: O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to thee and thy wife. So let him not get You both out of the Garden so that thou art landed in misery. There is therein (enough provision) for thee not to go naked" (70:117-118); "No food will there be for them but a bitter dhari which will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger" (88:7)

misery. Hunger, fear, lack of funds, lack of agriculture and fully realized development all are components of underdeveloped societies. All are signs of damnation and Hell.

5-6. Work is the only source of value. Work means effort, energy and sweat. No surplus value is admitted. That is why usury is absolutely prohibited, since usury is earning without effort. Money does not generate money. Capital increases only through human effort. Interest (Riba) is also prohibited for the same reason ⁽⁴⁷⁾. Commerce is not interest, since commerce implies effort and energy. Charity is simply the opposite usury, as giving is the opposite of taking ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

6 - The Rule of the Law

6-1. The Transcendence appears in society as an application of the Law (Shari'a) to give the individual and the society a formal structure through the State and its Institutions. The revolution of the Transcendence occurs every time human power becomes an absolute authority and a source of legislation. God is Ruler, the Sovereign and the Judge ⁽⁴⁹⁾.

6-2. Since Law is not man-made, but Divinely given, it is impartial, universal and objective. It can be applied in any time and in any place and for any community ⁽⁵⁰⁾. It is something similar to the universal declaration of human rights, combined with another universal declaration, that of

⁴⁷ The word (Riba) is mentioned in the Qur'an 8 times. The prohibit 5 times, such as "Oh, ye who believe! Fear God and give up what remains of your demand of usury, if ye are indeed believers" (2:278); "Oh ye who believe, devour not usury, doubled and multiplied. But fear God, that ye may (really) prosper" (3:130); "That they took usury, though they were forbidden. And they devoured men's substance wrongfully." (4:161)

⁴⁸ Those who devour usury will not stand except as stands one whom the Evil One by his touch hath driven to madness. That is because they say: Trade is like usury. But God has permitted trade and forbidden usury." (2:275); "God will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for the deed of charity," (2:276)

⁴⁹ "If any do fail to judge by what God hath revealed, they are unbelievers...The wrongdoers...those who rebel..." (5:44-45, 47). Truly, God has judged between his servants" (40:48); The Command rests with none but God. He declares the truth, and he is the best of judges" (6:57); "Is not his the Command?" (6:62); "The command is for none but God." (12:40; 12:67).

⁵⁰ "We have sent down to thee the book of truth, that thou mightst judge between men as guided by God." (4:105); "Let the people of the Gospel judge by what God hath revealed Therein." (5:50); "And this, judge thou between them by what God hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires" (5:52).

People's rights. The Universal Intentions of the Law, according to classical Jurisprudence, are four:

First, the affirmation of the common interests and welfare of all individuals and societies, including the rights of food, clothing, shelter, work, security and peace. In case of any apparent opposition between the textual law and the concrete common interest, the textual law yields. The law is not an end in itself, but only a means for the realization of individuals and peoples' welfare.

Second, the common understanding of the Law by all men is a condition for its implementation. The understanding of the law, its purpose and intent, its different modes of application and its capability of realizing human welfare, make its application a free choice and a responsible and accountable act.

Third, the assimilation of the Law makes it a part of human activities. The objectivity of the Law becomes a part of human subjectivity.

Fourth, the application of the Law is an individual and societal commitment. It is the belief-system put into practice ⁽⁵¹⁾.

6-3. The Law is not a formal Law, but a positive one based on the analysis of the human condition and the structure of human behavior. Human action is contextual. It is based on reasons, causes and motivations. It is either realized easily and normally, or else suspended because of difficulties and hindrances.

It can be radical and absolute in an ideal form. It can also be adaptive and relative in a practical form ⁽⁵²⁾. Since all human actions are motivated, only intentions can validate actions and cut short all possibilities of casuistics. Therefore, the penal code is not formal, regardless of the situation. Punishment per-se is not intentional but is only an application of the Law of Merit, and this in two ways: reward for good deeds and punishment for bad deeds. Rights are given before duties are requested.

⁵¹ These four intentions of the revelation called the intention of the Legislator are greatly expounded by al-Shatibi in *Al-Muwafaqat*.

⁵² In many verses, necessities are recognized. "But if one is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then is he guiltless." (2:173; 6:145; 16:115); "But if one is forced by hunger with no inclination to transgression, God is indeed forgiving, most merciful." (5:4); "Why should ye not eat on which God's name hath been pronounced, when he hath explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you except under a compulsion of necessity?" (6:1-19).

Individual sacrifices may preserve the common welfare. Capital punishment generates life for the whole community ⁽⁵³⁾.

6-4. Since the State and its Institutions are the manifestation of the Transcendence in society, no human power, namely, political power, can present itself as an absolute power. The Transcendence is the origin of authority. Sovereignty comes from the Law, which is a manifestation of the Transcendence. The Ruler is not God's representative. He is only chosen by the community to implement the Law. Whoever is knowledgeable, capable, just and honest can be the Ruler. He is neither a king to convey his kingdom to his posterity, nor an usurper, coming to power after a coup d'etat ⁽⁵⁴⁾.

6-5. In case the Ruler becomes a despot, the revolution of the Transcendence protects individuals' and peoples' freedom. Since the Ruler has been chosen to implement the Law, any intentional failure to assume his duties will elicit a response from those who are knowledgeable in the Law, the intellectual vanguard of the society, through the regular sermons of the Friday prayers, and through open and vocal condemnation. If the Ruler continues his obstinacy, he is officially reminded by the practice of the legal device, Ordering the Good to be done and preventing evil from being done, through direct confrontation between the Scholars and the Ruler. If he still continues his negligence or disobedience, he is then declared as unfit to rule by the judiciary, the high judge. If he is still in contempt of the Law, a mass revolt led by the scholars, the guardians of people's rights, is launched aiming at his complete removal from office ⁽⁵⁵⁾.

⁵³ "In the law of equality there is (saving of) life, to you, Oh ye men of understanding" (2:179).

⁵⁴ In the Qur'an, there is a radical rejection of kingdoms and Tyrannies. "She said: kings when they enter a county, despoil it, and make the noblest of its people its meanest. Thus do they behave" (27:34). The word tyrant is mentioned in the Qur'an 10 times, such as: "Thy intention is none other than to become a powerful violent man in the land" (28:19).. "And when ye exert your strong hand, do you do it like men of absolute power." (26:130); "And following the command of every powerful, obstinate transgressor" (11:59).

⁵⁵ The word advice is mentioned in the Qur'an 13 times, such as "I gave you good counsel, but ye love not good counsellors" (7:79); "I gave you good counsel" (7:93). This is also substantiated by the Hadith "Religion is the good advise". Ordering to do good and preventing from doing evil is a legal office in Islamic institutions, based on well-known Qur'anic verses such as: "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong" (3:104); "Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong." (3:110) 3:114, 7:157; 9:71; 9:112; 22:41: 31:17).

6-6. Therefore, the scholars of the Law are the real guardians of the city. They are the educators of the people and the conscience of the rulers. They can denounce the tyrants and mobilize the masses. Their words are substantiated by their deeds. Their ideas correspond to their feelings. The revolution of Transcendence is a revolution of Thought, of knowledge and of Science ⁽⁵⁶⁾.

7 - Progress in History

7-1. The revolt of the Transcendence is continuous in history. Since man first existed on Earth, the Transcendence was equal to his individual consciousness and to the social order. All the prophets revolted against the status quo in the name of the Transcendence. All future revolutions will also be launched, directly or indirectly, in the name of the Transcendence. Prophets did not only preach the revolutions but they also led them. They enter into the political struggle and take the side of the poor, the oppressed and the wretched of the earth ⁽⁵⁷⁾.

7-2. The function of revelation was to liberate human consciousness from the yokes of the natural and socio-political orders. The Power of the Transcendence is greater than the power of Nature or of the Tyrants. Individual consciousness will be elevated, deepened and strengthened by the Transcendence. Affiliation to the Transcendence is unique and exclusive. The first act of faith in Islam is an utterance, a recognition that there are no other gods than the only true God ⁽⁵⁸⁾. The prophet is this individual consciousness freed from the collective consciousness, which has and become autonomous and free. Those who believe with him in

⁵⁶ Is it not a sign to them, that the learned of the children of Israel knew it?" (26:197); "Those truly fear God among his servants, who have knowledge" (35:28).

⁵⁷ "How many of the prophets fought, and with them, large bands of godly men? But they never lost heart if they met with disaster in God's way, nor did they weaken nor give in" (3:146); "Whenever we sent a prophet to a town we took up its people in suffering and adversity, in order that they might learn humility"(7:94); "Apostle, rouse the believers to the fight..." (8:65); "O prophet, strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be firm against them" (9:73; 66:9)

⁵⁸ "It is not (possible) that a man, to whom is given the Books and wisdom and the Prophetic Office, should say to the people, Be ye my worshippers rather than God's. On the contrary (He would say): Be ye of worshippers of him who is truly the cherisher of all. For ye have taught the Book, and ye have studied it earnestly. Nor would he instruct you to take angels and prophets for Lords and Patrons..." (3:79-80).

God are likewise individual “consciousnesses” aligning themselves with the group⁽⁵⁹⁾.

7-3. All prophets struggled for the change of the status quo, toward a better and more ethical socio-political order. Lot fought homosexuality, Abraham struggled against idolatry, Moses strived for the liberation of his community from political oppression, Jesus sought to liberate the Jews from the formalism of the Law, and Mohammed attempted to establish a society of equality and justice⁽⁶⁰⁾.

7-4. At present, the Transcendence is a World structure, a World Development, a World Transformation, through human activity and effort. The Transcendence appears as the practice of good and prevention of evil. The role of man on Earth is to build not to destroy, to civilize not to annihilate, to plan and develop not to abandon and neglect. The word *Islah*, which means doing good, is used more as an active noun referring to good-doers or good deeds than as a substantive noun referring to abstract action⁽⁶¹⁾. The good deed is always connected to faith. The good deed can be for one’s self, for the other in the context of social relations, for the family or society, or in the contest of nations on earth⁽⁶²⁾.

⁵⁹ “Did ye wonder that there hath come to you a message from your Lord, through a man of your own people, to warn you so that ye may fear God and happily receive his mercy” (7:63; 7:69); “Is it a matter of wonderment to men that we have sent our inspiration to a man from among themselves that he should warn mankind and give the good news to the believers that they have before their Lord, the lofty rank of truth.” (10:2), Is there not among you a single right-minded man?” (11:78); “Then there came running from the farthest part of the city a man saying, O people, obey the Apostle” (36:20). “A believer, a man from among the People of Pharaoh, who had concealed his faith, said: Will ye slay a man because he says: My Lord is God...” (40:28).

⁶⁰ “But we destroyed those who transgressed beyond bounds” (21:9). “How many were the populations we utterly destroyed because of their iniquities, setting up in their places other peoples” (20:11); “Thus we have placed leaders in every town, its wicked men, to plot therein (6:123). “when we decide to destroy a population, we send a definite order to those among them who are given the good things of this life and yet transgress. So that the word is proved true against them. Then we destroy them, truly.”(17:16). “How many were the populations we utterly destroyed because of their iniquities setting up in their places other peoples.” (21:11; 22:45; 22:48).

⁶¹ The verb *Aslaha* and its derivatives are used in the Qur’an 180 times, as a verb 30 times, as a substantive noun, 9 times, and as a personal noun 141 times; “Any who believe in God and the last day and work righteousness shall have their reward with their Lord (2:62)

⁶² “Who makes mischief in the land and mends not (their ways)” (26:152); “There were in the city nine men of a family who made mischief in the land and would not reform” (27:48); “Do no mischief on the earth, after it had been set in order... “ (7:56); “And do

7-5. The prevention of mischief must come before doing good, since mischief on earth is contrary to man's vocation and purpose. Mischief on earth includes destruction of cattle or crops, killing or homicide. Man's deed is the link between himself and the Transcendence, an unbreakable ethical and contractual covenant ⁽⁶³⁾.

7-6. The Transcendence appears where ever socio-political struggle may be. The Transcendence is at the same time a theoretical structure of the world and a dialectic in history. The Transcendence is not a simple faith without works, nor an internal illumination for spiritual beauty and mystical beautification, but rather a social structure and a historical dialectic. The Transcendence is a permanent struggle between Reason and Passion, Good and Mischief, Unity and Disparity, Peace and Discord, Construction and Destruction, Life and Death ⁽⁶⁴⁾.

7-7. Therefore Islam is not submission or servitude, but rather the revolution of the Transcendence, a dynamic structure for the individual

no mischief on the earth after it has set in order" (7:85); "When it is said to them: 'Make not mischief on earth, they say: why, we only want to make peace! Of a surety, they are the ones who make mischief but they realize it not.'" (2:11-12).

⁶³ The Word *Afsada*, which means to make mischief, is used in the Qur'an 50 times, out of which 32 times are connected to earth, once to Heavens and Earth, once to land and sea which is also Earth, once to society, also on Earth, and once to Nations or countries, also on Earth. "Then, is it to be expected of you, if ye were put in authority, that ye will do mischief in the Land and break your ties of Kith and Kin?" (47:22); "When he turns his back his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth, and destroy crops and cattles, but God loves not mischief" (2:205); "Who makes mischief in the land and mend not (their ways)." (26:152); "But they (ever) strive to do mischief on earth, and God loveth not those who do mischief." (5:64); "And do no evil or mischief on the (face of the) earth" (2:60); "... And refrain from evil and mischief on the earth" (7:74); "Commit not evil in the land with intent to do mischief" (11:85; 26:183); "But do thou good as God has been good to thee, and seek not (occasions for) mischief in the land" (28:77); "Nor commit evil on the earth with the intent to do mischief" (29:36); "Those who break God's Covenant after it is ratified, and who sunder what god has ordered to be joined, and do mischief on earth. these cause loss, only to themselves" (2:27); "But those who break the covenant of God after having plighted their word thereto, and cut asunder those things which God has commanded to be joined, and work mischief in the land, on them the curse, for them is the terrible home!" (13:25).

⁶⁴ "And if God did not check one set of people by means of another, the earth would indeed be full of mischief." (2:251); "Mischief has appeared on the land and sea, because that the hands of men have earned, that God may give them a taste of some of their deeds." (30:41). (The translation used is that of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an. Text, Translation and Commentary.* Al-Dar Al-Arabia, Beirut, Lebanon, 1968).

consciousness, for the social order and for progress in history. This common and wrong idea, combined with another common and wrong practice, serve as a basis for the perpetuation of stereotyped images in a time where images, through the powerful mass media, became substitutes for realities. If the conflict of interpretations is indeed a power struggle on the level of society, the conflict of images is also another power struggle on the level of history.

7-8. The revolt of the Transcendence is not an utopian thought. It happened in history, in the Islamic World and Culture, during the classical era. Once the Transcendence eclipsed in the hearts and minds of the Muslims, it eclipsed also in their societies and in their history. All efforts to change the state of mind, the social order or even the course of history of the Muslims, in the name of secular ideologies of modernization, apart from the revolution of the Transcendence, will always have partial successes and several setbacks, one step forward and two steps backward, as the modern history of Muslim societies demonstrates. Only through the revolution of the Transcendence can Muslims return back to their individual souls, to their Law in society and to their vocation in history.

7-9. All revolutions occurred in history as the function of the Transcendence. Islam only gave the prototype. From Spartacus and the revolt of the slaves in ancient Rome until the Islamic revolution in Iran, people's power in the Philippines and mass demonstrations in South Korea, all revolutions were against political and social tyrannies. The great French, Russian, and American revolutions are different manifestations of the revolution of the Transcendence, especially as motivations in the beginning. All movements for the unity of peoples such as the German, the Italian and the American, are also indirectly made in the name of the Transcendence. The heroic era of decolonization in the Third World was also one of the late manifestations of the revolution of the Transcendence.

The argument of practicality is often misused. Instrumentalism was always a justification of war. Peace is an endeavor, an effort, a struggle to endure. But, it is above all a conviction, more than a striving. If humanity yields to interests, small or big, it will sink down into continuous wars. If humanity identifies itself with the Universal Code of Ethics, it will elevate itself to Eternal Peace. It is up to humanity to choose between failure of nerve and moral courage, between eternal damnation and eternal salvation.

8. Realities of the Muslim World To-Day

8-1. It may be argued that the realities of the Muslim World nowadays: violence, civil wars, kidnapping, hi-jacking, tortures, assassinations... etc, are far away from this ideal described just now: Islam as a religion of peace and a Universal Code of Ethics. If this ideal is not practiced by Muslims themselves, how far can it be applied by non-Muslims in the rest of the world? Indeed, such an argument could be valid if the Muslims had tried to apply the ideal and failed. On the contrary, the realities of the Muslim World are as they are, just because of the absence of this Ideal. Muslim Societies are not yet prepared for life in peace. Peace is reigning, neither in the external nor in the internal world, neither on Earth nor in the Soul. Muslim Societies are suffering from the most horrible forms of social, economic and political injustices. To the extent that these forms continue, Muslim Societies will not be prepared for life in peace. Once these forms are lifted up, peace can reign. The intention of the gradual Revelation in history was to prepare people, societies and nations for life in peace and security. Once the purpose of Revelation is fulfilled, the distance between the Ideal and the Real will disappear.

In the Muslim World nowadays, there are seven forms of injustices which are behind all kinds of violence and disturbance in the public Order on the international as well on the national scenes. They are at the heart of violence everywhere, motivating individuals and dissident groups for action and inviting peoples to revolt.

8-2. First, the occupation of the land as a leftover of the colonial era. In spite of the huge process of decolonization, parts of the Muslim World are still occupied: Palestine, Afghanistan, and Kashmir. Occupation can also be indirect, such as the presence of foreign military bases in many parts of the Muslim World (Saudi Arabia and Turkey). In Islam, the Kingdom of God is in Heaven and on Earth, not only a Kingdom in the Heavens (Christianism) or a Kingdom on Earth (Judaism). Decolonization is a just war. Jihad is legitimate for those expelled from their homes and expatriated⁽⁶⁵⁾. The Jihad, as explained is a defensive war to re-establish justice and order. Occupation occurs by aggressive wars and ends by liberating wars.

⁶⁵ "To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged; and verily, God is most powerful for their aid. (There are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right (for no cause) except that they say: Our Lord is God..." (22:39).

8-3. Second, internal oppression and dictatorial regimes are behind much of the internal violence in the Muslim World. The rule of a Muslim majority by a secular minority in the name of secular political ideologies: Liberalism, Socialism, Nationalism, Marxism. . . etc, is an usurpation of power. The source of authority in Islam is neither heredity (Kingdoms), nor coups d'Etat by Free Officers (People's Republics) nor referendums (Parliamentary systems), but Islamic Law. The political power is only an executive power, not a legislative nor a judiciary power. In Islamic Rule, freedom of expression is the duty of every Muslim man and Muslim woman knowing the Law. Each must order the good to be done and prevent the evil from being done ⁽⁶⁶⁾. He has to begin by peaceful advice, then by appealing to the judiciary, and finally as a last resort, by a revolt against the despot who does not apply the rule of Law. Although the high Judge is nominated by the head of State, he cannot be dismissed by him. On the contrary, the head of State can be dismissed by the high Judge if the former does not hear and obey the advice of knowledgeable people and before a revolt against him occurs. If political regimes in the Muslim World continue to rule in the name of secular ideologies practicing the most horrible forms of oppression and dictatorship, violence will continue to destabilize these regimes, supported by foreign Powers. Muslim societies can be prepared for life in peace, once the freedom of expression stipulated in Islam is implemented in practice.

8-4. Third, the polarity between rich and poor inside Muslim societies has reached a stage where a few people own almost all the wealth and the majority is starving. The misdistribution of wealth between those who have and those who have not, between oil rich countries and poor countries, between royal families and their populace, between multi-millionaires and the majority living under poverty line, is a major cause of social unrest. National capital has flown to international capital, and national sovereignty has yielded to multinational corporations. In Islam, wealth cannot be in the hands of the minority ruling the majority. It has to be shared, and given to all social classes in the whole nation ⁽⁶⁷⁾. Wealth and the whole world belong to God. Man is only a depositary. He has the right to use, to invest and to

⁶⁶ Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoying what is right, and forbidding what is wrong" (3:110); "We are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoying what is right, forbidding what is wrong.." (3:110).

⁶⁷ "What God has bestowed on his Apostle (and taken away) from the people of the townships, belongs to God, to his Apostle and to Kindred and Orphans, the needy and the wayfarer, in order that it may not (merely) make a circuit among the wealthy among you" (59:7).

spend according to his needs. But he has no right to misuse, to monopolize or to exploit. If he does, the State, representing mass interests, must intervene. The State has the right to nationalize, to confiscate and to own. General interests cannot be owned individually, such as grass (agriculture), fire (industry) and salt (big Trade). God in Islam is defined in terms of human needs: food against hunger as well as security against fear⁽⁶⁸⁾. A society would collapse and the State be destroyed, if there is a high Palace, looking over a closed well, that is, the domination by the wealthy minority of the poor majority⁽⁶⁹⁾. As long as a few are dying from satiety and over-filled stomachs, while millions are dying from drought, hunger and poverty, Muslim societies are not yet prepared for life in peace.

8-5. Fourth, the dismantlement of the Muslim World, the breaking of its indestructible tie, the dismemberment of one organic body continue to be a major cause of violence, borders clashes and internal civil wars. Before the era of colonization, the Muslim World was one united world. Every Muslim could travel from one corner to the other, looking for knowledge, without barriers or frontiers. After decolonization, new National States were created against the will of the people and contrary to their Islamic Traditions. With ignorance, backwardness and foreign conspiracies to strengthen ethnic and religious differences, wars began on the borders between two countries or inside the same country⁽⁷⁰⁾. The old Roman dictum, “Divide ut imperes,” was successfully implemented by the big Powers to divide the Muslim World and to swallow it piecemeal. As long as the dismantlement of the Muslim World continues, border clashes from the outside and civil wars from the inside will also continue. Once the Muslim World returns to its unity, in the image of God’s Unity, there will be no more violence and blood-shed⁽⁷¹⁾. The desire for unity is very deep in the present, not only in the past. The Muslim World is aspiring to its unity, antagonized by big Powers in many ways, even the partial alliances between any two neighboring States, in the

⁶⁸ “Let them adore the Lord of this House, who provides them with food against hunger and with security against fear (of danger)” (56:3-4)

⁶⁹ “How many populations have We destroyed, which were given to wrongdoing? They tumbled down on their roofs. And how many wells are lying idle and neglected and castles, lofty and well-built?” (22:45).

⁷⁰ Wars between two countries such as Iran and Iraq, Egypt and Lybia; Wars inside the same country such as in Sudan (North-South), Morocco (Polizario), Lebanon (civil war), the Philippines (Muslims in Mindanao).

⁷¹ “Verily, this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood, and I am your Lord and cherisher” (21:29; 23:52).

name of Arab or African Unity or in the name of Afro-Asian Solidarity or the Non-Alignment movements.

8-6. Fifth, the backwardness of the Muslim World called, in modern terms, underdeveloped or developing countries are another cause of disturbance. The lack of infra-structure on all levels, especially public services, creates whole societies living in distress and constantly depressed. All phenomena of underdevelopment such as: dependency in food and nutrition, foreign aid, increase of import and decrease of export, lack of heavy industry, widespread consumerism, deficit in balance of payment, foreign debts, open-door policies, tax evasions, the rise of new middle classes, corruption, foreign banks transferring money from inside to outside, black markets, brain-drain, lack of planning... etc, create a psychosis of frustration in those who cannot compete in the new life-style. Therefore, crime increases, and security decreases. As long as Muslim societies continue in that kind of social disorder, neither peace nor security will reign. It is quite easy, through Islam, to prepare Muslim Societies for life in peace by asserting the sense of Vocation of a Muslim in particular, and a human being in general, as a Vice-Regent of God on Earth, fulfilling his message and realizing his Word ⁽⁷²⁾. The struggle against underdevelopment is a struggle for peace.

8-7. Sixth, Westernization of Muslim Societies, and the consequent threats to cultural identity, are behind the upsurge of Islamic Fundamentalism and the practice of violence against the symbols of Western imitation and pro-Western policies. As long as the process of Westernization continues, a counter-reaction will always be generated in defense of indigenous Tradition. The polarity between the Self and the Other will reach a point of no return. Development does not necessarily mean the adoption of the Western model: growth, modernization, consumerism. Endogenous, rather than exogenous, development should protect Cultural Identity. As long as the relation between the Center and Periphery continues as it is now: Trainer and trainee, Master and disciple, Teacher and pupil, knowledgeable and ignorant, a one way relation from those who have to those who have not, and a dissemination of Knowledge from the centre to the periphery. Thus the complex of superiority created in the Other and the complex of

⁷² "Behold, Thy Lord said to the angels: I will create a Vice-Regent on." (2:30); "O David! We did indeed make thee a Vice-Regent on Earth..." (38:26); "It is He who hath made you (His) agents, inheritors of the Earth..."(6:165; 10:73; 35:39; 7:69; 7:74; 27:62).

inferiority created in the Self will continue as one of the major sources of violence and causes of revolt. But, once all nations become equal partners, having an equal share in the making of humanity, once the process of Knowledge and teamwork or partnership becomes a two-way mutual process, once the whole history of mankind is not reduced to one of its phases, that of European Modern Times, then Muslim Societies will be better prepared for life in peace ⁽⁷³⁾.

8-8. Seventh, the lack of mass-mobilization in the Muslim World, for a huge project of a global Renaissance leaves the masses an easy target for all kinds of under-ground movements to expand. Violence, bloodshed and wars are not inherent in human nature. It is an exception to the Rule. Violence is usually committed by secret organizations (for instance Jihad groups and Hizbollah in Lebanon) or by big Powers (American invasion of Grenada and bombing of Libya, Russian invasion of Afghanistan). The global commons are inclined to be peaceful. However, the abolition of all political parties, oppression by those in power, or the acceptance of a multi-party system without any equal balance of power and with an election result of 99.99% for the ruling party, all make the presence of an illicit, secret and militant Islamic party an attraction to Muslim youth. It is astonishing that in the whole Muslim World, there is no one legal and popular Islamic party which would fill the gap in political life, in spite of the complaint expressed by all political leaders about the political vacuum in their respective societies. The idea of a militant Islamic party is at the heart of every Muslim Society ⁽⁷⁴⁾. Once that party is allowed, the Muslim Masses will have a legal channel of expression. All underground Islamic Movements will have an open forum to express their grievances against the status quo and their hopes for their ideal societies.

⁷³ “To each among you have We prescribed a Law and an Open Way. If God had so willed, he would have made you a single people, but (his plan is) to test you in what He hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtue...” (5:51). “If the Lord had so willed he could have made mankind one people, but they will not cease to differ.” (93:18; 16:93)

⁷⁴ In the Qur’an, there is a duality between the party of the Devil and the party of God, which is usually a secret militant Islamic group. As for the Party of the Devil, “The Evil One has got the better of them, so he has made them lose the remembrance of God. They are the party of the Evil One. Truly it is the party of the Evil One that will perish” (59:19). “But people have cut off their affair (of unity) between them into sects; each party rejoices in that which is with itself.” (23:63; 30:32); The party of God, such as: “As to those who turn (for friendship) to God, His Apostle and the (Fellowship of) believers. it is the fellowship of God that must certainly triumph (5:56); “They are the party of God. Truly it is the party of God that will achieve felicity” (58:22).

8-9. As long as these actual dramas of the Muslim World are not resolved, Muslim Societies will be unprepared for life in Peace and be the victim of the most horrible forms of violence and war. Nuclear arms, star-wars and problems of disarmament are more linked to Western Societies. If it is easy to find solutions for nuclear threats through bilateral agreements between nuclear powers and through East-West Summits, it is very difficult to solve the seven dramas of the Muslim World. The threats to the Western World are recent, only since the second World War, and created by the Western Powers themselves. The dramas of the Muslim World are the heritage of a long history since its decadence, and caused mostly by the Other. The preparation of Western Societies for life in peace requires political treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The preparation of Muslim Societies for life in peace requires a change in the course of history. ❖