



# **Political & Cultural Invasion**

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Ramadhan 1423 AH  
(December 2002 CE)

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### Translation of the Qur'an

It should be perfectly clear that the Qur'an is only authentic in its original language, Arabic. Since perfect translation of the Qur'an is impossible, we have used the translation of the meaning of the Qur'an throughout the book, as the result is only a crude meaning of the Arabic text.

Qur'anic *Ayat* and transliterated words have been *italicised*.

Ahadith appear in **bold**.

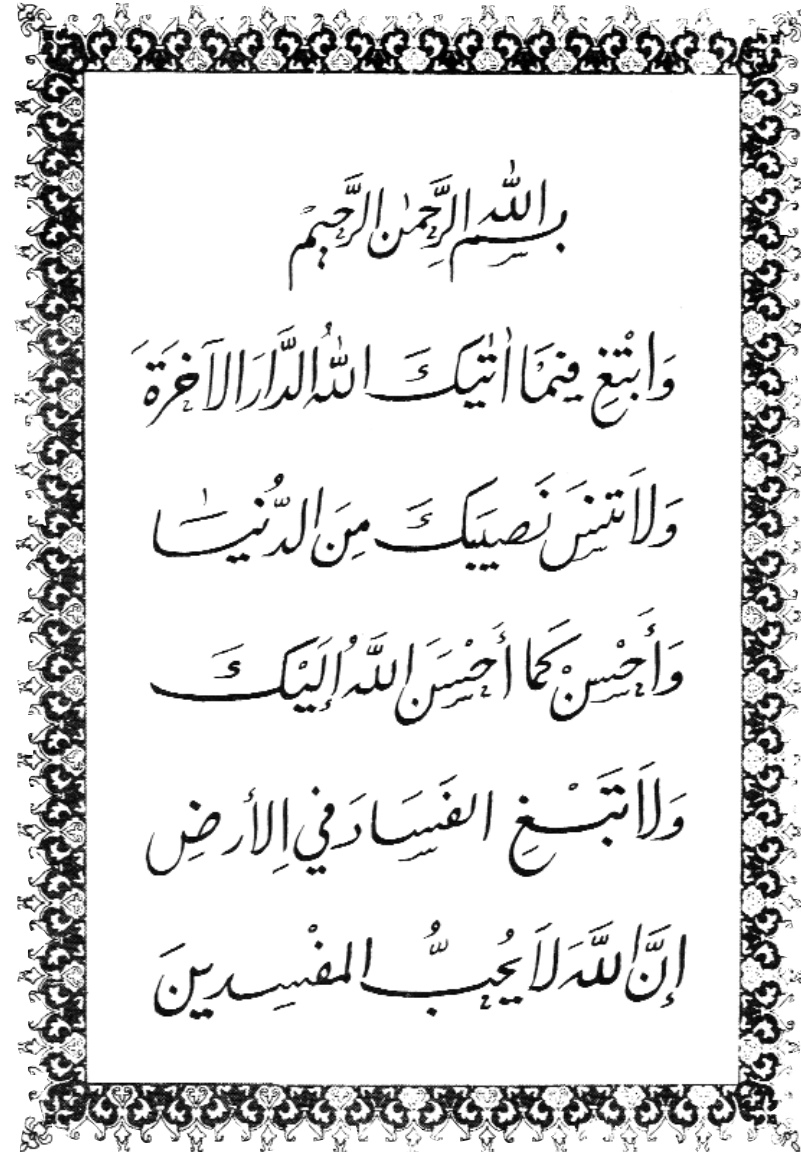
ﷻ - subhanahu wa ta'ala

ﷺ - sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam

ﷻ - radhi allaho anha/anho

AH - After Hijrah

CE - Christian Era



## Contents

*“But seek the abode of the Hereafter in that which Allah has given you, and do not neglect your portion of worldly life, and be kind even as Allah has been kind to you, and seek not corruption in the earth. Verily, Allah likes not the Musfsidun (those who are mischief-makers, corrupted).”*

[Al-Qasas: 77]

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## *Introduction*

*“We must not dream of perpetual possession, but must apply ourselves to bring the natives to a state that will admit of their governing themselves in a manner that may be beneficial to our interests as well as their own.”* [Governor of Bombay, 1819 to 1824, Mountstuart Elphinstone]

History has shown that the strength of empire has been built on many things such as powerful armies, efficient administration, economic prosperity and good leadership. However, one of empire’s more indiscernible means of consolidation lies with its culture. Culture governs the prevailing art, architecture, language, education, law, and philosophy of life - as well as dress sense, culinary preferences, manners and moral codes. The Greek, Roman and British Empires have shown that taking control of the predominant culture facilitates taking control of the hearts and minds of the subjects. The more recent example, of the American popular culture, has shown that the dissemination of a culture is still a significant strategy for consolidating newly conquered regions. Moreover, the ubiquitous culture Americana has served the US in much more than a mere reinforcement capacity. The export of plastic pop culture is now used to create new openings on previously untrodden territory.

The power of popular culture is best illustrated by taking a brief glance at previous Empires. Cultural imperialism has previously been used to describe how the colonialists controlled areas in which they had little or no direct rule or economic influence. This was the case with the Romans and the British where small numbers, relative to the masses in the colony, were controlling a region. From the ancient world it is well documented how the Greeks took their coins and imposed them on the people. They also enforced the worship of Athena. This period of Athens’ rule was relatively short and was replaced by the rule of the Macedonian, Alexander the Great. Later on the Romans took over control, which was

much more long term. To take an element of Athenian culture, the Acropolis was a shrine built by the wealth and slave power of the people for the worship of Athena. This cultural artefact was a symbol of Athenian political power. When Alexander the Great conquered Athens he placed hundreds of his shields all around the Parthenon in a display of his authority, then later Emperor Nero placed his inscription across the front entrance of the Parthenon as a symbol of Rome's self-glorification. The Graeco-Roman culture that emerged from this period is the culture that was then exported all over the Roman Empire. It was the military conquests of the Romans that took the ideas of Greece through the whole of Europe as far as Hadrian's Wall in Northern England. The cultural influence of this period persisted through the centuries. All Western Empires that have existed since then have borrowed culture from Rome in various ways. Examples of this can be found in how the British nurtured public school boys, who were to run the Empire, equipped with their knowledge of the Greek and Latin language and Classic culture. The British thought (and probably still do) this is a necessary part of training for administration. Napoleon also took the Eagle, the Graeco-Roman symbol as his emblem when he maraudered his way around the Mediterranean and northern Europe. The USA, when establishing their new state, insisted on it being a "Republican" Empire. Washington was to have a "capital" and a "Senate", with the architecture modelled on the classic world rather than on the British paradigm.

There are many parallels between the rule of the Romans over northern Europe and the British rule of India in the nineteenth century. There were many phases and changes in tactics that the British employed during their rule in India and also throughout their colonies. The British experience in India illustrates the principle of cultural imperialism in an acute fashion. This is partly due to the massive disparity in numbers. In the late eighteenth century under Hastings, the British showed great interest in learning about Indian customs and legal systems. Their view was that at the time they had to understand the mindset of those that they were governing. Then in the early nineteenth century the missionaries held sway with their desire to convert the Indians to Christianity. Then this was followed by the idea that a ruling elite, educated in the ways of the white man, should be produced from amongst the natives. In the 1830s there was a huge debate amongst the ruling elite in Westminster

concerning the introduction of English to the natives of India. This was supported by Thomas Babington Macaulay, whose speech in Parliament on July 10, 1833, was the most eloquent expression of the new spirit within the British attitude to India. Lord Macaulay later wrote; "By good government we may educate our subjects so that they may in some future age demand European institutions. Whenever such a day comes, it will be the proudest day in English history." After this period, following the Indian mutiny of 1857, they decided to try and return back to ruling in conjunction with the existing Princes etc, but by directing affairs from behind the scenes. However, throughout all of these changes in approach they described themselves as a "Protestant Israel". That is, a people chosen and blessed by God, but different from the cruel Spanish and Portuguese Catholics.

This is a glance at some element of the British rule in India. It may be a gross over simplification of what happened, but it is just an introduction to the idea that complicated means and methods can be used to control colonies - means and methods in addition to or in lieu of direct ruling by an iron fist.

In order for the Islamic Ummah to progress in any manner we must throw off the shackles of Western culture. There is a great temptation to take on the label of "reactionary" that the West has assigned us. We may merely reject anything and everything that is modern and new and attribute it to Western culture. It is essential that we learn to identify those elements of Western culture that are foreign to our belief. This is not solely because they are pernicious, but purely because they are foreign. It is as simple as that. Rasool-Allah ﷺ said;

(( ثم من أحدث في أمرنا هذا ما ليس فيه فهو رد ))

**"that which is not in accordance with our matter, is rejected".** However, there are many elements of modern life that are just of the normal sedentary items with no relation whatsoever to Western belief and culture. These on the other hand should not necessarily be rejected rashly. The key exercise now is accurately identifying the dangers of Western culture. In addition we should know and understand the alternatives from Islam. Lastly, it would help to also point out the oppressive nature of Western popular culture. It is a destructive force as

far as we are concerned, as Muslims. Also, as humans and as inhabitants of the world, we should know that Western culture benefits no one, save a tiny minority. This minority hold self-preservation as their creed.

We should be in a position, primarily, to be equipped with the battle armoury of the correct Islamic culture. We should be in a position, also, to identify that which contradicts our culture. We should be in a position that enables us to deconstruct and refute the fundamentals of Western culture. In this day and age it is a duty, on us as individuals and on us as an Ummah to recognise, reject, and replace Western influences in our lives.

## *Modern Imperial Methods*

Life, liberty and the pursuit of happy meals

*“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”* [US Declaration of Independence July 4 1776]

We are all seeking happiness and satisfaction. However, chasing after happiness is far from a trivial pursuit. The idea of achieving happiness has been uttered among those charged with the duty of designing a system by which man may judge his fellow man. The nobleness of their engagement was stated explicitly as the foundation of the American way of life. The United State’s independence from the oppressive British was heralded with a core declaration concerning “...life, liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”. This US system of government was built on the fundamental tenet of pursuing happiness. Thomas Jefferson’s ideas of 1776 were significant in that this was the first time that a political system was specifically shaped for the citizens to freely pursue happiness. In the context of the Declaration, “happiness” may have seemed a very nebulous concept. However, this matured into a system that became admired throughout the world. Today the US Constitution is the world’s oldest implemented constitution. As unwritten constitutions are few and far between it is also the most widely imitated. Imitation maybe the most sincere form of flattery. This indicates how widely acclaimed the US system has become.

The politics of eighteenth century North America evolved and developed independently of the turmoil of Europe with its bourgeois, religious bigots, potential Empire builders and warmongers. The system became very assured of itself. The individuals comprising the backbone

of that confident government metamorphosed from unrealistic dreamers, to forward looking visionaries, and then finally into arrogant autocrats. Over a century later one such individual at the centre of government, Woodrow Wilson (1919), said, “sometimes people call me an idealist, well that is the way I know I’m an American. Because America is the only idealistic nation.”

This principle had a profound effect on the rest of the World. This precept of pursuing happiness has personified the American way, and is now the US’s proudest export. American ideals were manufactured for a home market, but these ideals were also embellished, embroidered and beautified for global consumption. It is these principles that they cherish, rather than their cheap Mickey Mouse and McDonalds culture.

However, “happiness” was something that the Founding Fathers in Philadelphia left ill- defined. Happiness was in point of fact a hollow slogan. With regards to infant mortality, life expectancy for urban black males and living conditions for certain sectors of the US community, happiness seems to be absent. The amount of happiness that the US has spread around the globe is also in similar proportions. Two centuries on, we see that their use of the word happiness was a cruel misfit of a word. Thirty-six million Americans do not have enough to eat, and the number is growing. Nearly half of those lining up outside soup kitchens have one or more family members in employment. They are simply too poor to buy food. The have’s repudiate the have-not’s, saying, “Why don’t you get a job?” Few realise that, less than 1.1 per cent of the people removed from the welfare rolls by the welfare reform in 1996 will ever get a job that pays a living wage. On a minimum wage of \$5.15 per hour, working 50 hours a week there will still not be enough to pay rent and feed a family living in any major US city. That is to say nothing of clothes and any other necessities. This is just the issue of poverty. Crime, drugs and alcohol addiction, the breakdowns in family structure as well as a whole raft of other social problems all further distance the American people from Thomas Jefferson’s ‘happiness’. America is the home of Prozac, the chemical that physically enforces happiness on the one who takes it. Among the rich, a personal psychiatrist or therapist is seen as a compulsory fashion accessory.

This contradiction between an unhappy nation and a nation founded

on happiness is an issue that intrigues. It not only makes an interesting case study, it is a subject that we, as Muslims, should try to understand. The US has been a force for much evil in the world, especially in the Islamic world. Perhaps we can get to understand the root cause of these evils by understanding the American psyche.

#### Eudaemonia

All of us want to achieve some sort of tranquillity in our lives. Every human finds the term “happiness” alluring, that is the main appeal of the whole American dream. But when we strip this down we see that happiness, as with many things, is not something that humans find easy to comprehensively describe. This subject has fascinated philosophers of the ancient and modern world.

The Greek Philosopher Epicurus (341-270 BCE) discussed happiness extensively. He lent his name to the English language in the phrase Epicurean life, a byword for the good life. Aristotle, also from the ancient world, gave an account of the term, eudaemonia. This term is continually used in philosophical texts to mean happiness, contentment, and tranquillity. Eudaemonia has a much deeper meaning than a having mere feeling of merriment. The prefix ‘eu’ (ev in Greek) means good, as in euphoria, euphemism, eulogy and Europe. The body of the word ‘daemonia’, pertaining to ‘daemon’, meaning the spirit. The English word daemon is a derivation of the same word, meaning spirit. It is only in Modern English that daemon has come to mean evil spirit. In older English the word ‘good’ or ‘evil’ would always precede the word daemon. So what Aristotle meant by eudaemonia was a goodness of spirit. (Note - a more modern spelling of the word is demon rather than daemon).

The world we live in is one where the predominant idea in relation to happiness is to pursue our goals through consumer goods, owning particular items, wearing particular clothes, drinking particular drinks, maintaining a particular image and living a particular lifestyle. As the Nike ads tell us ‘just do it’, that is the means to achieve eudaemonia. However, the idea that possessions and wealth do not bring happiness is self-evident, from the actions and the behaviour of the mega-rich and the mega-famous. This is something well documented in the present day, and even ancients, such as Epicurus, described the phenomenon of



money not equating happiness.

﴿اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ  
وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ  
ثُمَّ يَهِيحُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ  
شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعٌ  
الْعُرُورُ﴾

“Know ye (all) that the life of this world is but play and amusement pomp and mutual boasting and multiplying (in rivalry) among yourselves riches and children; Here is a similitude; How rain and the growth which it brings forth delight (the hearts of) the tillers; soon it withers; thou wilt see it grow yellow; then it becomes dry and crumbles away. But in the Hereafter is a Penalty severe (for the devotees of wrong) and Forgiveness from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure (for the devotees of Allah). And what is the life of this world but goods and chattels of deception?” [TMQ Al-Hadid: 20]

This should induce quite a sobering emotion within us. As far as Islam is concerned we have been sent many reminders that should help us put the beauties of this world into context. When we understand the true nature of this world and the true nature of our role we should not fall into the trap of adopting a ‘just do it’ attitude.

﴿إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ  
بِهِ نَبَاتٌ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ حَتَّى إِذَا  
أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازْبَيَّتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلِهَا أَنَّهُمْ قَادِرُونَ  
عَلَيْهَا أَتَاهَا أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن  
لَّمْ تَغْنَبِ بِالْأَمْسِ كَذَلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ﴾

“The likeness of the life of the present is as the rain which We send down from the skies; by its mingling arises the produce of the earth which provides food for men and

animals; (it grows) till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out (in beauty); the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it; there reaches it Our command by night or by day and We make it like a harvest clean-mown as if it had not flourished only the day before! Thus, do We explain the Signs in detail for those who reflect.” [TMQ Yunus: 24]

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا  
وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ﴾

“O men! Certainly the promise of Allah is true. Let not then this present life deceive you nor let the Chief Deceiver deceive you about Allah.” [TMQ Fatir: 5]

Abu Hurairah related that Rasool-Allah ﷺ said;

((تعمس عبد الدينار والدرهم والقטיפفة والخميصة، إن أعطى

رضي، وإن لم يعط لم يرض))

“Ruined are those devoted to Dinar and Dirhams and black cloaks and striped cloaks. If they are given they are pleased and if they are not given they are displeased.” [Bukhari]

Sahl ibn Sa'd ؓ narrated that a man came and said,

((عن أبي العباس سهل بن سعد الساعدي رضي الله عنه،

قال: جاء رجل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: يا

رسول الله دلني على عمل إذا عملته أحبني الله وأحبنى

الناس؛ فقال: ازهد في الدنيا يحبك الله، وازهد فيما عند

الناس يحبك الناس))

“O Rasool-Allah ﷺ, direct me to a deed for which I shall be loved by Allah and by men when I have done it.” Rasool-Allah ﷺ replied, “Do not desire the world, and Allah will love you, and do not desire

that which people possess and they will love you.” [Ibn Majah]

‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar ؓ said,

((كن في الدنيا كأنك غريب أو كعابر سبيل))

“Allah’s Apostle took hold of my shoulder and said, ‘Be in this world as if you were a stranger or a traveller.’”

The sub-narrator added; Ibn ‘Umar ؓ used to say, “If you survive till the evening, do not expect to be alive in the morning, and if you survive till the morning, do not expect to be alive in the evening, and take from your health for your sickness, and (take) from your life for your death.” [Bukhari]

It should be very clear to us that our objective in this life is not focused on this world. The wider issue is that we exist in this world merely as a prelude to another world that will follow this one. This understanding puts the whole “philosophy” of pursuing happiness into context. Returning to the philosophers, the question of what actions lead to happiness was also addressed. John Stuart Mill, whose mentor was the arch utilitarian Jeremy Bentham, made this the central part of his philosophy. The utilitarians had argued that, in a world beset by moral ambiguities, the way to judge whether an action was right or wrong was to quantify how much pleasure and pain it gave rise to. John Stuart Mill stated, “Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure.” So, like the philosophy of Nike, if it gives you pleasure, ‘just do it’. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), a German of the time, completely disagreed with the position of the British Bentham and Mill. Nietzsche’s basic philosophy may be summed up as ‘no pain no gain.’ He said of the Utilitarian thought “Man does not strive for happiness; only the English do that.”

This serves to illustrate how far off the mark the Western Philosophers were. However, we include this discussion to demonstrate how much deep hatred the various schools of philosophy had for each other. Their arguments were futile. Their personal attacks on each other were childish.

Jeremy Bentham and Friedrich Nietzsche were two philosophers that presented advice on how people could live happy and contented lives. However, they were two of the strangest individuals imaginable. Bentham was peculiar, he requested that his corpse be pickled, preserved and placed in a glass case, like a mounted museum mammal. Although he does not have voting rights, his body sits in on board room meetings at University College London where he is housed. Many Western philosophers’ own personal lives were bereft of happiness. None epitomise this more than Nietzsche, who led a thoroughly miserable life. He was deeply bitter and unhappy with his lot. He attributed his dire state to his inability to forge relationships with women. Being a doctor of philosophy, he naturally diagnosed his condition - his opinion being that women found him unattractive. He hypothesised that this was mostly due to his monstrosity of a moustache. Unfortunately the great thinker was not enlightened enough to think about shaving or trimming it. These two comical figures are rather typical of Western philosophers that have offered up solutions to human problems. This collective bunch of freaks and oddballs are the last people we should look to for advice on anything, least of all on how to attain happiness in life.

What of Islam?

Pleasure, for us is obtaining Allah’s ﷻ pleasure. Happiness, for us is also found through gaining Allah’s ﷻ pleasure. Physical contentment and pleasure, sensual or otherwise, in the short term and even in the long term (in mundane temporal assessments) are recognisable. There is subjectivity associated with exactly how pleasurable a particular action is. Nevertheless pleasure is a very real phenomenon. Rasool-Allah ﷺ has described to us that there were things that he found physically pleasing to him. Anas ؓ reported Rasool-Allah ﷺ saying,

((حب إلي من دنياكم: النساء، والطيب، وجعلت قرّة

عيني في الصلاة))

“Among the things of this world, I love women and perfume, and the coolness of my eyes is prayer.” [Ahmad and an-Nasa’i]

Anas ibn Malik ؓ narrated Rasool-Allah ﷺ said,

((حب إلي من الدنيا النساء والطيب وجعل قرة عيني في

الصلاة))

“Perfume and women have been made dear to me, but my comfort has been provided by prayer.” [Tirmidhi]

Allah ﷻ has also mentioned that we, by our very nature, find pleasure in certain things of this world.

﴿زَيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ  
الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ  
وَالْحَرِّ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَإِ﴾

“The likeness of the life of the present is as the rain which We send down from the skies; by its mingling arises the produce of the earth which provides food for men and animals; (it grows) till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out (in beauty); the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it; there reaches it Our command by night or by day and We make it like a harvest clean-mown as if it had not flourished only the day before! Thus, do We explain the Signs in detail for those who reflect.” [TMQ Ale-Imran: 14]

Rasool-Allah ﷺ confirmed that there is nothing wrong in liking the things of this world. We are dissimilar to the Christians who consider human presence on the earth to be a terrible punishment and that there is no pleasure on this earth that is not a sin. That is the Biblical doctrine of ‘the fall’ from God’s grace. Belief in the fall contradicts the reality of our very make-up as human beings. We can all experience and appreciate pleasure. Anyone who has experienced the joys of family life will know that there are tremendous amounts of pleasure, in worldly terms, to be gained from being with one’s family. Rasool-Allah ﷺ encouraged us to make specific Du’a for this. The Du’a in the Qur’an states, “make my family pleasing to my eyes”. But this is pleasure for this world and the hereafter, as it is an act of worship to have relations with own spouse. It is a source of reward to find comfort, in whatever form, from your own

lawfully wedded partner. Do we regard “pleasing to my eyes” in the Du’a as meaning that our spouses and offspring should merely have outer physical beauty? Does this mean a deeper contentment in the harmonious relation that flourishes between a husband and wife? Perhaps it refers to the real pleasure brought to us by our families through seeing them pray, fast, pay zakat and behave correctly according to Islam. This pleasure is not something we quantify, but it is something we identify.

To further this discussion of the non-quantifiable but recognisable, there is paradoxical pleasure to be gained when fasting (siyam). This is obtained in a manner that is almost illogical, because it involves going without food. No one can really articulate in words the experience of breaking the fast at sunset. It is a feeling that we have all experienced, but yet none of us can say exactly what the actual experience is. It is more than satiation of hunger or thirst. It is more than relief. It is more than revitalisation. It is more than a feeling of achievement. It is a wholly unique sensation. To the onlooker, it may seem like no big deal. It is merely the eating of a few dates. However, it is one of the joys that we receive in this world, and it is linked to another joy in the hereafter. What Allah ﷻ grants us of pleasure in the hereafter is many orders of magnitude greater than the pleasure granted to us in this world. Indeed in a Hadith Qudsi revealed to Rasool-Allah ﷺ,

((كل عمل بن آدم له إلا الصيام فإنه لي وأنا أجزي به  
والصيام جنة فإذا كان يوم صوم أحدكم فلا يرفث يومئذ  
ولا يسخب فإن سابه أحد أو قاتله فليقل إني امرؤ صائم  
والذي نفس محمد بيده يخلو فم الصائم أطيب ثم الله يوم  
القيامة من ريح المسك وللصائم فرحتان يفرحهما إذا أفطر  
فرح بفطره وإذا لقي ربه فرح بصومه))

“Allah ﷻ said, ‘All actions of the children of Adam are for them except fasting, it is for Me. It is I who reward for it.’ Fasting is a shield. Once you are fasting, you should not speak foul speech nor loud. If a person curses or fights him, let him say; I am fasting. By the One who has Muhammad’s soul in His hand, the smell of the

fasting person's mouth is better for Allah than musk. The fasting person has two times of happiness; the first is when he breaks fast, the second when he meets his Lord." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Recognisable pleasures that are agreed upon are only half of the story. What about those things that bring no apparent worldly pleasure? Real happiness may result in us enduring some mental or physical hardship. In order to understand this apparent contradiction in terms we may look to the example of the Sahabah ؓ. It can be seen in the case of the first martyrs for Islam Yasir ؓ and Sumayyah ؓ. Sumayyah suffered hardship, shame, pain, indignity and ultimately death. These hardships and indignities were in temporal terms. When Rasoolallah ﷺ passed by them whilst in their state of agony, he ﷺ said,

((صبرا آل ياسر فموعدكم الجنة))

“Hold on Al-Yasir, your reward is Jannah. Your destiny is with Allah.”

Upon this Sumayyah, wife of Yasir, said, “I can see it, O Rasoolallah.”

When we reflect on this well-known incident it suddenly puts things back into perspective for many of us. Life is serious and life is a test. The trials and hardships of life are part of reason for being on this earth. Trials come with the territory. It is not just the Sirat-an-Nabi ﷺ and the lives of the Sahabah ؓ that are there as prompts to remind us of how hard life may become. There are many verses of the Qur'an that indicate to us that life is a test and hardship is part of the test.

﴿أَحْسَبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ \*  
وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا  
وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ﴾

“Do men imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say, we believe, and will not be tested with affliction? Lo! We tested those who were before you. Thus, Allah knows those who are true and those who are liars” [TMQ Al-Ankabut: 2-3]

﴿أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا  
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ  
الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصْرُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ  
قَرِيبٌ﴾

“Or think you that you will enter Paradise while yet there has not come unto you the like of (that which came to) those who passed away before you? Affliction and adversity befell them, they were shaken as with an earthquake until the Messenger of Allah, and those who believed along with him said; When will the victory of Allah come? Lo! The victory of Allah is near!” [TMQ Al-Baqarah: 214]

﴿لَتُبْلَوْنَ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا  
الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا وَإِنْ  
تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ﴾

“You shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your personal selves. But if you persevere patiently, and guard against evil, then that will be a determining factor in all affairs” [TMQ Ale-Imran: 186]

﴿وَلَتُبْلَوُنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ  
وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالشَّمْرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ  
مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ﴾

“Be sure We will test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss of goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere” [TMQ Al-Baqarah: 155]

﴿وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

*“Faint not nor grieve, for you will overcome them if you are (indeed) believers”*  
[TMQ Ale-Imran: 139]

The Sahabah ﷺ were fully aware of these verses and the meaning that they carry. The Sahabah ﷺ are an important model for us to look to in order to comprehend what the correct response should be to hardship. Sa’id ibn Aamir al-Jumahi ﷺ recalled how he witnessed the harsh treatment, of the Quraish, meted out to a Muslim captive, Khubayb ibn Adiy, from Madinah. The Quraish considered Khubayb’s ﷺ public execution to be revenge for their losses at Badr. When a large crowd assembled with the prisoner to be killed at the appointed place, Sa’id ibn Aamir took up his position at a point directly overlooking Khubayb ﷺ as he approached a wooden cross. At the time Sa’id ibn Aamir al-Jumahi ﷺ had not embraced Islam. From his vantage spot he heard Khubayb ﷺ pronounce amid the shouting of women and children. “If you would, leave me to pray two rakaats before my death.” The Quraish obliged. Sa’id looked at Khubayb ﷺ as he faced the Ka’ba and prayed. How beautiful and how composed those two ‘rakaats seemed. Then he saw Khubayb ﷺ facing the Quraish leaders. “By God, if you thought that I asked to pray out of fear of death, I would think the prayer not worth the trouble,” he said. The people then set about dismembering Khubayb’s ﷺ body while he was yet alive and taunting him in the process. “Would you like Muhammad to be in your place while you go free?” With blood gushing from him, he replied, “By Allah, I would not want to be safe and secure among my family while even a thorn hurts Muhammad.”

Al Baihaqi and Ibn Asakir narrated that Aby Rafi’a said; Umar ibn Al-Khattab despatched an army to the Romans, including a man called Abdullah bin Hudhaifah Al-Sahmi, from the companions of Rasoolallah ﷺ, whom the Romans captured. They took him to their king and said; “He is from Muhammad’s companions”. The tyrant king said to him; “Would you like to be a Christian and for me to make you a partner in my property and kingdom?” Abdullah replied; “If you give me all that you possess to leave the Deen of Muhammad ﷺ I would not do it.” The tyrant said to him; “Then I will kill you.” He said; “It is up to you.” The king commanded him to be crucified. At the same time he instructed his shooters to shoot Abdullah near his hands and near his legs while continuously offering him the same offer, but Abdullah refused. Then he commanded for Abdullah to be brought down and he called for a big pot,

poured water into it until it was boiling and asked for two captured Muslims to be brought forth. He then gave an order for one of the Muslims to be thrown into the boiling water unless Abdullah accepted his offer of becoming a Christian, but Abdullah refused. Finally he commanded that Abdullah be thrown inside the boiling pot also. As Abdullah was being taken away he began to cry. The king thinking that Abdullah’s resolve was broken instructed for him to be brought back and offered Christianity to him but once again he refused. Shocked at Abdullah’s answer, the tyrant king asked; “Why then did you cry?” Abdullah replied; “I cried because I said to myself you will be thrown in this pot and pass away. It saddens me that I only have one life to give. I would like that I had as many souls as the number of hairs in my body so that they can all be sacrificed and then meet Allah Ta’ala. The tyrant was dumb-founded by this answer and said; “Do you agree to kiss me on my head and I will then release you?” Abdullah replied to him; “With all the captured Muslims?” He said; “With all the captured Muslims.” Abdullah said; “I said to myself; One enemy of Allah’s enemies whom if I kiss on his head he will release me and all the captured Muslims then this is an action which I don’t mind doing.” He approached the tyrant and kissed him on his head. Thus, in this way he and the other captured Muslims were granted their freedom. He arrived with them to Umar ﷺ. Umar was informed of this news as a result of which Umar stood up and kissed Abdullah on his head.

The real issue of the United States is the ideas and thoughts that they want to live by and want others to live by in due course. That is, pursuit of happiness in narrow materialistic terms. We should remember what true happiness is. We should work to attain happiness in this world and in the hereafter. This is done by obeying Allah’s ﷻ laws, and not being a slave to our own ego. Pursuit of happiness is what destroyed past civilisations; it is what may destroy the US from within. We should learn to rid ourselves of these ideas of chasing after happiness like a dog chasing its own tail. We should not let our rigid pursuit of happiness of this world, humiliate us in the next world. Allah ﷻ has described in the Qur’an how he shall call to the soul that has attained happiness on the day of reckoning.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ \* ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَةً﴾

## \*فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي \* وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي\*

*“He shall say, “O, would that I had prepared for my life!” On that day none shall any bind with chains as He binds. “O soul in a state of tranquillity (nafsun-mutamainna), return to your Lord, well pleased and well pleasing. Enter you among My servants! Enter my Paradise!” [TMQ Al-Fajr: 27-30]*

We should pause for a moment and think deeply about this thought-provoking verse. We should think deeply about this verse, and the true meaning of tranquillity and what it means to become the nafsun-mutamainna. Following deep contemplation we should be prompted to make the Du'a which Rasoolallah ﷺ recommended us to supplicate on reading this verse.

((قل: اللهم إني أسألك نفساً مطمئنة، تؤمن ببقائك،

وترضى بقضائك، وتقنع بعطائك))

**“O Allah, I ask you a soul in a state of tranquillity nafsun-mutamainna, that believes in meeting you, pleased with your judgement and contented with your bestowal.” - Ameen**

No Ronald McDonald without McDonnell-Douglas

Every morning, the French nation breaks its fast on coffee and croissant. Le croissant is a crescent shaped light pastry, which is meant to symbolise the authority of Islam. It may seem like a tenuous link between Gallic gastronomy and the Islamic Sultan, but Le croissant commemorates the holding off of the Ottoman attack on Vienna. It was originally an Austrian delicacy. Marie-Antoinette, the Austrian Princess brought the croissant to France when she married Louis XVI. Legend has it that, whilst the Islamic army laid siege to the city, a baker in Vienna needed dough in his cellar. This cellar, where the dough was being prepared, was where his son would play marbles. The Muslims had already captured the outer city, but the fortifications on the inner part of the city were much stronger. They decided to tunnel their way under the wall and take them by surprise. They would never have expected this sort of attack. As they dug under the city the baker noticed his son's marbles were moving and that the ground was shaking. He alerted the

authorities. They asked him to make a special pastry to celebrate their good fortune.

Historians of all persuasion acknowledge that the events that followed the siege of Vienna in 1683 could have changed the face of Europe, if the tunnelling mission had been successful. The capital of Eastern Christendom had Vienna at the heart of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. If that city fell, at that time, the shock wave would have been such that the whole of Europe would have probably fallen subsequently. So, the invention of the croissant was a not a churlish gesture, but a sigh of relief. Today most Muslims wouldn't think twice about such an inconspicuous item of food. Is it that through the centuries we have grown to accept the croissant? Perhaps it is because food, by its nature, is neutral, inoffensive and unobtrusive. Food is exactly the ideal commodity to spread cross-racial and cultural boundaries. Food is food; surely it carries no real cultural baggage.

McDonald's

The export of American products, services and common culture has been spearheaded by the fast food industry. The export of US political and military imperialism has been spearheaded by the armaments industry.

The restaurant chain McDonald's and the military aircraft manufacturer McDonnell-Douglas have come to represent, respectively, two devices that are used for ensuring American global reach.

The McDonald's Corporation is the most important symbol of America's service economy. It is responsible for 90 per cent of the US's new jobs. It is estimated that one in eight of workers in the US have at some point been employed by McDonald's. The corporation is America's largest purchaser of beef, pork and potatoes. It spends more on marketing than any other brand name. It is America's biggest distributor of toys. Today the Golden Arches (the M-for McDonald's sign) are now more widely recognised than the Christian cross. McDonald's has replaced Coca-Cola as the world's most famous brand.

That is the case not merely in the US. Internationally, American fast

food chains have taken on a wholly different significance. For starters, the McDonald's Corp is the largest owner of retail property in the world. Internationally, the Golden Arches have taken on symbolic value that has far surpassed those of the swastika and the hammer and sickle.

American fast food represents Americana and the promise of modernisation. After the fall of the Berlin Wall within months McDonald's opened its first restaurant in Eastern Germany. In 1992 thousands of people waited patiently in Beijing outside the city's first McDonald's store at its grand opening. When McDonald's opened in Kuwait the line of cars waiting at the drive-thru window extended for seven miles. Around the same time Kentucky Fried Chicken hit its all time record earnings for one week, \$200,000, during Ramadhan, in the holy city of Makkah al-Mukarramah. Simply eating at Pizza Hut or McDonald's and drinking Coke or Pepsi, as if by magic, can lift one's social standing. This is the image that goes hand in hand with the sparkling clean tables and counters of the fast food take away stores.

The fast food chains have become imperial fiefdoms, sending emissaries far and wide. Den Fujita, the man who brought McDonald's to Japan 30 years ago once promised his Japanese countrymen, "If we eat McDonald's hamburgers and potatoes for a thousand years we will become taller, our skin will become white, and our hair will be blonde." Statements like this may lead one to believe that the job of the fast food chains in brain washing is a *fait accompli*. Sixteen years ago, when McDonald's opened its first restaurant in Turkey, no other foreign franchiser did business there. Turkey now has hundreds of outlets for US companies. Support for growth of franchising has become part of US foreign policy. The State Department now publishes detailed studies of overseas franchise opportunities and runs a Gold Key Program at many of its embassies to help American franchisers find overseas partners.

Due to incredibly fierce competition in the US between the chains, many have turned their attentions to markets outside America. The McDonald's Corp refers to their strategy as "global realization." To date McDonald's has over 15,000 restaurants outside the US in more than 117 countries.

The fact that fast food has come to represent US imperialism is not

something that has gone unnoticed by some who have paused to take stock of the status quo. In response to the US bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in 1999, there was a trashing of over a dozen McDonald's and four KFC's in China. In 1996 Indian farmers ransacked a KFC in Bangalore, in protest against the US erosion of the traditional Indian agricultural practices. In 1997, a McDonald's in Cali in Colombia was bombed. In 1995 a group of four hundred Danish anarchists looted a McDonald's in Copenhagen and burned it to the ground. Fast food restaurants (of which McDonald's was the most popular for attack) have been bombed, burned and abused in St Petersburg in Russia, Athens in Greece, Cape Town in South Africa, Antwerp in Belgium and the famous anti-capitalist, anti-globalisation riots in London. Although many are recognising the ills of culinary colonialism we should remember that McDonald's is merely one tool in amongst many for enforcing US junk culture on the world. The other tools are often more apparent and often more damaging. Each tool supplements the other. The spread of junk culture augments the spread of political influence.

So what of McDonnell-Douglas? The military might of the US has spread through the globe in an equally insidious and pernicious manner. Conflict and trouble spots have been used specifically as pretence for the establishment of military bases or for building sea borne parking lots for aircraft carriers and destroyers. These so-called trouble spots have in the past been conjured up from peaceful and stable regions. Flare-ups have been induced by the US through its various agencies and puppets that operate covertly and overtly. This has been exemplified by the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the Iran-Iraq war that followed. This conflict provided a reason for the US to have a heightened presence in the Gulf. A more dramatic example was that of the Gulf war of the early 1990s. Military bases were set up all over the Persian Gulf region with no opposition from the heads of state in the region. A comprehensive study of this issue is beyond the scope of this discussion, though some of these issues are addressed in the following chapter. Even the briefest of glances at modern history reveals ample examples of the use of the arms trade and base building in American hegemony.

Although in the aftermath of the US attacks on Afghanistan, the US may not have immediate plans to site a Starbucks in Kandahar, one thing is for sure - the US does intend to increase and strengthen existing bases

and footholds that she has in the Islamic regions of the world. Bases and ports are some of the plum prize booty sought after in today's situations. Both McDonnell-Douglas and McDonald's are key tools used for the pursuit of this goal.

No McDonnell-Douglas without constant conflicts

Perfect planning prevents poor performance

In America the majority (70%) of fast food purchases are impulse buys. Few people go out specifically to buy a hamburger and the like. This fact points to the importance of restaurant site location. Just as magazines and sweets are strategically placed at the checkout counter in the supermarket, fast food joints are located at a particular place by design and not by accident. In the past McDonald's used helicopters to assess the growth of residential areas. They would look for cheap land alongside highways and roads that would lie at the heart of future suburbs. However, they have progressed from that. In the 1980s McDonald's became one of the world's biggest purchasers of satellite photography, using it to predict urban sprawl. McDonald's developed a software package called Quintillion that integrated and ranked information from satellite images, detailed maps, demographic information, CAD drawings and sales data from existing stores. Thus, the science that lies behind the strategic placing of restaurants in prime locations in order to maximise profits is a science that is analogous to those used by the military intelligence agencies.

Strategic locations are paramount to fast food outlets. By analogy the US government places the same importance on location. However, the location is not a parking lot in a housing project but it could be an island, a peninsula, an isthmus, a mountain range, a waterway or a landlocked landmass. In the case of South America, through the Monroe doctrine, this could be a whole continent. The criteria that define a good location are not based on where lie the wealthy middle classes with expendable incomes. In this case they are based on mineral resources, human resources, agricultural capacity and strategic positions for trade routes and transportation of goods and commodities, to name but a few. Thus, the Golan Heights, Panama, the straits of Malacca and the Suez Canal are all examples of sought after prize positions. Just as strategically positioned

McDonald's restaurants have become ubiquitous in North America, US military bases are starting to become peppered throughout the Islamic lands.

Why are we comparing such a trivial issue like fast food with the McDonnell-Douglas Corporation who were the manufacturers of the F-4 Phantom, the A-4 Skyhawk, the F-15 Eagle, and the F-18 Hornet. The point being made here is that the means of thrusting these two all-American products on to the world are dangerous and devious. We should be aware of the stealthy manner that US imperialism has spread over the globe.

Policing the world

By taking on the role of the world's police force the US has been allowed to set up bases in all of the most strategic positions. These bases could just be a military base surrounded by a barbed wire fence, or an aircraft carrier patrolling other nation's sovereign waters, or a base could be an entire country as is the case with Pakistan. The Caspian oil rich states now have a most loyal servant to America to the south in Pakistan. On the soils of Uzbekistan there is military presence of awesome proportions.

In recent years the US has treated the whole country of Iraq as merely one great big rifle range. Baghdad has been treated as if it was a gigantic disposable paper-shooting target.

Arms trade

America's military is the country's biggest business. According to the House Budget Committee, in 2000, defence expenditures represented 16 per cent of discretionary federal spending. Excluding entitlements like Social Security and Medicare, all non-defence spending combined was only 19 per cent of the federal budget. In the Department of Defence's most recently published report, the 2001 defence budget will be more than \$300 billion, of which \$60 billion would be spent on procurement and almost \$40 billion on research and development. The budget for national defence is expected to exceed \$360 billion by 2006.



In 2000, worldwide arms sales rose to 36.9 billion dollars (up from 34 billion in 1999). Poor countries bought 68 percent of last year's [2000] US weapons output. US arms makers signed contracts for some 18.6 billion dollars in 2000, up from around 12.9 billion dollars the previous year. US contracts accounted for 49.7 per cent of global sales last year.

During the 1997-2000 period, the United Arab Emirates ranked first among developing nations in the value of arms transfer agreements, concluding \$14 billion in such agreements. India ranked second at \$7.6 billion. Egypt ranked third with \$6.9 billion. The US agreed to sell to the UAE advanced 80 F16s. The deal is estimated to be around 15 billion dollars. However, in return, the US will be able to build military bases there with improved access to the only deep-water port capable of housing aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf.

The US also sells many weapons to Turkey. These are used against Turkey's own population. The US turns a blind eye to these atrocities. This is because they are able to set up bases in such a key geopolitical location. This position allows them to spy on places in the Middle East, such as Iraq.

It is not just the US that have used the arms trade for profit and for strategic advantage. The UK is the world's second biggest supplier of arms. When General Zia seized power in Pakistan he vowed to "...match India sword with sword, tank with tank and destroyer with destroyer." Britain, just prior, to this had sold to India, Sea King helicopters, Hawk and Harrier aircraft and Sea Eagle anti-ship missiles. Salesmen from the UK offered Pakistan a very similar package deal. The UK has had a good track record of selling whatever they want for a quick buck. The arms sales to Iraq throughout the 1980s stand as testament to that. In 1981 Douglas Hurd, then Foreign Minister, flew specifically to Baghdad to celebrate with Saddam the coming to power of the Ba'athists in 1968. He was not the only arms salesman and politician to live it up with Saddam over that period. In 1988, David Mellor, then a foreign office minister, partook of the Takriti hospitality. While David Mellor was posing for photographs with Saddam, his host ordered the gassing of 5,000 inhabitants of Halabja. The opportunistic, used-car salesman approach, to international arms dealing was typified by Thatcher and son. When Mrs Thatcher ordered the nation to "Rejoice!" during the Malvinas

(Falkland) Islands War in 1982, she omitted to mention that the first Harrier aircraft lost was shot down by Argentinean fighters using British-built ammunition

War per se as tool

War in itself has been a means of furthering imperialist ambitions. The recent events of September 11th 2001 in New York and Washington have been described as a "second Pearl Harbor". This is an important analogy as Pearl Harbor changed US public opinion overnight about many things, as did the bombing of the World Trade Centre. This first event warrants review.

It is now well documented that President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) provoked the attack on Pearl Harbor. He knew about it in advance and covered up his failure to warn the Hawaiian commanders. The US was warned by, at least, the governments of Britain, Netherlands, Australia, Peru, Korea and the Soviet Union that a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor was coming. Important Japanese codes were broken before the event. The chief of OP-20-G Safford and Friedman of Army SIS, the two people in the world that knew what was decoded, said that FDR knew Pearl Harbor was going to be attacked. FDR needed the attack to happen so he could enter the war, since the public and Congress were overwhelmingly against entering the war in Europe. It was his backdoor to war.

Abraham Lincoln said, "Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail. Without it nothing can succeed. He who moulds opinion is greater than he who enacts laws." This maxim of Lincoln was something that President Roosevelt (FDR) knew the reality of. In November 1941, FDR ordered the Red Cross Disaster Relief director to secretly prepare for massive casualties at Pearl Harbor because he was going to let it be attacked. When he protested to the President, President Roosevelt told him that "the American people would never agree to enter the war in Europe unless they were attack [sic] within their own borders." [U.S. Naval Institute - Naval History - Advance Warning? The Red Cross Connection by Daryl S. Borgquist]

Well before the events of December 7 1941 back in the summer (14

August) at the Atlantic Conference, Churchill noted the “astonishing depth of Roosevelt’s intense desire for war.” Churchill cabled his cabinet “(FDR) obviously was very determined that they should come in.”

The consequence of the US entering World War Two was that it allowed the US to create its global empire from the spoils of the war. The whole war and the organisations set up after the war by the US such as the UNO, World Bank and IMF all served to consolidate the new empire that the US had acquired.

The devastation of the war is well known. The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are testament to that. FDR sacrificed approximately 3,000 lives at Pearl Harbor as well as scores of planes and 5 battle ships. To FDR this was a small price to pay for the greater spoils of the neo-colonialists post war world. In addition, after Pearl Harbor, the Supreme Court ordered that 100,000 American people of Japanese origin be rounded up and imprisoned for the rest of the war. This was the contempt FDR had for his own people. Borrowing FDR’s most famous quote, the people had more to “fear than fear itself”. They had the brutality of an uncaring government with a despotic dictator at the helm.

It may be argued that there can be no McDonald’s without McDonnell-Douglas. However, we neither do not need nor do we want McDonald’s and nor do we need or want McDonnell-Douglas.

## *Ideological Invasion*

Man as legislator

Islam is a way of life revealed from Allah ﷻ. Muslims, as humans, perform human actions. The solving of our problems are based on a divine text. The extraction of solutions from this text is not biased, nor prejudiced in any way. The one who performs this extraction, the Mujtahid, does not pre-assign a problem as being solely ethical, economical or educational. Rather, he views the problem as being a human problem. A problem that is intertwined with all the complexities of human societal existence. In contrast to this is the Western way of life where problems are not solved from a divine source. Rather human problems are solved for humans by humans. The human is limited in his knowledge, myopic in outlook and prone to self-preservation in judgements. It therefore follows that the system that he derives is riddled with disparity and contradiction.

Capital – the dominant influence in secular decision-making

When Europeans began to refer to man as the source of legislation, they discarded the shackles of Christianity. Thus, secularism was born. Constitutions were framed, laws were passed and systems of ruling emerged. These novel systems placed wealth at their centre. Political edifices were always constructed within the amphitheatre of capital. Appropriately, these systems became known as capitalist. This constant reference to ownership and wealth drew on a very basic instinct that all humans possess. That is, the desire to secure one’s own interests. When left unbridled, this instinct leads to greed, power, lust and exploitation. Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((لو كا لابن آدم واديان من ذهب لأحب أن يكون له

ثالث، ولا يملاً جوف ابن آدم إلا التراب، ويتوب الله  
 على من تاب))

**“If the son of Adam was given a valley full of gold he will always want a second. If he has two valleys full of gold he will always want a third.”** [Bukhari]

The reality was that these systems were merely knee-jerk responses to the whims and desires of a greedy few. In the words of ex-US President Jimmy Carter, “The reason for the Constitution was to empower people of property over common people. Indeed, our definition of self-government and freedom have become linked, if not equated, to the interests of the corporation.”

The theory of Capitalism is totally impracticable. William Beveridge’s ideas on welfare and social security were an attempt to compensate for abundant deficiencies within the capitalist system. Indeed, welfare was an after-thought, an add-on, in the historical development of the British system. Purists would consider Beveridge to be a heretic. Today, issues are always discussed with an economical slant. This is regardless of whether the essence or implications of these issues are moral, social or ethical. The overcrowding of prisons, the availability of beds in hospitals and the poor state of education are always debated in relation to finance and funding. In Britain, performance-related pay was a culture introduced into many realms during the 18 years of Tory government. The greengrocer mentality prompted the government to superimpose the economics of buying and selling to many spheres. Performance-related pay scales were introduced into the health and police services. The architects of this policy assumed that the performance of a nurse or a policeman can be quantified in the same way as a greengrocer. Can the number of patients that die under a nurse’s care, or criminals that evade arrest, ever be correlated with the number of melons sold in a week?

This economic skew has caused many Western analysts to lose track of all reality. This is seen with the West’s obsession with overpopulation. This obsession was born out of the erroneous conclusions of Thomas Malthus at the turn of the nineteenth century. He viewed population

growth purely as an economist. His conclusions that population should be curbed by famines and natural disasters were revamped in the 1970s with the publication of Ehrlich’s, “The Population Bomb”. This book prompted three major conferences and the adoption of population control policies in many poor nations. There exists a common myth that incidents like the Ethiopian famine were some how related to overpopulation. Ethiopia is eight times the size of England and at the time had a population three quarters of that of England. Indeed Africa as a whole, the continent most closely associated with famine, is actually highly under-populated.

Disparity and contradictions stemming from competing interests

The capitalist system in practice leads to disparity and contradictions. Experts are assigned to solve problems. Some of these are normal human problems. Others are problems that the system itself has generated. The result is that loopholes and get-out clauses are commonplace. This is seen clearly in Western legal systems. The process of judiciary is far removed from the actuality of life. Law is derived, discussed and debated in ivory towers but enforced on the common people. Laws are seen as academic legal issues; common people are not required to understand them. They are required merely to live by them. Therefore, legal issues when exposed can often go against public opinion.

A contradiction can be seen with the then UK Home Secretary Jack Straw’s commitment to keep Myra Hindley locked up for the rest of her life. The original sentencing judge stated that life meant “...a very long time”. In 1985, this was set at thirty years by the then Home Secretary Leon Britten. Now over thirty years after the original sentencing, ‘life’ suddenly means ‘for life’. The right to appeal for parole for ‘lifers’ is enshrined within the British legal system. The sentence of ‘life’ meaning ‘for life’ contradicts British and European laws and conventions. The ‘Moors murders’ have remained an emotive issue in the UK solely due to the tabloid manipulation of the masses. Hindley’s deeds were repugnant, but it is the press that have sustained her infamy in the minds of the British people. Three and a half decades later, the press still titillate their readers with the gory details of the trial in a manner that has no relationship to the academia of the legal process. She ended up dying in prison. Thus, saving David Blunkett from facing the vexed question.

Disparity and contradictions stemming from limited knowledge

Many issues have been painstakingly discussed, voted upon and ratified by experts and lay people. Upon studying isolated technical situations it is easy to find examples of how the limitations of the human mind have caused problems. An example can be seen with thalidomide. Whole armies of experts from a wide variety of scientific, medical and legal fields had granted a marketing licence for this drug. Despite extensive research, it was only post-marketing that these experts concluded it caused congenital abnormalities. These same experts concluded that some of their methods and observations were flawed. This admirable acknowledgement of fallibility is common in isolated cases. Man has readily admitted his shortcomings in judging correctly in relatively 'simple' models. Yet, the Western ideology insists man can be competent in judging societal problems, which are vastly more complex.

In the realm of government the problems that humans have created for themselves are numerous. The US has a relatively young system. It was framed far away from the bitter racial and religious prejudices of Europe at that time. The 'New World' consisted of many peoples that had purposely fled from religious intolerance. The Americans had the opportunity to take a long hard look at the European democracies. They attempted to take the best from Europe and to think deeply about forging a utopia. The American constitution has been a paradigm and an inspiration for many nations that gained independence from colonialism. The American system, it may be said, was carefully planned and thought out by rational, intelligent, well-intentioned lateral thinkers. Yet, we see the reality of America is that it is a complete mess.

Some of the main issues that were mulled and mused over to the greatest depth were enshrined in 'The Bill of Rights'. The most famous of which was the First Amendment; freedom of religion, speech, press, protest and petition. For two centuries this has been quoted, used and abused in defence of many issues that even the average American considers damaging; for example, pornography and white supremacist material. When this is linked with the Second and Fourth Amendments, we see the chaos that these principles gave birth too. These being, the right to bear arms and "the right to secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures". The

interpretation of these amendments led to the emergence of the "Branch-Davidian" sect in Waco, Texas. The whole 'Waco Incident' was the direct result of the very things that the founding fathers held to be so sacred. The US has always been the home of weirdo cults, crackpot militias and right-wing lunatics.

Satisfactory solutions to human problems, such as crime, have been elusive to the West for all the above reasons. They have reached a point of complete desperation. Criminologists, psychologists, sociologists, etc. rack their brains to come up with satisfactory solutions. For example, to combat crime in Britain, they have just extended a trial of electronic-tagging of criminals. However, the success statistics have not yet been published. We should not be surprised if this gives a greater than 80% re-offending rate as was seen with safari holidays, softly-softly, short-sharp-shock and confronting the victims of crime and so on. None of the methods cooked up by humans can ever produce satisfactory solutions. This is because the root remains the same - that man is the legislator.

Islam is the only system that is immune from prejudice and bias stemming from man. Nor as a source is it at the mercy of man's limited knowledge. This is the system that is from Allah ﷻ, our Creator. Allah ﷻ is the One who created us with so many needs and desires, but He ﷻ is the One without needs. Allah ﷻ knows best our very nature. Nothing of creation escapes his knowledge. Allah ﷻ designed us and therefore is the best designer of a system for us to live by. Surely His ﷻ system is the only system for man to live by.

It's all in the genes

Islam and Western philosophy differ in every respect. Differences are found in the fundamental teaching and outlooks on life, as well as the systems that emanate from these beliefs. The behaviour and actions of the Muslim should be dissimilar to the non-Muslim. Not only are the actions different but so are the attitudes and approaches to issues. Our lives may be seen as a series of problems that require a method of solving them. For us to proceed through life, we need a code to solve our problems. Essentially Islam and Capitalism are codes of life that deal with solving our human problems. Muslims solve problems by analysing them and then referring them to the Shari'ah. In contrast, the Westerners

follow approaches devised by humans themselves.

For example, in governing they have devised methods of electing representatives to speak for them in a debating chamber. This debating chamber has the authority to make, break and modify laws implemented on the people. In science, they have developed a method of analysing the components of an issue and extrapolating observations seen on the small-scale to what may occur in wider settings. Theories of how the atoms of carbon pack together in a diamond give rise to the explanation as to why diamonds possess incredible tensile strength.

#### Reductionism, breaking down chains into links

Reductionism forms part of scientific investigation. That is, problems are reduced to their smallest elements. This type of thinking is the gold standard in most fields of science. Indeed, this approach has been highly effective in providing many solutions in the laboratory setting and even further afield. Literally thousands of inventions, innovations and discoveries have been achieved by using knowledge of the component elements of things. The fundamental qualities of the electron and how it moves are the basis of electricity generation and in turn electronics and all electrical equipment. The characteristics of bodily cells is the basis of all pharmacology; the main stay of Western medicine.

Reductionism is wholly appropriate in many laboratory situations. However, human affairs are not confined to the laboratory. There are many of life's systems that do not have a micro paradigm by which the system may be modelled in isolation.

Many theories about human population growth have been based on laboratory models like bacterial growth. How possibly is the growth curve of a colony of bugs in a laboratory dish related to the growth of human communities? Despite this obvious flaw, Malthusian theories and myths of human overpopulation of Africa and Asia are based on such reductionism.

The complexities of the human social system can never be represented in the laboratory. Which is the best laboratory model of the extended or nuclear family? Guinea pigs, rats or rabbits or perhaps *E. coli*? Consider

an example like mental illness, which is far less complex than the social system. We see that the most basic of human moods, such as anxiety or depressions, still have not been modelled adequately in the laboratory. These are the simplest of mental disorders, many times simpler than devastating illnesses such as schizophrenia. Western drug companies rely almost solely on a rat model of anxiety when testing new tranquillising drugs. In psychology circles, it is commonplace to find use of not only the rat model of panic attacks but also the pigeon and the gold fish. How possibly is the mood state of a gold fish related to a human in any way? It may be argued that the pseudo-science of psychology is outside the boundaries of sanity. However examples, equal in stupidity, are to be found in so-called proper science. For example, the extrapolation of the abstract super-string theory to man, life and everything.

The whole philosophy behind these drug treatments and experimental models is based on reducing the mind to a series of chemicals within the brain. Because reductionists see behaviour as being the product of chemicals they see chemicals as the solution to behavioural problems.

Thus, Prozac is prescribed quickly for those expressing the mood pattern that most normal humans experience from time to time, ie the depressed mood. Chemicals are used to control the moods of bored housewives, naughty children and menopausal women. These quick-fix chemical solutions have caused many problems in their own right, including social and economical. It is clear that the reductionist approach to the human mind is completely erroneous.

#### The genetic code for life

The 'discovery' of the genetic code has apparently answered many questions and solved many problems. This genetic code is considered to be the software that the human machine has been pre-programmed to run on. Genetic theories have settled creedal issues about the origin of human existence, explanations about diseases and natural phenomena, and offered many practical solutions for life's problems. Over the last decade there has been a fierce debate in the West about the diversities of sexual inclination. One group of scientists even claimed to have proved the existence of a gene predisposing people to homosexuality. Genes have been cited as the cause of intelligence, mental illness, aggression and

criminality. It is commonplace to find educated intelligent people discussing anything and everything in relation to a cryptic code encased within DNA. Today genes have been news worthy in relation to everything from being the source of intelligence to genetically manipulated source of Soya sauce. These are contemporary practical issues that have been addressed using genes.

The very presence of humans on this earth has also been explained in the light of the genetic code. Gene theory is the ‘evidence-based’ explanation that has underpinned Darwin’s theories of evolution. For decades Darwin’s ideas were considered hair-brain and marginal. How did an abstract idea that was riddled with contradictions and incomplete arguments become so widely accepted? It wasn’t until gene theories matured that credibility started to be given to his theories. The grandfather of all genetic reductionism theories was a monk called Mendel. The birth of Mendelian genetics came from observations Mendel made about tall and short garden pea plants. Ironically all geneticists accept that he probably made up his results. No one has ever reproduced his exact experiments with such definitive outcome without the aid of clever statistical analysis. Thus, the foundation stone of all genetics is fudged data.

#### The limits of reductionism

Societal and philosophical issues cannot be assessed accurately using reductionism. Human societies are composed of various tenets. These include the individuals, the commonly held beliefs, thoughts, emotions and attitudes of these individuals, and the ruling system that touches all of their lives. Each of these tenets is interwoven with one another in a complex and elaborate manner. Each in turn is affected by a whole host of influencing factors, directly and indirectly. Many of the solutions put forward to solve crime, social issues, abuse and alcoholism are reductionist in nature. Crime is a particularly stark example of this. Punishments involving imprisonment, fines and even electronic tagging are desperate attempts to tackle one aspect of a wider issue. The results of which is an expensive mess. Expensive in more than just financial terms. The idea of addressing the symptoms rather than the disease may seem clichéd. However, it is a cliché that epitomises reductionist thought.

#### Reductionism; out of the lab, out of place

The extremist fundamentalist reductionist would actually live in a world far from reality. Those who sincerely believe that reductionism is the ultimate problem-solver may present an argument as follows.

Society can only be understood through the eyes of scholars of society. Therefore, those best equipped to deal with people’s affairs are the sociologists. However, sociology is merely an extension of the study of the individual in terms of his mind and behaviour. This is the subject of psychology, the science of the person. The mind may however be reduced to a series of circuits in the brain; biochemicals whizzing around controlling our every thought, emotion and movement. Thus, the fundamental tenet of all life is biochemistry. However, biochemistry by definition is a small branch of a vast field of a pure science, chemistry. Chemistry both theory and practice is merely a rehashed version of physics, the study of matter itself. Everything in physics is a mere extension to the knowledge of the sub-atomic particle. If the western capitalist reductionist were to follow his own chain of discussion to fruition he should conclude that high level physicists are the best judges of societies, QED. Is it surprising that super-string theory and other theories of quirks, quarks and quacks have been put forward to explain man, life, the universe and everything in-between!

#### Islam – putting reductionism in its place

The task of analysing and observing society is arduous, but not impossible. It is a misleading over simplification to consider society to be composed merely of those individuals that are present within it. Indeed such an over-simplification is not atypical of the reductionist thought.

Reductionism and scientific thought is an attitude that seeps deep into the Western mindset. It has affected much of the theory and practice of Capitalism. Capitalists perceive society as being composed of individuals. Thus, contented individuals equal a contented society. However, the individuals are influenced by many things, especially issues related to government. Muslims are wrong to adopt this attitude towards society. Sadly, it is oft-repeated amongst Muslims, that to change the Islamic Ummah requires a reductionist approach. Some mistaken Muslims

maintain that one must first change the individuals, then families, then communities, eventually arriving at the whole; the Ummah. This simplistic view overlooks the fact that the propaganda machine of Kufr is always working to reverse any progress that is made in that direction. More importantly, the current corrupt governments are working by hook or by crook to annihilate any form of Islam that will jeopardise their existence. It is naive to think that changing our families, alone, to be good moral people, will in turn change society.

Muslims should not see the world as a great big laboratory. We do not consider this world as a trial run, prototype or pilot study. It is considered a test from Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ judges our behaviour in this world and we reap the rewards of it in the next life. Allah ﷻ gave us a law to settle our human problems. We should therefore consider these problems as human problems. Issues are not reduced to being solely economical or solely educational. Economy cannot be viewed in isolation of the ruling, education and social systems or indeed foreign policy. They are not to be reduced to their components merely because that is a convenient way to assess them nor are they to be reduced in an attempt to mimic the Western method of problem solving.

Muslims should not allow themselves to be influenced by Western thought in any respect. That is especially true when trying to analyse our current situation. The Islamic World is dogged with problems. Are we to solve them by referring to a method that has proved to be problematic in the social context? Those Muslims that have reduced society to being merely a group of individuals should re-assess their observations. This is surely a reductionist conclusion. A chain is as strong as its weakest link. This phrase is most poetic, thought provoking and astute. However, this is all well and good when applied to chains, but not to human societies.

#### Battlefield of life

There is a need to seek out Allah's ﷻ law for everyday issues. For us, the solutions for life's problems lie in the revealed text. For the capitalist these solutions lie within man's own remit.

The Islamic Shari'ah addresses human problems; it was applicable fourteen centuries ago and it is applicable today. The instincts and

biological needs of humans have not changed in all this time. Fundamentally we are still the same.

We need to produce competent scholars that can pull the law from the pages of the Islamic texts and apply them to modern life.

The nuts and bolts of Usul al-Fiqh involves hard and fast traditional studying, teaching, memorising, arguing and discussing. However, the application of this science to life is an extremely animated affair.

The only way to reverse the current woeful state of scholarship is not merely to churn out graduates in "Islamic law". Good Islamic ruling and good Islamic scholarship should go hand-in-hand. When one is good the other is good. Conversely when one is shoddy the other is shoddy.

The Khilafah's early rapid expansion coincided with encounters with new cultures, customs, traditions, tongues and philosophies. These encounters spawned the need to find laws to settle new issues. If the text was not always wholly explicit on the fine detail of a subject it became necessary to extract laws through Ijtihad. The procedures for arriving at these laws were just as important as finding the laws themselves. These procedures became codified and documented. Scholars laid down basic formulae for studying novel issues and comparing them to the text. Thus, the science of jurisprudence (Usul al-Fiqh) was born out of the necessity to extract law from the revealed text on novel situations.

When humans step onto the battlefield of life they are confronted with problem after problem. Our lives are about grappling with major and minor issues. Islam is not a barrier between man and his legitimate desires and aspirations. It does not regard human's existence as a gloomy punishment for some original sin. Nor does it portray life as some fleeting opportunity for material satisfaction and sensuous delight. Muslims consider the most mundane of actions to be "religious" and therefore a source of reward.

Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((ثم إذا أنفقت المرأة من طعام مفسدة كان لها أجرها بما

أنفقت ولزوجها أجره بما كسب وللخازن مثل ذلك لا

ينقص بعضهم أجر بعض شيئاً))

**“When a wife spends food of her house without spoiling, there is for her its reward for she gives away, and there is also reward for her husband for what he earns, and the like (reward) for the storekeeper - none of them diminishing anything from the reward of another.”**

There is a need to seek out Allah’s ﷺ law for everyday issues. For us, the solutions for life’s problems lay in the revealed text. For the capitalist these solutions lay within man’s own remit.

Islam: A way of life

The laws of Islam not only deal with Salah, Siyam and Hajj but also with economics, government and international affairs. Dissimilar to the codes of life that came to the Prophets of Bani Israil, the final revelation came for all humankind. At the time of Rasoolallah ﷺ problems that the Sahabah ﷺ faced were settled by the revelation. They ﷺ had no need to perform Ijtihad in the presence of Rasoolallah ﷺ. They ﷺ could ask him directly for solutions. After his death the revelation ceased. However, the community that Rasoolallah ﷺ nurtured clung to the beliefs and practices that they ﷺ were taught. When they ﷺ faced fresh problems they sought answers from the Qur’an and the Sunnah. They did not philosophise or theorise over issues, they merely quoted an evidence or extrapolated a meaning from a known evidence.

Fatimah ﷺ, the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ claimed that she was entitled to inheritance from him. The matter was settled when Abu Bakr ﷺ quoted the hadith; “We prophets do not inherit nor leave an estate for inheritance. Whatever we leave is a charity” [Bukhari]

Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ set out for ash-Sham and when he was at Sargh, near Tabuk, the commanders of the army, Abu Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah ﷺ and his companions, met him and told him that the plague had broken out in ash-Sham. Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ said, ‘send all the first Muhajir unto me.’ He then assembled them and asked them for advice,

informing them that the plague had broken out in ash-Sham. They all gave differing opinions as to should be done. Some said, ‘You have set out for something, and we do not think that you should leave it.’ Others said, ‘You have the companions of the Prophet, and the rest of the people with you, and we do not think that you should send them towards this plague.’ Umar ﷺ having listened to the advice said, ‘Leave me.’ Then he said, ‘Summon the Ansar to me.’ They were summoned and he asked them for their advice. They also acted in the same manner as the Muhajireen had acted and disagreed as to what course of action should be taken. Having listened to their various opinions Umar ﷺ said, ‘Leave me.’ “Then he ﷺ said, ‘Summon to me whoever is here of the aged men of Quraish from the Muhajireen of the conquest.’ He summoned them and not one of them differed in their advice. They all said, ‘We think that you should withdraw the people and not send them towards the plague.’ Having considered all opinions Umar ﷺ announced his decision to return to the people by saying ‘I am leaving by camel in the morning’. To this announcement Abu Ubayda said, ‘Is it flight from the decree (qadar) of Allah?’ Umar was astonished at such a remark and said, ‘better that someone other than you had said it’. Nevertheless he answered the question that Abu Ubayda had posed, replying, ‘Yes. We flee from the decree (qadar) of Allah to the decree (qadar) of Allah.’ At this point Abd ar-Rahman ibn Awf arrived (he had been off doing something) and said, ‘I have some knowledge of this. I heard Rasoolallah, say, “If you hear about it (the plague) in a land, do not go forward to it. If it comes upon a land and you are in it, then do not depart in flight from it.” On hearing this Umar ﷺ praised Allah and then set off from where he had come.”

Thus the whole issue was settled by the citation of a hadith.

When they ﷺ found no explicit text they ﷺ exercised Ijtihad to solve issues. They did not formally document the principles of deriving laws from the Qur’an and Sunnah. They had an exceptional command of the Arabic language and the direct knowledge of the source of law. The next generation maintained this pure understanding. They too did not document the procedures of deriving law. However, the third generation saw massive territorial expansion and with this came new challenges. This gave rise to frequent use of Ijtihad. It was at this stage that the jurists devised a set of criteria to remove disagreements over disputed points. These rudimentary guidelines were based on Arabic grammar,



syntax, textural authenticity and relevance and the practices of the Sahabah ﷺ in jurisprudence. This led on to very comprehensive discussions of the basis of deriving law as in the example of the Risala of Imam Shafi'i. The next four hundred years saw the golden age of Ijtihad and clear accounts and discussions written by the jurists [Examples are Malik (d 179AH) Abu Hanifah (d 150AH), Abu Yusuf (d 182AH), Shaybani (d 290AH) Shafi'i (d 204AH) Ahmed b. Hanbal d 244]

### Implementation of Islam

Many issues, dubbed modern, have laws concerning their legitimacy within Islam. For example in this century scholars have found rules related to stocks and share companies, life insurance, nationalisation of waterways, copyrights and patents and even IVF and whole organism cloning.

"...The Shari'ah was revealed to solve such new and numerous demands, regardless of their diversity or how their patterns change. Actually, this was one of the factors that contributed towards the growth of Fiqh. But this vast capacity of the Shari'ah does not mean that it is flexible and adapts to everything or to every issue even if it contradicts Shari'ah. Nor does it mean that it evolves thereby it changes with time. It rather means that the texts have the capacity for numerous rules to be derived from them, and it also means that the rules have the capacity to apply on many issues. This ample capacity of the text enabling many rules to be derived from it and the ample ability of the rules to be applicable in many problems." (Concepts of Hizb ut-Tahrir, Taqiuddin al-Nabhani)

### How is law derived ?

This is obviously an issue beyond the scope of this book. However, we may outline some ways in which the texts may be related to issues. The Islamic texts are viewed as legal texts, enabling the Mujtahid to derive rules for other issues not explicitly mentioned.

Allah ﷻ says;

﴿فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ﴾

"...Then if they give suck to the children for you, give them their due payment..." [TMQ At-Talaq: 6]

The Ayah mentions that payment should be paid for wet-nursing. However, many rules or principles can be derived from this one verse; payment is extended to any hired employee, the wage has to be defined in the contract and employees should receive their wage without any delay upon fulfilling contractual obligations.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ﴾

"O you who believe! When the call to prayer is sounded on the day of congregation hasten to the Thikr of Allah, and leave all trading" [TMQ Al-Jumu'ah: 9-10]

The Ayah mentions that, when the call to prayer is given, one should stop trading (baya'). What if we are not involved in trading, does the Ayah tell us to stop what we are doing? The Ayah goes on to mention that when the prayer is over, disperse and seek Allah's ﷻ bounty. This means that there is a reason to leave the commerce, being that if we do not, then we will be preoccupied. The application of Qiyas for this example would be for any other activity besides trading. Thus, 'being busy' is the main issue. Therefore, working as a computer programmer or rocket scientist, playing football or watching TV all constitute 'being busy' and are prohibited at the time of the Jumu'ah prayers. There are several verses and countless hadith that may be applied in this way to modern issues.

### Scholarship is necessarily not pragmatism

The job of extracting law is arduous and lies with the scholars. The ability for this Ummah to produce scholars of this calibre is an obligation, fard kifayah. We need to produce competent scholars that can pull the law from the pages of the text and apply them to modern life. What we do not need is apologists that accept the status quo and bury the text by reinterpreting them with the "anything goes" philosophy. It is this skill that is lacking in the Ummah today. The reasons for this deficiency are many. However, one of the reasons for their abundance during the

golden age was related to the sheer fact that they were confronted continually with new problems that needed answers. The brilliance of the older scholars may in part be attributed to the abundance of issues that they had to solve. The real test of the substance of a scholar lies in his settling of problems and the actual practice of his 'job-description'. As with any skilled craftsmen he maintains his ability by continually facing new challenges. Cutting corners in scholarship lead to the misapplication of Islam in the short term, and in the long-term lead to the complete erosion of the correct Islamic ruling system.

### The future of Usul al-Fiqh

Usul al-Fiqh involves sagaciously extracting the solemnity of the written text and injecting it into our lives so that we may reap the benefits of this world and the next. This is a true and extraordinarily difficult science, requiring great feats of mental agility. However, it is not merely for academics in ivory towers. It is born of the need to live by Islam. It will continue as a result of the need to live by Islam. The whole science in its brilliance bears testament to the fact that this Ummah was always aware of the need for invention, 'creativity' and discovery and that what comes with this is the need to derive law for these new issues. The only way to reverse the current woeful state of scholarship is not merely to churn out graduates in "Islamic law". Good Islamic ruling and good Islamic scholarship should go hand-in-hand. When one is good the other is good. Conversely when one is shoddy the other is shoddy. A return to the golden era may result from several factors, all working in concert; the correct implementation of Islam, the striving for technological advancements, and an elevating of the basic knowledge of Islam and the language of Islam (Arabic).

## Cultural Invasion

Desperately seeking something

The West struggles to deal with the desire to believe in something. We have shown how the hard sell of Western culture prevails over the globe. However, it is not just about describing how the West is out to export their ideas and culture. It is important to discuss a few unconvertible truths about how the West completely fails to grapple with the most basic of human thoughts and emotions.

Throughout history humans have revered things. The One, true God ﷻ has been worshipped, as well as a mixture of the weird and wonderful. Innate in us is a desperate desire to sanctify. This sanctification instinct may seem out of place in the hustle and bustle of modern life. However, sanctification is present in the West today in many guises. Similar guises appeared within the ideology that denied this instinct's very existence, the old Communist bloc. As Muslims this instinct is a positive energy that we tap into, providing many practical applications.

The sanctification of Allah ﷻ

﴿إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ  
وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ  
مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا  
مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ  
السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

*“Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day; in the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which Allah sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; in the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth;- (Here) indeed are Signs for a people that are wise.”* [TMQ Al-Baqarah: 164]

Muslims derive inspiration from the wonders of the world. Appreciation of the magnificence of the creation pushes us to have a greater appreciation of the Creator ﷻ. This appreciation affects us by prompting us to obey Allah’s ﷻ law. The more aware we are that Allah ﷻ is watching us, and He ﷻ will bring us to account, the more vigilant we should become of our responsibilities. Sanctification is a central part of our daily lives. As a minimum of five times a day we turn in prayer to Allah ﷻ. An integral part of Salah is the sanctification and the begging of our Lord ﷻ for guidance and help. When performed sincerely this should inspire us to be mindful of Allah’s ﷻ laws in the periods between the Salah. Thus, the fruits of remembering Allah ﷻ, in this world, should be born out in our behaviour.

﴿إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ﴾

*“Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; and remembrance of Allah is the greatest without doubt.”* [TMQ Al-Ankabut: 45]

The power that is released when sanctifying Allah ﷻ should be harnessed to influence our lives in general. The more aware we are of Allah’s ﷻ existence the more mindful we should be of the law. This appreciation of Allah ﷻ, linked with the fear of facing accountability (and the submission that follows) is what characterises the Islamic society.

The desire for sanctification

Currently the world is dominated by disbelief, Kufr, which is characterised by ignorance in belief and actions. G.K. Chesterton, the English writer and satirist, has been attributed with the saying, “when people stop believing in God they don’t start believing in nothing. They start to believe in anything.” This is not merely an accurate description of

modern Britain, but a description of the nature of human beings. Humans have certain needs and instincts. We all need food, water and air to breath etc. As Muslims we believe that it was Allah ﷻ who created us with the need for food and water. Similarly we experience certain discomforts when aspects of our lives are lacking. If we do not fulfil an instinct it results in anxiety. The root instincts are few, but the ways they manifest themselves in our behaviour are many. The sanctification instinct stems from the fact that we are all subordinate to various things. We are all very much aware of our inferiority to many phenomena. Past people have been worshipped or have commanded others to worship them. The Qur’an tells us of Fir’awn (Pharaoh). Communities that lived by the sea have recognised how their whole existence relied upon the sea, as a result they would worship the sea. This is paralleled in communities that lived on the banks of the Nile or within the shadow of a volcano. Similar examples can be seen in communities that acknowledged the importance of the sun, fire, the moon and the stars etc. The method of worshipping these things was disparate.

Channelling sanctification correctly

Muslims acknowledge the brilliance of many things. However, all our worship is channelled to Allah ﷻ and not the created things. We recognise the power of a riding beast. There are many dangers involved in riding a camel or a horse. This may be extrapolated to the dangers of driving a car. Rather than resign ourselves to thinking that our well-being lies in the handling of the car or the beast only, we ask Allah ﷻ to grant us control over His ﷻ creation,

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ \* وَإِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ﴾

*“Glory be to Him Who has subjected these to our (use), for we could never have accomplished this (by ourselves). And to our Lord, surely must we turn back.”* [TMQ Az-Zukhruf: 13/14]

This is often recited with real conviction and trust in Allah ﷻ, not only by habit. After seeing or hearing of a terrible road accident we appreciate the horrors that the car can inflict on the human. It is at that time when

we recite this Du'a with the most conviction. Ja'far as-Sadiq ؑ once addressed a staunch atheist, saying; "Have you ever travelled on the sea?" He replied, "Yes." Ja'far then asked, "Have you experienced its terrors?" "Yes, indeed! One day while we were out at sea, a terrible hurricane blew up and smashed our ship. Several sailors perished. I clung to a rafter of the ship but soon it was also snatched away. I was thrown about in the stormy sea but was eventually tossed up on the shore." "When the storm broke," Ja'far commented, "perhaps you first relied on the ship and the sailors for your safety and then on the rafter which saved you for a while. But when all these went, did you resign yourself to death or did you still hope of safety?" "I hoped for safety," the atheist answered. "On whom did you hope for safety?" The man was silent and Ja'far said, "The Creator is the One on whom you placed your hopes at that time, and He ؑ is the one who delivered you from drowning." After this conversation the atheist was no longer an atheist.

#### Filling the West's belief vacuum

Atheism is a blatant form of disbelief. However, any non-belief in Allah ؑ and His Messenger ؑ is Kufr. In Britain many are leaving traditional Christianity in favour of new fan-dangled ways. Less than 10 per cent of the population go to church regularly and the numbers are declining rapidly. But Britain has not suddenly become a nation of sceptic rationalists. Seventy-one per cent (1990 survey) still profess to believe in a God of some form. If popular culture is to be taken as a gauge, superstition and the paranormal seem to be the new creed. The entertainment industry has capitalised on the interest in the weird and wonderful. This is reflected in Hollywood films such as 'Contact' and TV shows such as 'the X-Files' and 'Millennium'. These are not clever nor thought provoking, rather they are moronic. One of the best-selling books of 1997 was "The Bible Code", which discusses the events of world history as described in a type of Morse code running through the text of the Bible. The numbers of Catholics attending mass has declined, but the number of requests for priests to perform exorcisms has increased. A report published in the British Journal of Psychology (1997) found that 59 per cent of those surveyed believed in the paranormal. While senior Anglican doctors of theology brand the virgin birth of Christ as far-fetched, the masses, it seems, believe in alien abduction. All this demonstrates that the belief vacuum must always be filled.

Humans need guidance to show us how and what to worship. This guidance cannot be left to Matthew, Mark, Luke and Mystic Meg. We believe in all that is mentioned in the Qur'an regardless of how difficult it is to perceive based on our limited minds. Muslims accept that 'Isa ibn Maryam (as) was born of a virgin and spoke from the cradle and that Ibrahim (as) was put into the fire without being harmed. We are comfortable with these beliefs because we first believe in the authority and authenticity of the Qur'an. The Qur'an is most agreeable to Muslims. Its commands are compatible with our nature. The Qur'an may be seen as a kind of user's manual that manufacturers supply with machinery. Our 'manufacturer' is Allah ؑ. Who is therefore best qualified to provide us with a manual for life? A code for us to satisfy our inner desires to revere something is clearly described for us in the texts of Islam.

﴿الم \* ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ \* الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ﴾

*"Alif, Lam, Mim. This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah, believe in the Unseen, establish the prayer, and pay the Zakah"*  
[TMQ Al-Baqarah: 1-3]

Hard work is the key to success

Rasoolallah ؑ recommended for us many special Du'a (supplications). One of which is;

((اللهم إني أعوذ بك من الهم والحزن و أعوذ بك من العجز والكسل ، و أعوذ بك من الجبن والبخل ، و أعوذ بك من غلبه الدين و قهر الرجال))

**"O Allah, we seek refuge in You from anxiety and sorrow, and seek refuge in You from weakness and laziness, and seek refuge in You from cowardice and miserliness, and seek refuge in You from the dominance of debt, and from being overpowered by men."**

This Du'a may have a particular significance for those who live and work in the West. This Du'a is one of the only sources of solace for one who is caught up in the cycle of work, work and more work. The Western system is designed to instil the maximum amount of anxiety in the individual and at the same time inducing laziness and miserliness. The lifestyle also ensures that there is a spectre of debt looming over everyone, as one never knows who or what is going to 'rip you off' in the near future. Of course, Allah ﷻ recommends this Du'a through Rasoolallah ﷺ, for all Muslims and for all times up until the Day of Judgement. However, it seems such an appropriate shield for us now from the internal turmoil that we may go through as a result of living in such a chaotic world, as it stands at the moment.

#### Work to live or live to work?

There is a maxim that the average worker, in Western Europe and North America, would not care to utter in polite society. It goes; 'I work harder than I would really like, in order to buy things that I don't really need, in order to impress people that I don't really care for.' Regardless of whether people utter this phrase out loud, it is still something they feel in their heart of hearts. It sums up the emotion that people who subject themselves to the treadmill of working life in the West really feel. Employees have to put up with long working hours and performing exhausting and stupefying tasks. Outside the workplace, people's leisure is then taken up by modes of relaxation that merely prolong and build upon the stupefaction process that is induced by work. Leisure is based on false needs, which are imposed by the mass media. So people would happily work until they are berserk, and then shop until they drop. The pursuance of relaxation centres about behaving as the glossy-ads tell people they should behave. People find fulfilment in sun worship in the summer and skiing (often followed by hospitalisation) in the winter. They pursue pleasure in owning essentials such as cars that poison the environment, but have unblemished bodywork. Pleasure is also obtained by owning trinkets such as DVD players, mobile phones with onboard MP3 technology and wide screen TVs. Their viewing regimes consist of a diet of home and garden makeover programmes, cooking programmes and mind-numbing soap operas. After consuming a belly-full of consumerism through the tube they then feel the need to buy, buy, buy. So they may have a sudden urge to acquire a fitted-kitchen or fancy

utensils for making fresh pasta (even though they only ever eat ready meals from M&S), or a Mexican bathroom, an African bedroom or a Scandinavian style living room. For the backyard they may want to dig up all the vegetables and lay down decking and install a water feature.

#### Stress

The ills of difficult working environments are often exacerbated by the creation of further stress through backstabbing, conniving, undermining and brown-nosing. This situation is again best summed-up by a quote "The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win you are still a rat" [Lily Tomlin]

Stress has become the buzzword of the twenty-first century in relation to the Western professional life-style. In the 1980s "stress" was trivialised and even ridiculed by the movers and shakers of the "lunch is for wimps" Thatcherite society. The rampant greed that metamorphosed into Tony Blair's caring sharing 1990s brought about a gradual change in attitudes to work-related stress. Much of this being prompted by several high profile cases of individuals needing to get out of the rat race. By the late 90s, even the tabloid headlines that lampooned, the then, Aston Villa striker, Stan Collymore, for complaining that he was unhappy were met with a chorus of disapproval. Bashing Stan for getting £20,000 a week, merely for kicking a football for a few hours a day for couple of days a week, the papers thought, would strike a chord with the British public. But, they were wrong. The tabloids themselves were criticised from trivialising a very real and established medical condition, depression. A large bank account, adoring fans (however not in Collymore's case), and a celebrity girlfriend do not predicate happiness. This is something that The Sun and The Mirror, on that occasion, missed. Regardless of all the hyperbole banded about in relation to stress, it is nevertheless, a mounting concern for many in the West. In 2000, the TUC surveyed 6,000 UK organisations and found stress at work to be a severe problem. The TUC now consider stress to be the UK's top workplace hazard. The survey found that one in five workers are subject to violence at work. The latest British Crime Survey reported 1.2 million incidents of work-related violence.

The issue for work ethic and ethos is one that impinges on the lifestyles

of Muslims in the West. Through no choice of our own, if we live in the West, we are all directly or indirectly affected adversely by Western attitudes to work. Moreover, through the process of globalisation and the manipulation of third-world workforces, the Islamic World is also subjected to this form of enslavement. Globalisation and exploitation of the world's animal, mineral, vegetable and human resources is the inevitable conclusion of corporations convincing people to buy things that they don't want or need.

#### Mass-consumption needs mass-production

Western communities are continually exposed to a culture of wanton greed and a desire to buy more. The generation of a desire amongst the populace for new and improved consumer goods is one of the foundations of Capitalism. However, a mass-consumption society must have its counterpart in a mass-production society. The flip side of demand is supply. In order to meet the demands of the Frankenstein's monster of consumerism, he must be kept fed with the blood, sweat and tears of a work-force willing to spend their 'three score years and ten' feeding him. So, manual labourers must be sacrificed to the beast, but also armies of ad-men, artisans, media manipulates and corporate middle managers etc, must spend their hours servicing the every want, whim and fancy of the beast. Consumerism has to be kept in the public's mind every second of the day. Therefore, advertising and the so-called creative media professions and PR companies have become an industry in their own right. A Faustian pact is signed by anyone who decides to work for this monster of consumerism. The worker's time, energy, physical and mental well-being, family life and dignity are handed over in exchange for a meagre monthly salary, medical insurance and free membership of a gymnasium with sauna. The Western way of life produces mindless robots that compulsively chase false needs.

#### The West is run by corporate power

The capitalist economy is supposedly based on competition. In reality "competition" is a false over-simplification of how things work. Competition exists to some extent but the best way to beat down competitors is not to let the produce speak for themselves, but to use other means and mechanisms of promotion. Advertising for example is

used to make exaggerated or even false claims about products or services or merely to discredit the competition. A more effective manner for gaining dominance is to form alliances with others who are either of like-mind, or who operate in related industries or to influence government through lobbying. All of these actions serve to stifle competition as they take attention away from the quality of the products and services actually being offered. However, the most effective manner through which to gain dominance is via the emergence of 'super' corporations with their Napoleonic complex of Empire-building, that are simply getting bigger and bigger by exploiting the world. This later point is best explained through example. The recent merger of Time-Warner with AOL demonstrates how a few diverse but linked sectors of the media business managed to combine in order to create a force far bigger than the sum of its parts. The separate entities of Time-Life publications and Warner Brothers entertainment overcame their competitors in magazines, films and music sale not in the "market" but in the boardroom. Few companies could even begin to compete with the profile and self-advertising that CNN, Time magazine could generate for selling Warner Brother's cartoons, films and CDs with accompanied merchandising and paraphernalia. Now with the new emerging medium of the Internet, AOL secured all the frontiers of the Time-Warner Empire. CNN could do a feature on a new CD release, or create news about the hype surrounding a film premier. The film often may include music from the same CD. Simultaneously, Time magazine may write an article on the film and/or the CD. The producer of the film and the CD is obviously Warner Brothers. All this without a red cent being spent on advertising in the conventional way.

Time-Warner have not only created an economic monopoly but they have ensured that their pop culture and only their pop culture alone is dominant. Even if the consumer wanted to choose to watch a non-Warner film, non-Warner films are just not out there or just not known to the public. Thus, it is a complete myth that there is such a thing as "consumer sovereignty" - there is merely "producer sovereignty". This is the way of doing business in the West.

The other tool of the capitalists is that of government. The relationship between industry and government is often a very warm and cosy one. Governments often use taxpayer's money to subsidise certain industries.

In US, the aircraft and computer industries (Boeing and Cray) were founded on government subsidies taken from taxes. Since the 1940s hi-tech industries have been funded through the Pentagon's Welfare System. Agriculture is also protected and subsidised. The various Federal Highways Acts (1944, 1956 and 1968) have channelled billions of dollars into the highway system that was conceived by Alfred Sloan, chairman of General Motors. It made America dependent on gasoline-powered transportation and gave the oil industry a de facto monopoly. Other industries such as the tyre manufacturers, the road builders and repairers, and even the health-insurance industry all benefited. Hospitals have to be built to cope with all the accidents on the road as well as all the other diseases, like asthma, cancer and heart disease that are by-products of poisoning the air and preventing people from getting any exercise. The capitalists run the show from top to bottom. The owners of industries not only work people to death, they steal taxes out of their employees pay packets and give them to the governments. The industrialists then later get the money back from the government as subsidies.

We are all sucked into this corporate empire building, either as slaves to their wears or slaves to the corporations directly. We may not all work within these monstrosities of corporations, but we are all continually exposed to their news, views and opinions. Slavery in the workplace is the main issue addressed here. However, it is only one element of the evil empires of corporate business.

How all this came about

Work did not always occupy such positions. The ancient Greeks regarded work as ignoble, it was from "the sphere of necessity" to be performed only by slaves and the lower classes. It seems that many from the upper echelons of Western society have adopted this old Greek tradition ethos. The Judaeo-Christian tradition saw manual labour as a punishment from God, following 'The Fall' because of the Original sin. Up until a few centuries ago in the West, work was seen as an irrelevancy, something that was to be avoided or minimised. In pre-industrialised Britain most work took place in or close to the home. Agriculture and craft production were the main types of work for the lower classes. Many academics suggest workers, then, only did as much work as they felt they had to. They were not governed by the clock or piecework assessment.

It wasn't until the rise of the Calvinists, who saw work as a calling from God that the Protestant Work Ethic was born. This was reiterated by Victorian Britain, where it was oft-said that "heaven helps those that help themselves." Indeed attitudes changed with the Victorians, but the actual practices were forced upon the British people much earlier. The main turning point occurred with the industrial revolution. Mechanisation required new attitudes and new work patterns. Pre-industrialisation was characterised by "task-orientated" work, people did the task that was at hand in whatever time was necessary. Industrialisation required massive financial layouts by the employers to buy the expensive machinery, therefore machines had to be kept in constant use to repay the capital costs. This work pattern was later just driven by sheer greed. So the new work patterns were based around time and not task. This is the work ethic that the West inherited for today.

Marxism

The inhumane practices of the European industrialists of the nineteenth century did not go without criticisms. Any discussion on working practices and labour would not be complete without addressing the socialist view on the subject. Not least because Marx's observations of the abuse of the labour force led to the development of one of the most significant philosophies of the twentieth century. Although as a system attempts at implementing Marx's idea failed abysmally, Marx nevertheless made some astute comments on how Europe was developing in the later part of the eighteenth century. Although we do not want to give any credibility to Marx himself or to any of the corrupt thoughts he came up with, it is of interest to chart how certain attitudes to work changed during his life. We can compare and contrast what his thoughts were and those of the capitalists.

Marx believed that work gave the most basic means of freedom - liberation from necessity. He proposed that work provides people with food, as well as shelter and clothing, thus allowing freedom from the challenges and pressures of nature. Further, progress in labour sets humans free from necessity for labour itself by giving humans time and resources to do other things. Following on from this was one of Marx's best-known theories, the division of labour. If labour is the essence of humanity, as he thought, then division of labour is paramount. The

division of labour had both positive and negative aspects. On one hand it could maximise the potential of human endeavour, on the other hand it could ensure and perpetuate the domination of certain sectors over others. Marx made a clear observation of the times, but he offered up a theoretical solution that was completely divorced from the actuality. The idealism of Marx can be sharply contrasted with this stark reality of pragmatic Capitalism.

The worth of an individual is defined only by the work (s)he does

The degree of self-worth that an individual has is very much related to the occupational system. Thus, assembly-line workers and street cleaners are seen in lower standing than doctors and lawyers. Even though, particularly in the case of the street cleaner, the job they do is important. An elaborate stratification of humans developed which was based on profession. Training and expertise becomes the real significant issue rather than the actual input of the individual. Thus, in a law firm; the actual bulk of the work is commonly performed by the clerical staff, who are without training in law or supervision in the practice of law. Whilst the lawyer, who heads the firm, and does the least work, gets the most credit, most cash and most credibility. Parallels can be seen in the nursing profession in relation to other health care professionals such as physicians. The worth of the individual can also be seen with parenting. A mother who gets no wage for her full-time job of hard labour, with no cash bonuses or productivity incentives is seen as being lower than the care-worker in a playgroup or nursery who get a wage for changing the nappies of other peoples' babies. A parallel can be seen with the wife that may cook and serve her husband. She is seen as lower than one who works in a multinational pizza chain who gets a wage, training, tips, career structure plus all the free garlic bread she can eat.

Men and women are seen merely as entities that contribute to the economy. Therefore, women as mothers are not valued. Homemaking is an unpaid, labour intensive, strain on the economy. It has no direct bearing on the GDP. Today the only socially recognised work is that which is paid with tax contributions in big businesses, on full-time "permanent" contracts. Those included in this narrow description are dignified and honoured. Thus, those working in non-conventional jobs or un-waged are considered inferior. So collecting firewood and selling it

on a street corner without a peddler's licence and P45 tax certificate would be considered wrong and undignified. The lauding of the stereotypical "working man" only serves to demean motherhood and homemaking. Many factors have led to the current Western attitude to motherhood, which is at odds with human nature. Children are brought up by strangers. A mother works full-time, and is a parent part-time. She gives up three-quarters of her salary, for childcare, to pay strangers to bring up her children. The social problems that these situations produce are immense. Even within the West many acknowledge that this is a problem that has to be addressed. The spate of school shootings (Kentucky, Oregon, Arkansas and Mississippi) prompted academics, criminologists, law enforcers and parents, in July 1998, to cite the lack of adult supervision in children's lives as a factor contributing to this problem. In the UK, the Social Exclusion Unit was set up in December 1997 to advise the government on such issues as lawlessness, drugs and helplessness etc. The experts have been brought in to find answers to questions that to most rational people are blatantly obvious.

So What of the future?

The political system that prevails in the world today has the above-described capitalist model at its heart. The working practices of the West, which are now exported to the rest of the world are the result of the capitalist system that dominates all aspects of life's affairs. The only way to reverse these cruel and de-humanising practices is to radically uproot corporate power from their fortified positions. These corporations have only been allowed to become so powerful because the system allows it. In fact the system encourages it. It is the true nature of Capitalism. Until the world sees a more just political system, with its accompanying just economic and ruling systems, the citizens of the globe will not be released from this enslavement by humans and human-made laws.

Worship at the altar of celebrity

January 2001 saw the world's biggest gathering of human beings, by the banks of the Ganges. The rituals that the Hindus at the Kumbh Mela participated in were diverse. One man held his hand up above his head for twelve years; several people stood for years on end, and thousands bathed in the repugnant, polluted and pungent waters of the Hindus'



holiest of rivers. Others merely soaked up the atmosphere whilst sipping on a glass of cow's urine and smoking the "weed of wisdom". The congregation itself was also diverse. It comprised of weird and wonderful factions, or perhaps just weird factions. Take, for example, the Aghoris, a small sect who are the followers of Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction. They have a morbid fascination with death, many of them spend their time surrounded by corpses, and drinking from human skulls. It is said they express their devotion to Shiva by eating excrement and having sexual intercourse with menstruating prostitutes.

A couple of months after the Kumbh Mela, members of another faith participated in a different type of ritual. This mass gathering was conducted in a very twenty-first century manner. It crackled over the cable and satellite receiver networks, the World Wide Web, mobile phones and by word of mouth. The spirit of worship ran freely through acres of column-inches in tabloids, broadsheets and magazines. And of course the flocking to the equivalent of the banks of the Ganges for the cult, Hollywood. The Mela here being the Oscars ceremony. To date there are no authorised accounts on how many members of the faith exist. The members of this faith dub themselves with no official title for their group. Many people even deny being members of the cult, whilst others publicise with pride their commitment to the faith. Although they have no unified body in terms of admin and structural organisation, it is estimated that there are millions of members of the cult of worshipping celebrity.

Not dissimilar to Hinduism, the practises of the cult of worshipping celebrity are just as diverse. These vary from camping out all night just to see a glimpse of an Oscar nominee, or queuing up in the rain for hours to be able to claim to be one of the first of "the public" to see the fourth sequel to a film whose original was released in the 1970s. Rituals also include the daily reading of chapters and verses of the celebrity magazines. These scriptures giving blow-by-blow accounts of the minutia of the daily lives of celebrities. They ogle the glossy photos snapped by the paparazzi.

The worship of celebrity is an issue that seems to dominate the flow of information to the public. This is supposedly the epoch of the information revolution. However, the channels of information seem to

be clogged up with information on celebrities. More, defiantly, has come to mean less in terms of responsible information.

This insatiable desire for information on the trivial, untrue and tragic is merely a by-product of a mindset that has been instilled in the general public by the powers that be. This is the nature of Capitalism. In order for the system to work the people's minds have to be disabled or disengaged. Thinking has to be discouraged. However, Allah ﷻ created us as humans with an inquiring mind, and the desire to seek out the truth of what life is about. The system cannot beat this trait out of humans, so as an alternative the system ensures that minds are occupied with the trivial. Western society has lost its sense of reality. When this happens, societies have to seek refuge in various forms of escapism. The dispirited, confused and hopeless people of the West retreat into the inner world of subjectivism and fantasy. Materialism and self-absorption take the place of true worship, an inquiring mind and community spirit. The pathological symptoms that manifest are a retreat into fiction, a desire not to participate but as an onlooker, and to hold reality at an arm's length. It is in this atmosphere that the film industry comes into its own. This explains how films have come to play such a major role in the Western way of life. Films have become a metaphor for real life. People speak, write and communicate in clichés taken from film scripts.

The mere passive occupation of the human mind is actually only half the story. There is also the active indoctrination of the human mind with corrupt thoughts and emotions. Films and the mass media industry have an important role to play in this process. The history of Hollywood movies is a history of corporate America messing with people's minds. Hollywood epitomised the upholding of the golden rule of the American way of life. The golden rule being, those that have the gold make the rules. Films have painted a picture of blacks, native Americans, women and just about every non-American creed, race and culture in a manner that came to define these groups in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The Apache, Blackfoot and Xu have been portrayed to the world as being the bad guys and the cowboys were the gallant heroes of 'How The West Was Won'. The European marauders invaded the land of North America. They farmed the land in an intense and exploitative manner, clearing out acres of natural animal habitat in order to herd cattle. They built railroads to transport livestock and other booty around

the country and also to bring the wealth from the west and mid-west to the colonial capitals of the east of the Union. They had to massacre the Native Americans in these earlier times. Then, to add insult to injury, Hollywood portrayed these proud tribes that lived at peace with the environment, as bloodthirsty savages that killed at will just to obtain a scalp as a trophy. The Native Americans now live in economic deprivation in communities riddled with social problems, drug and solvent abuse, poor housing, and no prospects of competing on an equal footing with those that raped and plundered their land.

The violence of the founding of the US became sanitised for the white Europeans by Hollywood. The escapism of the movie theatre created a blurring between fantasy and reality. The public would leave the cinemas taking home whatever message Hollywood wanted them to take. On the way home from the theatre people could stop at a McDonalds, eat the beef of the Wild West, eat the apple-pie of the wholesome mid-west, get the free toy of a Disney character, such as Pocahontas, and contemplate on how good the American dream is. They could reflect on how conquering of the Red Man was not pretty, but was necessary to built this great American dream. Thus, Hollywood would dispel any element of guilt that the conqueror may have harboured in their hardened hearts and at the same time reinforce the policy of destroying the Native American Nation.

The Hollywood treatment of the Native Americans is paralleled in its treatment of blacks. The very first moving images made by Thomas Edison portrayed stereotypes of black savages boiling people in pots ready to be eaten. This theme was carried on to the first ever Hollywood blockbuster, the silent movie of DW Griffith, *Birth Of A Nation*. The first ever feature with a soundtrack, 'The Jazz Singer', was one where a Russian Jew (Asa Yoelson aka Al Jolson) blacks-up his face and re-enacts racial stereotypes and gets paid for doing this on the stage. The first glorious Technicolor Movie, *Gone With the Wind*, was set on the Southern plantation. The film is a stream of subtle images of blacks in Uncle Sam's intended role for them. There weren't any black characters central to the plot nor did any have a major role, although blacks appear throughout the film. They are always cooking, cleaning and generally serving the every whim and fancy of the white stars and starlets in the film. The other image of blacks apart from servant or savage was that of

entertainer. Thus, blacks were shown as having rhythm; they were shown as dancers and singers and performers to please white audiences.

This sent home another stereotype that had more resonance in the ghetto. The message being that the only thing that blacks are good at is jumping around in a monkey-like- fashion to a primitive beat. This was given the grandiose title of dancing. Later people of the ghetto started to believe in this myth themselves. That is, the myth that God had given black people brains in their feet, and that they could dance their way out of a life of poverty. So many aspired to degrade themselves by acting the monkey for the movies, whilst white folks insisted that they had no rhythm and could not entertain. However, they were good at collecting money from the punters who wanted to see blacks performing circus tricks. This is a tradition firmly established in the early days of Hollywood, and was seen in the first version of the musical 'Showboat'. However, the blatant racism of 'Showboat' was toned down in the later re-makes of the film. These were released at the time of the Cold War, where the Soviets made an issue of the way the US exploited their own citizens. Hollywood was sensitive, in that period, to the exposing of any chinks in the armour of the land of the free.

However, this tradition continued with vigour through the blacksploitation movies of the 1970s. Today this good American tradition of exploiting black-skinned bodies is kept alive on MTV. Today the music video fulfils the role of plantation slave-master, African slave-trader, pimp, player and hustler. Thousands of black kids all over North America and Europe practice their moves and study videos in the hope that they could one day be like their heroes of the three-minute music clips. Their only dream and aspiration in life is to gyrate their bodies in a sexual manner in time to a programmed drum machine.

There is a substantial number of blacks in the US. However, the image of America to the outside world through Hollywood lies exclusively in white hands. So the images of Tarzan, spear chucking and cannibals that swing from trees is what Hollywood provided the world with.

The other major group that has been given the Hollywood treatment is women. The misogynist, racist cartel that ran Hollywood exploited women more than any other sector of Western society. Women were

used, and still are used, purely to appeal to the most base of human drives, sex. The female form is exploited as part of story lines, the female form is exploited in trailers, and the female form is exploited in the hyperbolae generated by the general media in order to promote a film in more indirect advertising. The etymology of the maxim “sex sells” could have easily originated in Hollywood.

We have touched on a few issues to do with Hollywood’s treatment of sections of American society, those being blacks, Native Americans and women. This is the type of treatment they meted out to their own kind. One can only imagine what they had in store for foreign cultures. The red and yellow peril has become clichéd in an untold number of films from the cold war period. Then there were the propaganda films of the Second World War. In this day and age the world frowns upon the propaganda machine of Goebbels in Nazi Germany. However, nothing that Goebbels could churn out could compare to the blatant racism and sheer power of mind manipulation that Hollywood produced during the Second World War. The other issue that is obviously more relevant to us is the image of Muslims on the silver screen. One film in particular sums up the whole attitude of tinsel town; the whole American understanding of Islam and Muslims is seen through the eyes of Peter O’Toole in *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962). This is one side of the coin; the other is the portrayal of the Jews.

The issue of the Jews in Hollywood is an epic in its own right. The very foundations of the studios were built by Jews. It would therefore come as no surprise that their output of films were often to serve the Zionist cause. The blatant examples of the direct link between Hollywood and Israel can be seen in the 1960 film starring Paul Newman, *Exodus*, which traced the events of 1947 (in Hollywood-style of course), and later Steven Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List* (1993). These two films were overtly pro-Jewish. *Exodus* had more effect on US public opinion for supporting Israel than decades of lobbying politicians had ever had. However, for every one, in-your-face, Zionist propaganda film there are ten that give a subtler hint of pro-Israeli support.

DW Griffith has already been mentioned, and is mentioned here again as being one of the key forgers of the den of iniquity called Hollywood. His biographic film, *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) helped to formulate

and stabilise Hollywood’s oft-recycled narrative style. This film became the template for almost every film ever made by Hollywood in terms of its structure and presentation. Griffith’s *‘Birth of a Nation’* was an adaptation of *‘The Clansman’*, a novel about the Civil War and reconstruction by the South. Griffith was a Kentuckian whose father had served as a Confederate officer. Griffith was deeply sympathetic to the material, and to the Ku Klux Klan. The blatant bigoted content of *‘The Birth of a Nation’* prompted riots in northern states. Certain states even banned the film outright. However, this did not prevent DW Griffith’s so-called classic from becoming the single most popular film in history to date; in the year of its release it was seen by nearly 3,000,000 people. Griffith, a man famous for courting controversy, was totally unrepentant about the uproar his film had caused. He later issued a pamphlet about the film and the issue of free speech. Griffith was a significant figure in that he had been called the “the Shakespeare of the screen”, and he has been widely accepted as being “the man who invented Hollywood.” Hollywood was created by the likes of DW Griffith. Should we be surprised as to what DW Griffith’s fledgling town, Hollywood, grew into?

It was in 1915 that the collaboration in corruption began to take a strong foothold. The main studios then were Famous Players-Lasky Corporation (later Paramount Pictures, 1927) and Universal Pictures, founded by Carl Laemmle in 1912. Later on small independents started to merge; Samuel Goldwyn and Edgar Selwyn, Metro Picture Corporation and Louis B Mayer Pictures merged to form MGM in 1924. In the same year Columbia Pictures, Inc. became incorporated by Harry and Jack Cohn. Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc., was a year earlier founded by Harry, Albert, Samuel, and Jack Warner. These organisations became the backbone of the Hollywood studio system, and the men who controlled them shared one common trait; they were all first or second generation Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe, most of them with little formal education, while 90 per cent of the audience they served was Protestant or Catholic. By the 1920s, when movies became a mass medium, this Jewish cabbala started to influence every American citizen. Hollywood went on to become the chief purveyor of American culture to the world.

Over 8 decades later this same cartel of carpetbaggers are in charge of

delivering to the world the main cash export from the US - that being its cheap and nasty all-American popular culture. Only now they have many more tools at their disposal. The companies such as Fox, Warner, and United Artists also control TV networks and the mainstream music record labels. So a multi-pronged approach can be adopted by the magicians of these companies, begotten of Hollywood. The United States has many tools at its disposal for dominating the globe, economically, politically and militarily. However, the drive in these fields is supplemented by the US's striving for world cultural domination. There is no one single industry that augments the cause of subjugating the world in terms of hearts and minds to American cultural imperialism, than the film industry. So although worshipping at the altar of celebrity may seem pernicious enough, it is only the tip of the iceberg in terms of the sinister monstrosity that looms below the surface of the film industry.

All that glistens is not gold

﴿قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

“Say; ‘My life, my death and acts of worship are all for the Rabi-l alamin.’”  
[TMQ Al-An’am: 162]

﴿أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ﴾

“Obey Allah and Obey the Rasool...” [TMQ An-Nur: 54]

“Thirst is everything, obey your thirst.” [American commercial for Sprite]

Get a lifestyle

We are told that the purpose for our entire existence is to worship Allah ﷻ. TV ads tell us otherwise. According to advertisements, our needs, wants and instincts are everything; we should obey them.

The Western way of life relies on a continual cycle of want. The people must always desire to own something new, regardless of whether they need it. The people keep the cycle of consumption in constant motion. They work extra hard, in order to buy things they do not really need, in

order to impress people that they do not really care for. The objective is to have the newest and the best; and therefore, in their eyes, to be the best. For this “cult of the worship of newness” to prevail, the high priests of the god of consumerism must work hard to preach their gospel. They are not just selling products, they are selling an ideology. They are promoting a value system that continuously bombards the public with messages of self-indulgence and instant gratification. One only needs to look at the catch phrases; ‘me first’, ‘gotta-have-it’ and ‘gimme,’ to understand the common ethic. This god of consumerism is the creator and sustainer of the capitalist system.

Fashion epitomises the capitalist ethos of creating a desire for the inconsequential. Consumers from all walks of life spend hundreds of billions of dollars on fashion annually. On face value, fashion may appear to be a frivolous and insignificant obsession for the rich, dandy and infamous. In reality, it is an industrial giant that directly influences most of the world’s inhabitants. Its task force includes Chinese silkworm farmers, Indian cotton pickers, Italian yarn spinners, Scottish weavers, German dyers, French seamstresses, teenaged Saturday shop assistants from Hackney, Harlesden and Hounslow, and South American, Portuguese, Greek, Turkish and Bengali sweatshop workers. Besides these, are a string of wholesalers, retailers, merchant traders, rip-off artists and street hustlers from Bangkok to Brixton. In global terms, it is an industry worth over \$1.5 trillion. This astounding figure is actually more than the international expenditure for the arms industry.

Fashion reached a new pinnacle during the 1980s. During this time, right wing parties controlled the main economies of the world. The Thatcher and Reagan administrations provided tough fiscal policies and reduced taxation for the rich and very rich. With this new climate, the rich no longer had to be ashamed about their wealth. Clothing became a means for the wealthy to display their means while inflating their egos. The demise of Reaganomics and Thatcherism had no effect on the escalation of fashion at large. Fashion now stands as the primary cultural artefact of the Western world, replacing music, cinema, art and poetry as the all-encompassing symbol of both popular and high culture.

Clothing is an integral part of human existence; yet, it is only a minute aspect of fashion. Other components are art, design, expression, risk

and above all, marketing. The fashion industry has evolved symbiotic relationships with many sectors. These are primarily with the visual media industry (magazines especially), the chemical industry (through dyes, perfumes and cosmetics) and pharmaceutical industries.

#### The fashion industry

The fashion industry is constructed as a pyramid. At the top are the couturiers (Chanel, Dior, Yves Saint Laurent and the like), below these are the imitators and competitors, and at the bottom lies 'high street' fashion. The clothes produced directly from the fashion houses are exclusive and very expensive. Haute couture, though it holds the most exclusive position in the fashion pyramid, does not provide the designers with a profit. This is because of the cost of materials and the small clientele. It is the piece of the pyramid beneath couture that has become the most lucrative. Though these can also be very expensive, they are mass marketed in a way that the first category is not; therefore, it is accessible to more people, while retaining prestige.

Associated with design houses are a plethora of other products. These include everything from cosmetics, accessories, perfumes, jewellery, cars, sports equipment etc. Pierre Cardin endorses over 800 products, most of which Cardin himself has probably never seen. Designers' names (under licence) have gone on underwear, cigarettes, deodorants, chess-sets, teddy bears, stationary, bath-towels, neckties, cufflinks, ball point pens, watches, sunglasses and even tropical fruit (the Oscar La Renta papaya). The perfumes Dune and Coco were only conceived years after the deaths of Christian Dior and Coco Chanel, although the Houses of Dior and Chanel make a handsome profit from them.

The not so rich can buy into the Calvin Klein lifestyle by simply buying bottles of cK Be from department stores. Those who have even less can buy into the lifestyle from unofficial vendors on Oxford Street, London. The perfume industry is worth well over \$10 billion a year. Few women can afford a Chanel suit for thousands of pounds, but millions are able to spare enough for a 7 ml bottle of liquid. Gram for gram Chanel's No. 5 costs about the same as 22 carat gold.

The main point here is that fashion is not about clothes, it is about

lifestyles. This is true just as Coca-Cola is not about thirst, but lifestyle. Yet, with all the abundance, Westerners who can get clean water from a tap for free, will proclaim that they have nothing to drink, or look through their bulging wardrobes, and proclaim, "I haven't a thing to wear." Do not think, however, that all this rampant indulgence comes without cost.

#### Exploitative practices

The exploitative practices of the fashion industry have been well publicised in recent years. This practice is not unique to Third World countries. Immigrant workers earn minimum wage in sweatshops on 7th Avenue in New York. They operate cheek by jowl with shoppers buying designer sweatshirts on 5th Avenue. The contradictions here are blatant. The combination of cheap labour combined with the artisans' skills, make fashion a paradigm of the workings of Capitalism.

The contradictions in the less developed countries are even starker. Relatively poor regions, where jeans are not commonly worn, import large quantities of denim. For example, 48 million metres of denim were imported into Bangladesh and 85 million meters were imported into Turkey in 1996. The reason for this is simple; nearly all jeans are stitched together in hundreds of thousands of low wage sweatshops and private homes around the world, but they are worn in the West. The wages paid to these workers are far less than the wages paid to those in the developed countries. Mexican garment workers earn one-fifth to one-tenth of the hourly rate paid to the 200,000 garment workers across the border in Los Angeles. These practices are necessary for the jeans industry to maintain their massive profit margins. Between 1984 and 1997 Levi Strauss's market value increased 105 times - by almost as much as Microsoft. In the early 1990s annual sales of Levi Strauss were worth \$7 billion, 71% of this was due to jeans or jeans-related items, with an annual publicity expenditure of \$300 million in the US and \$200 million outside. These disproportionate amounts spent on publicity can be contrasted with the wages paid to their workers.

This issue of spending on advertising rather than labour is a common trait among many different companies. More is spent on convincing one person to wear one item than paying an employee to make thousands of that same item.

Compare the millions of dollars paid to Michael Jordan by Nike over the years with the pittance paid to the South East Asians for producing these Nike goods. What is the cost of a pair of Air Jordans? The women and children of Nike sweatshops know them to be less than \$2. After all, that is what they get paid to make the shoes on their 12-hour shifts for 6 days a week. Michael Jordan was at one stage the richest sportsman on the planet, even though basketball is not the most popular sport in any country except the US. His wealth is largely due to the generous salary provided by Nike. In the UK, parallels can be seen with the recent million pound agreements made between David Beckham and Adidas. Once again, the disproportionate wages paid to the Indonesians that stitch them, compared to the one who endorses them, are quite apparent.

Another company that has come under the international spotlight is the Gap. A series of protests were sparked off in America in 1995 when an 18 year old addressed a crowd outside a Gap store in Toronto. Holding up a Gap shirt, Viera told the crowd; 'In Canada, you pay \$34 for this shirt. In El Salvador we were paid 27 cents to sew it.' The Gap does not own the factories or have to deal with the workers that make their products. Instead, they contract out production to free-trade zones in Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and now Africa.

The Gap has conspicuously not allowed independent monitoring at any of its contract factories in over 50 countries around the world, nor did the company suffer much public criticism when Carmelita Alonzo died of exhaustion from overwork in 1997. Before she died, Carmelita had been working 14 hours a day at a factory in the Philippines producing garments for the Gap and other brand-name retailers.

#### Fall into the Gap

The followers of fashion are fooled into believing that spending thousands on an outfit gives them 'individuality'. The victim is often unaware of the financial oppression that they themselves are subjected to. Who better to sum-up the machinations of the industry than one of the main perpetrators of the fashion conspiracy, Karl Lagerfeld. The head designer at Chanel, Chloë, Fendi, and KL. When asked about what makes the fashion industry run, he narrated the famous children's story, *The Emperors New Clothes*. This is a story of a couple of tricksters who

convinced a vain emperor that they could tailor him an immaculate outfit. Only intelligent people could see the elegance of the clothes. The ignorant would not even see the outfit, and the wearer would appear naked. In actuality, the emperor really was naked. Lagerfeld draws the similarity between himself, and the tricksters in the story. After all, it is only the 'intelligent' that can look at a handbag, and recognises that it is a Chanel crocodile original, with interlocking C-C hallmark, costing more than £5,000. The ignorant will merely see a leather bag.

Other designers are not as honest about their profession. Their egos delude them into believing that they are a special gift to humankind, bringing delight, beauty and pleasure to millions of people. Christian Lacroix, for example pontificates that the slave labour employed throughout the world helps to provide employment for the people of Third World countries and their economies. Ralph Lauren, on the other hand, considers his designs a reflection of emotional freedom, nostalgia and romanticism of the average American.

The people caught up in fashion are superficial, pretentious and naive, but what is so pathetic about them is that they are innocent victims. The trap (or the Gap) is an easy one to fall into. There are many inner desires within all of us. It is these desires that corporate power tap into.

The fashion industry is far from a marginal or atypical capitalist industry. It is not the norm for any capitalist corporation to perceive a demand for a new product and then strive to meet it. It is far more common for capitalists to produce commodities and then set out to create a 'need' for them. From Digimon to Double Mints, or roller blades to Rolls-Royces, the product precedes demand. This explains why marketing is such a fundamental tenet of Capitalism.

One only needs to consider the present dependence on cars in the US, which was brought about by the deliberate denial of choice to travellers. A 1974 report to a subcommittee of the US Senate documented the destruction of electric rail-transport systems in 45 US cities by General Motors (GM), assisted by Standard Oil of California and the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company. GM bought electric transit systems, ripped up the tracks, substituted GM buses and then sold the transit company. Public transport by bus implied road construction and hence a huge

hidden subsidy for the private car industry. Similar processes are now taking place in Eastern Europe. Citizens of the new capitalist ‘democracies’ will have the choice between buying cars and immobility.

Another example of the creation of a need can be seen in a more destructive industry; the international arms industry. While it can be compared with the fashion industry in terms of its annual turn over, the parallels actually go much further. Developed countries produce arms and then work to create a need for their produce in other countries. They do this by convincing people that their neighbours, even fellow countrymen, are their potential enemies. These people are often of the same creed, colour, race and tongue. The believers of this myth proceed to squander the national wealth on useless military hardware, just in case their friends become their enemies. I use the term ‘useless’ because these packages always have strings attached. It is these ‘strings’ that render the packages unusable. These may be such that the arms cannot be deployed against a manifest enemy (often the salesman themselves). The result is that we see governments going on shopping sprees to the Bond Streets and 5th Avenues of the arms world. The glossy adverts and PR are more elaborate than in the fashion industry. Whole wars, and endless repeats or war footage are used, ie the stealth bomber and patriot missiles of the Gulf War. Wars are the arms industries equivalent of cat walks and Fashion Week, and Norman Schwarzkopf and Colin Powell were the super models of the industry.

#### Marketing

The power of advertising cannot be overstated and is indeed a whole topic in its own right. Advertisers are continually seeking to manipulate the minds of the public. They etch out new groups of consumers to target and continually think up new exploitative ways of getting people to part with their money in exchange for useless commodities.

A 1999 article in Kidscreen, an online industry newsletter, stated, “there have never been more ways in the culture to support marketing toward kids, and there have never been more outlets to study how to speak to them. That makes the competition for kids attention significantly greater, forcing advertisers to work harder to get inside kids heads.” Advertisers consider children to represent great market potential. They are a sought-

after demographic because, in addition to making their own purchases, they have a powerful and growing influence over their parents’ buying decisions, and they hold great promise as future adult consumers. In the US in 1998 alone, children ages 4 to 12 spent approximately \$27 billion of their own money and 12 to 19 year olds spent \$94 billion. Children directly influenced about \$200 billion in parental purchases.

Advertisers and marketers are enjoying an unprecedented number of potent psychological tools to probe and exploit the minds and emotions of the consumers. There is simultaneously a strong and growing body of psychological evidence that indicates that people who watch a great deal of television, with its incessant stream of commercials, have more materialistic values. It is only now that psychologists are acknowledging that materialistic values are associated with increased depression, anxiety, substance abuse, interpersonal problems and antisocial behaviour. The American Psychological Association published a statement in 2000 stating, “studies on ‘materialism’ show that individuals highly focused on materialistic values also report less satisfaction with life..worse interpersonal relationships, more drug and alcohol abuse, and less contribution to community...[and this process contributes] to the formation of a shallow ‘consumer identity’ that is obsessed with instant gratification and material wealth.” Western psychologists are finally recognising the obvious. Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((لو كا لابن آدم واديان من ذهب لأحب أن يكون له

ثالث، ولا يملأ جوف ابن آدم إلا التراب، ويتوب الله

علي من تاب))

**“If the son of Adam had two valleys of money, he would wish for a third, for nothing can fill the belly of Adam’s son except dust, and Allah forgives him who repents to Him” [Bukhari]**

The fashion industry is a contrived industry based on creating a lust for something that does not really exist; a gold standard in style. The industry would not exist if this lust was not created in the first instance and then sustained.

This blatant manipulation of basic human wants and needs could be contrasted with the Socialist philosophy. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels described the expansion of human needs as part of Capitalism's 'progressive' role. Having observed what was happening in the West they concluded that human desire was all a bourgeois plot. They completely denied the existence of any innate human wants, needs or instincts. A century and a half after Marx's observations, the new 'needs' created by Capitalism no longer has a character way beyond what Marx observed. Consider the US funeral industries promotion of coffins with a foam mattress for the deceased. Mattresses for the dead are the last word on consumerism. No doubt, one day these mattresses will be labelled, under licence, with Calvin Klein or the like.

#### Islam

The capitalists selfishly exploit and manipulate the wants and desires of humans. The Socialists deny the very existence of these thoughts and emotions. Both of these approaches would lead to misery.

Islam acknowledges the fact that ownership and the desire to have money is part and parcel of human nature. Rasoolallah ﷺ said;

((إن هذا المال خضر حلو فمن أخذه بسخاوة نفس بورك

له فيه ومن أخذه بإشراف نفس لم يبارك له فيه وكان

كالذي يأكل ولا يشبع واليد العليا خير من اليد السفلى))

**“This wealth is (like) green and sweet (fruit), and whoever takes it without greed, Allah will bless it for him, but whoever takes it with greed, Allah will not bless it for him, and he will be like the one who eats but is never satisfied. And the upper (giving) hand is better than the lower (taking) hand.”** [Bukhari]

Also in the Qur'an;

﴿زَيْنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ

الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِصَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ  
وَالْحَرْثِ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَبَإِ ﴿١٤﴾

*“Beautiful in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet; Women and sons; Heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence); and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life; but in nearness to Allah is the best of the goals (to return to).”* [TMQ Ale-Imran: 14]

Umar ؓ once said, “O Allah! We cannot but be happy with those things which you have made fair in our eyes. O Allah! I request You to give me power to spend all those things in the right way.” [Bukhari]

Islam acknowledges this basic instinct, but it has not assigned it as the basis of the whole economic system as Capitalism does. Islam's economic system is comprehensive and clearly defined. A tenet of this system upholds that “all property belongs to Allah, and we have delegated authority over that which Allah has allowed us to own”. This system also must ensure all basic rights of food, water, shelter and clothing. In addition to these, Islam caters for the luxuries. Therefore, it is clear that the system of Islam is in accordance with our individual nature, the global community and the globe itself.

The above examples demonstrate that the capitalist system has allowed certain industries to dominate. In doing so, they have actually stripped the basic rights away from many individuals. The fat cats such as fashion, films and pharmaceuticals have bled the human resources within the Western World, not to mention the Third World and the Earth itself. What makes things worst is that those particular industries, that are eating the flesh of humankind, are the most irrelevant and incongruous imaginable.

A big fat scam

In January 2002 a report appeared highlighting the health dangers associated with obesity. It stated that more than a million British children under the age of 16 are obese, while more than half of all adults in the UK are officially overweight. The cost of healthcare for the seriously



overweight drains the NHS of more than £500 million a year and costs society almost £2 billion in lost work time and economic output. Obesity is a risk factor for cancer, strokes, increases the risk of heart-disease and is known to predispose to diabetes. In the US, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimate that 300,000 Americans now die each year from obesity-related illnesses. In short, fat is a big issue.

Obesity on the societal level, as it stands in the West, is the product of a paradox. On the one hand there is an obsession with being thin. There are several cottage and trans-national industries that thrive on this obsession. On the other hand there is another industry that thrives on selling low quality high calorie over-processed and over-priced food. One would have thought that these two would oppose each other. However, the companies and individuals that benefit from the “well-being sector” live in a milieu of mutual benefit with the junk food sector. One, quite literally, feeds of the other. Between the two, both the clinically obese and the chronic anorexic exist in a neurosis governed by body weight.

#### Junk food industry

For the first time in history, in some societies, the majority of adults are overweight. In Europe as a whole, more than half of those between 35 and 65 years of age are overweight, whilst in the US the figure is bigger. The trend shows that these numbers are not reversing. It is hardly any wonder that the average bodyweights, in the West, are increasing at dramatic rates; the issue of life-styles, coupled with the over consumption of junk food has contributed to this. Cities are designed for cars and people enforce exercise deprivation on themselves. Those that do decide to exert themselves don't do it in the natural course of their daily lives. They pay good money to a health club to ride on bicycles or row in boats that don't actually go anywhere. Few humans have to hunt for their food or go to the forest to collect edible berries. Readily available food can be purchased at the “hunter gatherer” freezer of any supermarket. Alternatively it can be delivered to the doorstep for just £5 via the Internet.

Then there is the other option open to many; that of pre-prepared takeaways. Fast food is one of the US's most lucrative industries. The success of the fast food industry is nothing short of a phenomenon.

With such a profile given to fast food it is not surprising that juvenile obesity is rising rapidly. In the US, where at least 1 out of 10 youngsters between the ages of 6 and 17 years is overweight; the incidence of obesity among children has more than doubled over the last 30 years. Not only does juvenile obesity typically translate into adult obesity, but it also causes metabolic changes that make the disease difficult to treat in adulthood.

#### Believe the children are the future

This situation is to be expected considering how much effort McDonald's, Burger King, and their like, put into trying to attract children to their wares. All of their efforts are handsomely rewarded. McDonald's have perfected the art of appealing to young children. For single mothers, a trip to McDonald's is a cheap and easy way of feeding their kids and keeping them happy for the afternoon. The décor, the free gifts and the whole experience are geared to keep mum and kids satisfied with a short-term fix for boredom, hunger and many other things. It is not only the working class that Ronald McDonald has a grip on. The middle class lifestyle results in men and women, who are big achievers in their careers, finding it difficult to devote adequate time for their children. Thus, a trip to McDonald's is a quick-fix that may be enough to convince some children that their parents love them. This is best explained in Ronald McDonald's own words. Recently published confidential documents expose just what Ronald really thinks of his customers. According to an internal marketing memo they set out to explain the psychology behind parents going to McDonald's. It's because they; “want the kids to love them...it makes them feel like a good parent” [E. Schlosser, fast food nation, 2001]

So this is the start of the fast food addiction. The kids love it as an experience and thus develop a psychological craving for the experience. Thus, building customer loyalty that will last into adulthood, or at least long enough for them to badger their parents for regular visits. They develop a physical addiction based on our innate need for food and preference for all that is sweet, salty and fatty. Paramount to the whole experience are the trinkets that accompany the happy meals. The 1997 free Beanie-Baby promotion has been lauded as the most successful advertising campaign in US advertising history. That is in terms of

increase in sales in proportion to money spent on advertising. The secret weapon, in their vast arsenal, is the free-gift. I say secret, but it's actually no secret at all. It's just that most parents choose to ignore this.

#### Room with a view – from the sofa

Modern urbanisation has systematically eliminated exercise from our lives. Workers commute by car from home to work, driving quite literally from door to door. Lifts and escalators have replaced stairs. Leisure time is spent watching television. In the United Kingdom, the two lifestyle variables that correlate most closely with obesity are television viewing and automobile ownership. Children who watch television five or more hours a day are five times as likely to be overweight as those who watch less than two hours a day. The typical American kid watches on average 21 hours of TV a week. Which approximates to one and a half months a year spent on the sofa. This exposes them to roughly 30,000 commercials a year. So each child becomes immersed in information about all latest fads, the latest Disney paraphernalia and of course the latest free-gift offers from McDonald's, Burger King and KFC.

#### Diet industry

The other side of the coin, or silver dollar, are methods of obesity reversal. This industry would not exist if not for the above-mentioned situation. The cosmetic-surgery industry may be worth \$300 million, the health and fitness sector may be worth \$1.5 billion, but the diet industry is estimated to be worth between \$33 and \$77 billion each year. The US diet industry is America's fifth largest industry. According to the Lancet more than half the female population of the US are on a diet. In Australia, 30% of the female population are on a diet, including 68% of all 15-year-old girls. A survey of 10-year-old girls in the US found that 80% were already on diets. A survey in Newsweek magazine reported that 11% of parents in the US would have an abortion if they found their child were predisposed to obesity. Dieting is not just a female preoccupation; one in 20 men (UK) buys over-the-counter slimming pills each month.

#### Diet dollars

We are all familiar with the hoards of junk e-mails that inform us of novel ways of making dollars or novel ways of losing lbs. So what are all these diet dollars spent on? Diets themselves contribute significantly. There are more than 30,000 "new" diets introduced into the market each year. Then there are the other associated money-spinners such as the various miracle cures. These include; sweat suits, liquid lunches, exercise-enhancing electrodes, breast-enhancing creams, thigh busters, tummy busters, and cellulite creams. In addition there are fat pinchers, scales and tape measures etc. More than 800 new diet books weighed down bookshop shelves in time for Christmas 2001. Membership of health clubs leapt by an average of 50% in the following New Year period. Supermarket sales of low-fat products grew by more than £300 million in the past five years.

#### Up hill struggle

How well are the diets, exercises, potions, lotions and pills really working? As many as 98% of all women, using the products and services supplied by the diet industry, fail to achieve their objective of losing weight. 95% of all weight loss due to diets is regained, most of it within a single year. For every 10lb of lean muscle lost on a crash diet, 12lb is put back on - much of it in fat - because the body is still operating in famine mode. After a crash diet the body's energy conservation capacity fights back with a vengeance, making it easier to store fat. Therein lies the rub. The basic biology of the issue shows that most people are seeking the unobtainable. Adipose tissue (fat) is a natural store. Its regulatory mechanisms have an innate ability to recognise adverse conditions. By dieting the body is fooled into thinking that it has hit starvation and should reset its fat building rates and processes. So, like demented dogs chasing after their own tails people pursue new fad diet after new fad diet. There are no magic cures for fatness. The industry is spinning a lie that the gullible have bought; and are continuing to buy, by the bucket-load.

Imagine how it must affect the confidence and self-esteem for one who fails to maintain a diet that has been promoted as being simple and flawless. This low self-esteem is what the parasites of the diet industry

feed on. This is analogous to the way the cosmetic industry make a killing by telling women that they are ugly without their products. Those who believe that it is important to be beautiful rush out and buy the chemical waste of the cosmetic industry. Similarly, those who are desperate to lose weight become more vulnerable to an aggressive and deceptive dieting industry and more likely to believe whatever quick-fixes it offers, however dangerous and unhealthy they may be. This lack of self-esteem within such large numbers of the population may explain, in part, why psychiatrists are so busy and why psycho-pharmaceutical use is so widespread in the US. These pathetic figures are the by-product of the industry.

### Body image

The average person is bombarded with 3,000 direct or indirect advertisements per day. Every day, flawless, slim young women assail us from every angle. They seem the embodiment of eudaemonia, worthiness, wealth, health and popularity. However, the glossy allure leaves many feeling somewhat less than human. There is little immunity that can be built against the influence of advertising. Most sensible people know that most of what we see in advertising is a blatant lie, but that doesn't stop the constant barrage of messages filtering into the subconscious.

1.1% of women in the West have the same waist-hip measurements as a standard shop dummy. Coincidentally, this is the same percentage of the female population that suffers from anorexia. Physiologically, the typical figure of a shop manikin is not wholly compatible with the natural state of a woman. A manikin measurement woman is usually menstruation-free woman. It is the norm for anorexics to completely suppress menstruation altogether. In order for a woman to maintain healthy regular cycles a certain fat-to-lean body ratio must be achieved. The only cycle that these women know about is the self-assembled cycle of indulgence-guilt-abstention, guilt being the driving-belt for the cycle. The source of fuel, for this guilt, is the diet industry and its symbiotic associate sectors. Those such as the magazine, fashion, film, lifestyle and cosmetics industries. Although there are many facets to the issue of body image, a comprehensive discussion of the subject cannot be presented here. However, these are a just a few of the issues that are relevant to the diet

industry.

### Full spectrum diet dominance

The fast food industry has previously been discussed at length. The criticism levied against The McDonald's Corporation et al, may, just as easily, be directed at the diet industry. This may seem like a paradox. However, these two industries of fast food and dieting are not in conflict at all. They totally complement one another. They aid one another in maximising each other's profits. The downside is that their existence is at the detriment of the people. The big companies are prepared to poison, abuse and lie to the common people in order to make a fast buck. In the short term some rich individuals get richer. In the long term the whole nation pays dearly, through the strain on the health budget etc. The other point that is noteworthy is that these two industries have just about reached saturation point in the US. So, fast food culture and the quick-fix diets will slowly seep into all other parts of the world including the Islamic world. Fast food and the body image obsession are pernicious and we should be on our guard against them.

### Food – a human basic need

An adult needs a intake of 2,350 - 2,600 calories per day.

**Table 1** - *The percentage calorific intakes in relation to the average physical requirements for different nations*

Country	Difference from basic need
Belgium, Greece and Ireland	> calories than required 149%, 151%, 157% respectively
US, UK, Canada, Australia and NZ	> calories than required 124% to 138%
Angola, Mozambique, Somalia and Rwanda	< calories than required 77% to 82%
Afghanistan, Chad and Ethiopia	< calories than required 72%, 73%, 73% respectively

## *Economic Imperialism*

### Bretton Woods

Between 1503 and 1660, 185,000 kilos of gold and 16 million kilos of silver were shipped from Latin America to Europe. Indian labourers extracted silver through hard graft from the mines of Mexico and Peru. This could be seen as a war crime, or it could be seen as the first of several friendly loans, granted by America for Europe's development. Were they to charge compound interest on this loan, levied at the modest rate of 10 per cent, Europe would owe the indigenous people of Latin America a stack of gold and silver which exceeded the weight of the planet.

The American academic economist JK Galbraith considered the influx of South American precious metals into Europe a landmark in the history of money. This event heralded the start of global economics. Money changed from being an intrinsically desirable metal that could be exchanged by individuals to a commodity that could be controlled, regulated and manipulated in terms of its rate of exchange and transfer by governments and banks. The history of economics is peppered with such sea changes that are attributed to a single incident or event. Halfway through the twentieth century saw another dramatic chapter in the use of economics to affect the lives of ordinary people across several continents.

The event in question was the Bretton Woods conference. This put in place the pillars of a global economy where borders were to be as porous as possible to goods and capital from anywhere in the world. As part of the design Bretton Woods spawned two key institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, to deal with problems that might lead governments to inward-looking economic policies. This was followed shortly by another organisation, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which set the rules and pressures for open

economies and free trade. Together with the regional development banks these are collectively known as the IFIs, an acronym for International Financial Institutions.

Forty-four nations attended the conference. However, the resulting system of international post-war reconstruction and monetary relations was based on principles articulated solely by the US. Potentially the outcome of the conference may have been very different. Many people went there believing the summit to be an opportunity to make the world a better and fairer place after the process of de-colonisation and the accompanying re-distribution of wealth and economic power. An important presumption that was made at the time was that the allied nations were going to win World War II.

The political scenario of the time is vitally important to understand Bretton Woods. The world was at war and Europe needed US money for the final push. The US's attitude to all the discussions was along the lines of; delegates can say whatever they want but if you don't do what we say you won't get the war loan. The US delegates insisted that gold, valued in dollars, be used to set exchange rates, ensuring that the dollar became the international banking standard. The dollar was returned to gold convertibility at \$35 per ounce and would serve as the world's reserve currency, while the pound, the franc, and other currencies were pegged to the dollar. What was created was a global economic system that traded in dollars. Thus, the US global economic hegemony was secured, long term, through the vehicles of the IMF and World Bank. Debtor nations became deeper in debt and the principal creditor nation (the US) became prominently placed atop the economic super league of nations. The World Bank and the IMF became a neo-colonial policing system to make sure that rich nations would continually be rewarded and that poor nations would be perpetually punished. The Bretton Woods system used structural adjustment programmes (SAP) to tell nations that they had to run their financial affairs in this way or that way. They could also tell nations that their political system should take this or that complexion. If not, debtor nations would be branded as international pariahs and outcasts.

The US at the time was the biggest creditor nation on earth. They obviously wanted to keep it that way. So they proposed that fundamental

global inequality be maintained. This could be achieved by making sure that when a nation gets into debt, the whole burden of that debt, plus a whole lot more, lays only on that nation and the creditor nation has nothing to do with affecting the amount owed. Creditor nations should not have to be embarrassed by discussions of moral or ethical responsibilities. They should feel that it is their right, even duty, to just pile on and pile on compound interest on existing debts.

The measures that were imposed were precisely those that facilitated Western multinational corporations to get access to the resources, minerals and humans without rewarding the poorer nations. The IMF and World Bank would dictate to nations what crops they could or couldn't grow, what minerals they could mine or drill for and what fish they could catch. With these impositions, incentives and disincentives nations could not ever become truly independent. A nation would be prevented from growing an appropriate crop that would maybe lead to self-sufficiency in food. Instead they would be encouraged to import food from America and produce something in exchange that the US needed.

1944 was indeed a turning point in global events in many respects. In political terms Britain had lost the war to the US. Britain emerged from the war without an empire. Whereas US had just started to build outposts to its Union in places other than the Western Hemisphere. The tool that it was to use to consolidate its post war acquisitions was not troops and brute force. This time an empire was to be held on to using economics as a political tool. Nineteenth century colonialism was administered and maintained using armies and trading companies. The neo-colonies of the late twentieth century were to be run using global organisations and quasi-international bodies. Bretton Woods was one of the landmarks in the process of using economics as a tool in empire building.

Those who sleep on a full stomach

Anas narrated that Rasoolallah ﷺ said from one of the sayings from his Lord ﷻ,- "He who would not have believed in me, is the one who slept with his stomach full when his neighbour on his side was hungry and he knew of it."

Golden jubilees of monarchs are usually greeted with celebration. 50

years passing of important wars are usually a cause of reflection. However, the passing of fifty years since the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees has been marked in 2001 with next to no response. Perhaps homage is continually being made to the "great" document by the fact that the issue of asylum and immigration never left the headlines of European newspapers throughout the whole of 2001. Addresses by senior European politicians, such as Hague's "foreign land" speech, and the continual condemnation of those who profit from human traffic came to dominate the headlines in the middle portion of the year. In the UK, much of this news reporting crescendoed with the brutal fatal stabbing of an asylum seeker in the Site Hill district of Glasgow in the summer of 2001.

Crisis point has been reached in many Western European countries, with regards to this issue. The perception is that the economies of these once prosperous nations can no longer sustain a continuous infusion of the homeless and stateless that have been created by a decade of post Cold War conflicts. The stark reality is that their summary statement is that 'you're not welcome any more'. That is making the assumption that they were at one point welcome. The media has continually focused on how immigrants are a drain upon the economies of Britain, France and Germany. Very little has been mentioned of how hundreds had prepared to give up thousands of dollars to charlatans and racketeers for the hope of a better live. The cost, in real terms, is not just fiscal. It is one massive human tragedy, where life is a commodity, in the industry of human traffic. However, we can analyse to our hearts content the problems and prejudices of the West, but this does not help us to solve the problem of war and starvation in the Islamic world. We have come to accept and even expect the West to adopt their current stance.

So, what of the Islamic world? Could the rulers in the Islamic World be as callous as their counterparts in the so-called civilised world? A human catastrophe has been unfolding in recent times in Afghanistan. Pakistan, the land of the pure, is the immediate neighbour. She is capable of absorbing the impact of this blow to the Afghani members of this Ummah. Refugee families that have penetrated the "closed" but porous border have arrived at Pakistani hospitals in a state of advanced malnutrition. Regardless of what the Western media say, primarily, they fled from the bombing or the threat of bombing. Although four years of

drought may have been the backdrop, it was the response of the US to September 11 2001 that was the trigger to all this. Well before these events, Afghanistan had the world's highest rate of infant mortality. One child in four fails to reach the age of five years old.

Pakistan's response was to close the border. Pakistan claimed that she could not cope with an influx of refugees. These sentiments sound strangely similar to those of the West over the same issue of refugees. President Musharraf of Pakistan even suggested that if the world community could provide him with \$100 for each refugee, he would gladly open the border. Musharraf wants to create a climate in Pakistan where the Afghanis are distrusted and feared. The fear being that they will drain Pakistan of its wealth and suck the lifeblood of the nation. He may regard the Muslims from over the border as parasites, but the Islamic Ummah do not. In fact it is he who is the opportunist and sucker of blood. He has exploited the whole human tragedy to his own advantage. His standing in the international arena is now presented as a respected statesman and humanitarian who is doing the best for his nation and his neighbours (particularly his neighbour to the east of Islamabad). He is no longer a factious rebel. He has been lauded by the great and the good from the West. In October 2001, the British Department for International Development announced it would increase its bilateral programme to Pakistan to £45 million per year for the next two years. After the announcement, in Islamabad, the UK Cabinet Minister Clare Short said; "This Government has made very real progress in implementing reforms and this increase in funding will continue so long as that effort is seen to be effective and to deliver benefits to poor people in Pakistan." It is not just flattering words that Musharraf has been showered with. Ms Short discussed plans with Minister Aziz to waive service payments on £20 million of debt that Pakistan owes to the Commonwealth Development Corporation, and to consider in due course the cancellation of the debt subject to continued economic and political progress. These financial pledges come on top of the additional £11 million the UK has provided since September 11 2001 to ensure that poor Pakistanis do not suffer because of the increase in refugees, and the £40 million committed to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in the region.

A similar situation applies all over the Islamic world. Crises after crisis

abound; from Palestine to Chechnya to the ten years of war in Iraq. The situations in surrounding nations to these trouble spots parallel Pakistan's position. The behaviour of the current leaders of nations is in stark contrast to the actions of Rasoolallah ﷺ and the Sahabah during the Madinan period. Here too were a people that had fled their homes. Here too were a people that had left everything behind in terms of material wealth. Here too were a people that undertook a long and arduous trek in harsh conditions. The dissimilarity lay with the state that welcomed them. The welcomers of the Muhajireen were honoured by Allah ﷻ with the term 'al-Ansar', 'the helpers'. This was not just an empty title but a real description of exactly who and what they were, ie. those that helped. The two parties were not dubbed with derogatory names such as "hosts" and "refugees". They went on to become the vanguard of Islam;

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ  
اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ  
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ  
الْعَظِيمُ﴾

*"And the vanguard of Islam from the Muhajireen and the Ansar and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith). Allah is well pleased with them, as they are well pleased with Him. He has prepared for them Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise), to dwell therein forever. That is the supreme success." (TMQ At-Taubah: 100)*

These were a people who knew their duty and responsibility to the newcomers to their city. These were a people who knew the true meaning of the sacred Hadith; "He who would not have believed in me, is the one who slept with his stomach full when his neighbour on his side was hungry and he knew of it."

Life in Madinah was a model for later generations to live by. Life in Madinah actually defined what the Islamic mode of life was and should be today. Islam guarantees the livelihood for each citizen of the state, and ensured that the community did not fragment and remained

coherent. Fragmentation could easily result from having a “guest” and “host” community living in one state. However, Islam took measures to prevent disparity in financial terms by protecting the interests of the individuals and guaranteed the management of their affairs. This is achieved by maintaining the entity of the state, which has been delegated with the necessary mandatory powers to carry out her economic responsibilities.

In our current situation with its society of flagrant disparities, a new balance in the process of distribution must be struck between the citizens in order to bring about a rapprochement in the providing of basic needs. That was seen fourteen hundred years ago in Madinah.

Islam has made the circulation of currency between all the citizens an obligation, and it has forbidden the restricting of such circulation to a certain group of people to the exclusion of others. Allah ﷻ said;

﴿كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ﴾

“Lest it circulates solely among the wealthy from amongst you.” [TMQ Al-Hashr:7]

Rasoolallah ﷺ saw the potential disparity in wealth between the Ansar and the Muhajireen, he ﷺ divided the booty gained from Bani Nadheer exclusively among the Muhajireen, in order to generate an economic balance. It has been reported that when the Rasoolallah ﷺ peacefully conquered Bani Nadheer and then expelled the Jews from it, the Muslims asked Rasoolallah ﷺ to divide the booty among them. Thereafter Allah ﷻ revealed the following verse;

﴿وَمَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ﴾

“What Allah has bestowed on His Messenger from them, for this you have made no expedition.” [TMQ Al-Hashr: 7]

Therefore, Allah ﷻ placed the wealth gained from Bani Nadheer exclusively at the disposal of Rasoolallah ﷺ. So Rasoolallah ﷺ divided it among the Muhajireen and did not give the Ansar any of it except for Abu Dajana Sammak Ibnu Kharsha and Sahl Ibnu Haneef who both were at that time needy just like the Muhajireen. Upon this the Ansar

agreed to share their homes and wealth with the Muhajireen and let them have the booty as well.

Allah ﷻ then revealed;

﴿وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَى  
أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ﴾

“But they give them preference over themselves even though poverty was their own lot.”  
[TMQ Al-Hashr: 9]

Therefore, Allah ﷻ saying;

﴿كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ﴾

“Lest it become doolatum (circulated) merely among the rich from among yourselves” [TMQ al-Hashr 7] means lest it circulates only amongst the rich. The Arabic word “doolatum” means the object that circulates or changes hands amongst people; it also refers to the circulation of wealth; this means that the booty which by right should be granted to the poor to help them secure a living, and should not be exclusively circulated among the rich. The booty of Bani Nadheer was part of the treasury’s funds, which in turn belonged to all the Muslims.

The main point here being that the Sahabah acted in a manner that was impeccable. Both parties loved for their brothers what they loved for themselves. In times like these we should look to the Sahabah for inspiration on how to act under very difficult circumstances. However, we look to them not just for inspirational stories, but for guidance as to what our response should be to this so-called humanitarian disaster.

Musharraf has not only turned over his brothers to the enemy, but those most urgently requiring help are languishing at the mercy of Western nations that have caused the crisis in the first instance.

Rasoolallah ﷺ said;

﴿المسلم أخو المسلم لا يظلمه ولا يخذله﴾

**“The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim, he does not let him down”**

And in another hadith;

((المسلم أخو المسلم، لا يظلمه، ولا يسلمه))

**“The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim, he does not let him down nor does he oppress him, or hand him over to his enemy”**

Fiat currency standard

One of the main factors contributing to the global financial crises of the 1990s was that of the Fiat currency standard. The South East Asia financial crises of 1997 led to the devaluation of the local currencies. The human costs of these crises were major hardship for the people, especially the poor, of the region. This period saw incredible rates of devaluation of the local currencies. These are summarised below.

**Table 2 - Currency devaluation - exchange rates relative to the US dollar on 16 February 1998 compared to end of June 1997**

Thailand	48%
Philippines	36%
Malaysia	36%
Indonesia	75%
Singapore	15%
Korea	47%
Taiwan	15%

This sharp devaluation had impacted upon salaries, savings and the price of goods and services. It also raised the value of short-term debt, which was denominated by the US dollar. Then in August 1998 there was a devaluation of the Russian Rouble, which devalued by 70% within just six months. Later in 2001 on Wednesday 28th February, a day to be dubbed ‘Black Wednesday’, the Turkish lira was devalued by 30%. This resulted in 100,000 workers, and thousands of journalists, becoming unemployed. Within two months it had devalued by almost 50%. The

devaluation was due to a lack of confidence in the government.

More recently there was the Argentinean currency crisis. The Argentine Peso devalued by more than 100% compared to the US dollar to which it was previously pegged. One of the main reasons for this was the decision to remove the peg of the peso to the dollar, which was seen as unsustainable in light of the IMF policies that were forcing a devaluation of the currency amongst other things. The government’s failed strategies led to the collapse of the government and daily riots with possible knock-on effects in other South American countries.

When we look at the devaluation of the currencies of the Islamic regions of the globe in the last five years it should show us how vulnerable and exposed the Ummah has become. A small sample of Islamic countries may demonstrate this.

**Table 3 – Exchange rates of various of various currencies relative to the US dollar**

Currency	US\$ Jan 1997	US\$ Jan 2002	Devaluation
Turkey - Lira	108,340.00	1,474,525.00	93%
Indonesia - Rupee	2347.90	10410.00	77%
Libya - Dinar	0.36	0.66	46%
Sudan - Pound	148.00	256.00	42%
Malaysia - Ringet	2.53	3.81	34%
Pakistan - Rupee	40.21	60.80	24%
Egypt - Pound	3.39	4.60	26%
Morocco - Dirham	8.83	11.56	24%

These are just some examples from recent history, which have led many economists to question the Fiat money standard. Some economists such as Tatyana Koryagina have even forecasted the collapse of the US dollar itself.

Russia realised the speculative nature of the currency markets and the instability that the Fiat currency brings. In July 2001 the Russians started to circulate gold chervonets coins. The Bank of Russia - Central Bank introduced measures on July 10th 2001 making the gold chervonets legal tender. The short-term purpose of that move was to tempt Russians’



savings from the dollar to the Russian chervonets. This was in a country where \$100 billion or more is held in cash (US Federal Reserve Notes). Beyond that result, the Russian currency shift could become a stepping-stone to more profound changes in international monetary policy, as nations seek safety from the disintegration of the Anglo-American-centred world financial system.

During the eight-month tenure of Yevgeni Primakov as Russian premier, various maverick economists proposed an international role for the Rouble, and for gold. Proposals circulated at that time included Monya Kantov's "The Rouble as a World Reserve Currency," and Artur Sazonov's plan for a "gold-backed rouble," linked to the Euro.

Fiat Money - is simply money that has nothing of substance behind it. According to Webster's New World Dictionary, Fiat money is "currency made legal tender by Fiat (sanction) and neither backed by, nor necessarily convertible into, gold or silver." It is a promise to repay nothing, over an unspecified period. This inconvertible paper currency system gives the central bank the powers to issue and circulate paper money that has no intrinsic value. The government forces the people in the country to accept this currency in fulfilling financial commitments.

In America's first depression, 1819-1821, four US states (Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, and Missouri) established state owned banks, issuing Fiat paper. They were backed by legal tender provisions in the states, and sometimes by legal prohibition against depreciating the notes. And yet, all these experiments, born in high hopes, came quickly to grief as the new paper depreciated rapidly to negligible value. The projects had to be swiftly abandoned. Later, the greenbacks circulated as Fiat paper in the North during and after the Civil War. Yet, in California, the people refused to accept the greenbacks and continued to use gold as their money. Later when the Gold standard was abandoned the government forced the people to accept the Fiat currency.

With Fiat money the way is clear for the government to counterfeit money (ie create new money out of thin air). It can issue new notes at will to pay off government debts, start new projects, pay government employees and use it for any other government expenditure. It is a source of revenue that is unnoticed by the public and less hostile compared to

taxation. Counterfeiting is nothing but another name for inflation.

When governments increase the supply of money then the purchasing power of that money drops, that is, the price of all goods rise. As for any commodity the price rises and falls with demand (increasing the supply will reduce the demand). This is the same with currency; the purchasing power of money rises and falls with demand. For example, if there are \$100 in a society and there are 100 goods (e.g. TVs) then \$1 will buy 1 good (TV). Then if the state prints another \$100 for some government project, there will be now \$200 chasing 100 goods so people will be willing to pay more for the same goods as there is more money in circulation; the price of each item (TV) will be forced up to \$2. Increasing the supply of money decreases the demand and hence the purchasing power, which leads to a rise in prices. The obstacle preventing the government from printing more and more money is the threat of hyperinflation, the crack-up of the currency.

#### The impact of inflation on the economy

The government uses the newly created money to buy goods and services, giving local spending a boost. As the new money starts to work its way, step by step, throughout the economic system it bids prices up which in turn dilutes the effectiveness of each unit of currency. But this dilution takes time and is therefore uneven; in the meantime, some people gain and other people lose. In short, the counterfeiters (the government) and their local retailers have found their incomes increased before any rise in the prices of the things they buy. But, on the other hand, people in remote areas of the economy, who have not yet received the new money, find their buying prices rising before their incomes. The first receivers of the new money gain most, and at the expense of the later receivers. Inflation, then, confers no general social benefit; instead, it redistributes the wealth in favour of the first-comers and at the expense of the laggards in the race. And inflation is, in effect, a race-to see who can get the new money earliest. The latecomers-the ones stuck with the loss-are often called the 'fixed income groups.' Ministers, teachers, people on salaries, lag notoriously behind other groups in acquiring the new money. Particular sufferers will be those depending on fixed money contracts-contracts made in the days before the inflationary rise in prices. Retired persons living off pensions, landlords with long-term leases, creditors,

those holding cash or savings in an account, all will bear the brunt of inflation.

Inflation has other disastrous effects. It distorts that keystone of the economy – business calculation

Since prices do not all change uniformly and at the same speed, it becomes very difficult for business to separate the lasting from the transitional, and gauge truly the demands of consumers or the cost of their operations. For example, accounting practice enters the “cost” of an asset at the amount the business has paid for it. But if inflation intervenes, the cost of replacing the asset when it wears out will be far greater than that recorded on the books. As a result, business accounting will seriously overstate their profits during inflationary times -and may even consume capital while presumably increasing their investments.

Inflation cannot go on forever - at first, when prices rise, people say; “Well, this is abnormal, the product of some temporary emergency. I will postpone my purchases and wait until prices go back down.” This is the common attitude during the first phase of inflation. This notion moderates the price rise itself, and conceals the inflation further, since the demand for money is thereby increased. But as inflation proceeds, people begin to realise that prices are going up perpetually as a result of perpetual inflation. Now people will say; “I will buy now, though prices are ‘high,’ because if I wait, prices will go up still further.” As a result, the demand for money now falls and prices go up more, proportionately, than the increase in the money supply. At this point, the government is often called upon to “relieve the money shortage” caused by the accelerated price rise, and it inflates even faster. Soon, the country reaches the stage of the “crack-up boom” when people say; “I must buy anything now-anything to get rid of money which depreciates in my hands.” The supply of money skyrockets, the demand plummets, and prices rise astronomically. Production falls sharply, as people spend more and more of their time finding ways to get rid of their money. The monetary system has, in effect, broken down completely, and the economy reverts to other moneys, if they are attainable - other metal, foreign currencies if this is a one-country inflation, or even a return to barter conditions. The monetary system has broken down under the impact of inflation (hyperinflation).

There is another factor feeding inflation, as the printing of new money leads to devaluation of the currency in relation to other currencies. The cost of imported goods greatly increases; this has a major impact on those countries which are not industrialised and are not self sufficient, as they are heavily dependent on foreign goods such as machinery for manufacturing, farming, building roads and railways, building ships, tanks, planes, etc. Due to IMF policies of specialisation most Islamic countries need to import food as they only specialise in certain crops. Also most of the Muslim countries tend to import electrical goods or manufacture them locally by importing their parts. Electrical goods such as refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioning units, irons, cookers, etc. will all rise in price. The rise in price of these imported good will all feed the inflation and speed up the process to hyperinflation

Fiat currency: A source of government revenue

The revenue that governments gain from printing money, accounted for approximately 54 per cent of total Argentine government revenues between 1985 and 1990, reaching a period high of 86 per cent in 1987. The Argentine public, not wishing to hold a depreciating monetary asset, shifted out of pesos and into US dollars. To protect its revenue base, Argentina’s government resisted unofficial dollarization, but often the form of the resistance - capital controls, for instance - compounded the inefficiencies associated with monetary instability.

The printing of currency remained probably the single most important source of state revenue for Afghanistan. Banknotes printed under first contract in Russia and then by the American Banknote Company continued to be delivered weekly to the Rabbani government. The resulting devaluation of the Afghani and inflation were so severe that the government introduced new currency notes. Under Najibullah the official exchange rate had been af. 50 to the dollar, and the largest bill was the af. 1,000 note. By the summer of 1991, the Afghani was trading at about 1,000 to the dollar, and it continued to fall. The Rabbani government issued first a 5,000 and then a 10,000 Afghani note. Each time it did so the currency fell further. Hikmatyar forbade the use of the af. 10,000 note in bazaars under his control. The former communist ethnic Uzbek warlord of Northern Afghanistan, Abdul Rashid Dostum, had his own notes printed after breaking with Rabbani in January 1994.

By September 1996, when Kabul fell to the Taliban, the Afghani was trading at 17,800 to the dollar there. Furthermore, the Afghani was worth even less (25,600/dollar) in Dostum's de facto capital, Mazar-i Sharif.

The currency in circulation in Pakistan showed an average growth rate of 10.6 per cent during the five-year period from 1991-92 to 1995-96. During this period the government gained revenue of 97.173 billion rupees from just issuing extra notes and coins.

In the time of war, nobody will accept paper currency as there is no confidence in the government, therefore the promise of the government has no value. The Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, said on 20th May 1999 to the House Banking Committee soon after Britain announced its decision to sell gold that - 'gold still represents the ultimate form of payment in the world'. Germany in 1944 could buy materials during the war only with gold. Fiat money in extremes is accepted by nobody. Gold is always accepted.

As stated earlier the Fiat currency only holds a legal imposed value. It does not possess an intrinsic value, nor does it depend on an intrinsic value. It merely represents a unit that has been agreed upon as a means of circulation, and it is the law that gives it the power to become a means of circulation. That is a form of common exchange that allows a person to acquire goods and services. Its power is derived from the power of the state who issues it and who uses it as its currency. So, if the state demonstrates a sign of weakness politically, militarily or economically then this will weaken the currency. This will then lead to currency devaluation, if the central bank does not intervene. An example of this is Turkey in February 2001 when the government showed political weakness and the currency devalued by 30 per cent. Any instability in the country that leads to a lack of confidence in the government will start the devaluation of the currency.

Although some major problems associated with Fiat standardisation have been outlined here, this does not mean that standardisation is itself problematic. In point of fact standardisation is paramount to any monetary system. The problem lies with the choice of reference as a standard. The nebulous concept of Fiat is actually a quasi-standard. A standard must contain some form of intrinsic value. This would lead to

stability in the economy and avoid inflation. Gold and/or silver as a reference point fulfil such a robust standard. This bimetallic standard has been tried and tested for centuries. Past economies have not been at the mercy of the booms and busts of the Fiat system. Islamic law is based entirely on this bimetallic reference point. Our laws, measurements, taxes, compensation payments, etc. all were revealed to Rasoolallah ﷺ using gold and silver as the standard. The solid Islamic bimetallic system contrasts sharply to the paper-thin flimsy Fiat system. Moreover, it is not only more stable but is it an obligation from Islam to return back to the Islamic currency of gold and silver.

#### The gold standard

The two metals, gold and silver, have been used as a medium of exchange for centuries. This medium of exchange is referred to as money. Currently the only currency used in the world is that of the Fiat form of standardisation. This Fiat standard results in a currency with an arbitrarily assigned value and without any tangible backing. Although Fiat predominates in the world today gold still has an important role to play. The importance of gold may appear to be latent, but close scrutiny of political and economic affairs exposes issues related to gold in the global economy. Attempts have been made to completely eradicate the significance of gold in monetary terms. This is a process known as demonetisation. Recently, there have been several attempts at demonetising gold. Certain landmark incidences are reviewed here. This discussion is an attempt to shed light on the role of gold in the recent past, present and future.

On 15 August 1971 the convertibility of gold into dollars, for official holders, was suspended. Ever since World War I the capitalist nations and their financial institutions have persistently marginalised gold as a currency. They have worked to demonetise gold. The importance of gold can be appreciated by analysing economic events of the last three decades. There has been a downturn in the prices of gold, which was triggered by the sale of gold by central banks. By contrast we find that, within official sectors, gold reserves have only declined by 6%.

In 1999, at a fringe meeting of the IMF/World Bank Annual Meeting in Washington, a historic five-point agreement was reached. 15 European

central banks (including ECB) declared their allegiance to the idea of gold in the economy. The communiqué which was read out by Mr Wim Duisenberg, President of the European Central Bank stated;

“Gold will remain an important element of global monetary reserves. The above institutions will not enter the market as sellers, with the exception of already decided sales. The gold sales already decided will be achieved through a concerted programme of sales over the next five years. Annual sales will not exceed approximately 400 tons and total sales over this period will not exceed 2,000 tons. The signatories to this agreement have agreed not to expand their gold leasings and their use of gold futures and options over this period. This agreement will be reviewed after five years.”

Although it was a European agreement, it was put together through the Group of Ten central bank governors who meet regularly in Basle, Switzerland, on a monthly basis. Japan and the US who were part of the G10, supported this agreement. In fact, Japan announced on 27th September 1999 that she too would not be selling or lending gold. The US announced, in May 1999, that neither the US nor the IMF would be selling or lending gold.

This agreement covers nearly 50 per cent of the world's official gold holdings as the 15 signatories collectively hold approximately 16,000 tonnes (including the 2,000 to be sold by 2005) out of the world total official holdings of 33,500 tonnes. Also by 2005 UK and Sweden might be either in or preparing to be in the Euro, thus bringing their reserves under ECB control. The Euro as a result will have equal if not greater gold “backing” than the US dollar.

Writing in 1923 to reject the arguments to return to a gold standard, John Maynard Keynes stated in his, *Tract on Monetary Reform*, “The value of gold has not depended on the policy or the decision of a single body of men; and a sufficient proportion of the supply has been able to find its way, without any flooding of the market, into the Arts or into the hoards of Asia for its marginal value to be governed by a steady psychological estimation of the metal in relation to other things. This is what is meant by saying that gold has “intrinsic value” and is free from the dangers of a “managed” currency.”

These statements highlight an important point, which has been known for centuries. That is, even before Islam, gold was known to have an “intrinsic value” and it was (and still is) well suited for use as a currency. The Fiat currency standard was introduced by the colonialist nations to manipulate the world currency markets and serve as one of its tools for economic colonisation. The fact that these colonialist nations still hold vast gold reserves and are signing agreements not to sell or lease the gold indicate that the Fiat currency standard is nothing but a tool of the colonialists. They suspect that the gold standard will one day return. It was stated in an article on the Internet site [www.ncpa.org](http://www.ncpa.org), “experts in global finance are suggesting adoption of a global gold standard as the best way to restore and perpetuate the world's financial stability. They point out that developing nations are opting to withdraw from the global economy and abandon free-market Capitalism”. Also we find that in June 2001 Russia started to issue gold coins as legal tender and it has started selling dollars and building its gold reserves. The re-emergence of the interest in gold is clear. This is mainly due to the manifest benefits of using the gold standard.

When a state adopts the gold standard it uses the gold currency in its foreign and domestic transactions. It uses the gold standard even if it used paper currency, as long as the paper currency can be exchanged for gold and this exchange is fixed ie a specific unit of paper currency can be exchanged for a specific amount of gold.

The benefits of the gold standard

The bimetallic standard would bring stability to the exchange rates between countries, as gold and silver cannot be manipulated like the Fiat currency. This will increase international trade and reduce trade barriers. Businesses that are dependent on imported commodities do not have to fear that these commodities will become too expensive as a result of their currency devaluing. Businesses that export their products do not fear their commodities becoming too expensive for the destined countries as a result of the increase in value of their currency. An example of this is the Argentinean peso that was pegged to the dollar. This increased the trade between Argentina and the US since the exchange rate was fixed by an Argentinean currency board. But as Argentina also exported about 30% of its products to Brazil when the value of the dollar rose so did the

peso and hence the Argentinean products became too expensive for the Brazilians. This severely impacted the trade between Argentina and other countries that were not pegged to the dollar. This artificial fixing of the exchange rate only benefited the US as we can see from the continuing crisis in Argentina. Also with the Fiat currencies, businesses used to buy financial instrument (hedge) to protect themselves from the fluctuation in the exchange rate. This added further costs to businesses involved in foreign trade.

It would remove the problem of inflation, as gold is a scarce commodity. The money supply cannot be increased at the will or whim of a government. The prices of goods and services may still increase as a result of gold coming into the state due to a high level of exports. This increase is likely to be minimal and temporary as the inflow of gold is due to trade and there is real wealth coming into the state. This will lead to economic growth, which would mean more goods and services are available, which would counterbalance the extra gold coming into the state. As long as the state allows the free circulation of gold (ie import and export) then there will be financial and economic stability. This can be understood if we consider the two scenarios.

(i) Gold going out of the state due to high levels of imported goods and services.

This leads to prices of goods and services in the state becoming cheaper as there is less money (gold) in circulation. So the people will be more attracted to the local cheaper goods and services, as long as the state has a policy of self-sufficiency and is industrialised. This will reduce the demand for the imported goods and reduce the outflow of gold from the state. As the goods and services are cheaper within the state then this will increase the exports as they have a competitive advantage compared to foreign goods and services.

(ii) Gold coming into the state due to high level of goods and services exported.

This is where gold is being imported into the state and this is likely to drive up prices in the short term as the supply of money has increased in the state, but it is likely to be minimal as the inflow of gold is likely to be

staggered. Also the inflow is due to increase in real trade, which will lead to economic growth as wealth is coming into the state. This means there will be an increase in goods and services and this will reduce the rise in prices. If the local goods and services within the state continue to have high prices then people will favour the foreign goods and service ie there will be an increase in imports. This will reduce the money supply within the state and hence will begin to drive down prices.

Today international trade is hindered because of the lack of hard currencies. Many of the currencies are considered too weak and volatile for international trade. Globally, most transactions are carried out in US dollars. However, even in times of war the dollar is not stable, since it is only a Fiat currency having no intrinsic value. It is only gold (and silver) that is truly a stable currency. It is only through the bimetallic standard that these barriers to international trade can be removed.

These are some of the advantages of using the gold standard. If any state today adopted this standard, it could very quickly become a global standard. However, it is unlikely that any state today will adopt this standard as the economies of most of the nations today are dominated by the capitalist nations and it is not in their interest to adopt such a standard. It is only the Islamic State, carrying the ideology of Islam, which will adopt such a standard. Moreover, the Shari'ah has made it an obligation to implement the gold (or silver) standard. When the Islamic State comes it will adopt the gold and silver bimetallic standard, thus transforming the current international money markets and free the world from the dominance of the capitalist nations (insha-Allah).

## Educational Imperialism

What is useful knowledge?

The acquisition and dissemination of ‘useful’ knowledge is the goal of any education system. Knowledge considered useful to the capitalist is worlds apart from knowledge considered useful to the Muslim. Islam has a particular view of life, which differs vastly from that of Capitalism. These differing attitudes to life produce the main differences between the two education systems.

Creed defines what is ‘useful’

The world we live in is not the be-all and end-all of our existence. Allah ﷻ says,

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

“And I (Allah) created not the jinns and humans except that they should worship Me (Alone).” [TMQ Al-Dhariyat: 56]

Our mere existence is to strive to attain Allah’s ﷻ pleasure. It is our good deeds that please Allah ﷻ. All our actions are geared towards reaping the benefits in the next life and not this life. In order to perform deeds to the best of our ability, thus gaining Allah’s ﷻ maximum pleasure, we should acquire some understanding of this world.

capitalists turn their attentions to this life. They consider ideas of an afterlife as personal philosophy to be taken or left. The raison d’être of the capitalist becomes to achieve in this world as much as possible. A good action is considered that which brings worldly benefits, regardless of the hereafter. They too feel it necessary to understand this world. However, it would be purely for worldly benefits.

Many rituals require the state of ablution, wudu. It is obligatory to know how to make wudu. Furthermore, it is obligatory to know; what constitutes wudu, what nullifies wudu, which actions require wudu and for which actions it is recommended to have wudu etc. These things are second nature to most of us. However, at some stage we were taught them. This is considered useful knowledge; it benefits us in the hereafter. Aspects of tahara (purification) are considered essential parts of an Islamic education. In contrast, the non-Muslim would find no benefit in reading a chapter entitled, “The four causes of minor ritual impurity (hadath)”. Similarly a Muslim would find no benefit in knowing that white wine is drunk with fish and red wine with meat.

Islamic knowledge is seen in worldly issues, as well as in issues related to ritual worship.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ  
وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“O you who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination - of Satan’s handwork; eschew such (abomination), that you may prosper.” [TMQ Al-Ma’idah: 90]

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ narrated that Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((كل مسكر خمر ، و كل مسكر حرام))

**“Every intoxicant is khamr and every intoxicant is prohibited. Alcohol and gambling are both prohibited.”**

To know what constitutes gambling, it may be necessary to gain certain knowledge. For example to conclude that lotteries are gambling, one must first know what the lottery entails. Thus, the Muslim must have knowledge of the haram in order to know where, when and how to avoid them. Intoxicants are forbidden. We need to know which things we may come across that are actually forbidden for us to approach - for example, marijuana, cocaine and heroin to name but a few. It may seem ironic, but we can benefit in the hereafter by studying the haram things. That is if we study them in order to recognise and avoid them.

‘Useful’ knowledge throughout history

Throughout Islamic history, culture and civilisation revealed phenomena that were directly linked to our creed. The same could be said of Western civilisation. There are developments that stem from their insatiable desire to have mastership of this world. In the field of navigation, Muslims were always well accomplished. Muslims had established astronomical observatories, produced elaborate charts and concluded that the planets follow elliptical orbits, long before their counterparts in the West. The main hindrance to Western explorations was the lack of navigational skills. They feared sailing too far away from the sight of shore. It wasn’t until the advent of the magnetic compass that they ventured out to sea. The achievements of the Muslims stemmed from something simple, normal and mundane. This was, the desire to find the Qibla for prayer. Muslims learnt to read the pole star not only for navigation but also for the sake of finding the Qibla, thus translating the concerns of this world to the concerns of the next world. Most Muslims today would have developed a sixth sense for orienting themselves in relation to Makkah. Islam encourages us to travel for trade and/or to spread Islam; these all require navigation. Rasoolallah told us that the tourism of the Muslim is Jihad. Indeed the knowledge required to fight Jihad efficiently spawned many technologies and innovations.

The subject of tahara gave rise to many aspects of knowledge and culture. These include the design of houses, mosques, public wash facilities and many aspects of technology related to hygiene. Cleanliness and hygiene were, and remain, essential parts of our culture and education, as well as being essential for public health. Indeed, the Spanish Inquisitors were riled by the cleanliness of Muslims. They found the best way to detect whether new converts to Christianity were keeping their old Islamic habits was by checking the condition of their facilities. The achievements of Muslims were not exceptionally brilliant; rather they were plain and ordinary. That is because they were born of basic actions that we are all required to perform.

Similarly, worldly knowledge is required to understand trading and a whole host of transactions and worships. The hadith books are filled with measurements in weights and volumes. These are in reference to rituals like the fortieth to be paid for annual Zakat, the volume of cereal

to be paid for Zakat al-Fitr and also in reference to transactions like the quantities of gold and silver, ie our currency. Muslims are required to understand elements of basic and advanced arithmetic as well as concepts of proportionality and quantification. This would not be to perform fast Fourier transform in FORTRAN, manufacture missiles or even to program in PASCAL, but to divide inheritance, pay Zakat and buy bread and share out meat from the Aqiqah. In addition to the above examples we must learn some basic elements of the Shari’ah. Preferably we should learn the related verses of Qur’an and ahadith - these being the so-called ‘traditional’ aspects of Islamic education.

A student doctor may learn a drug’s basic form, its mode of action, its recommended dose regime, its indications and contraindications. All this is academic knowledge. What makes it ‘useful’ is how he uses it. He may intend to use this knowledge to treat patients purely for the sake of treating patients, or for the prestige of being a doctor, or because it is his job. However, it may be purely for the sake of pleasing Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ has allowed this profession and we are all encouraged to help the sick. The student doctor is rewarded merely for learning. The same principle should be applied on everything. A wife may learn a new recipe for the sake of pleasing her husband, because Allah ﷻ recommends that. She is rewarded for learning the recipe. These examples may not be considered ‘traditional Islamic’ education but they are indeed snippets of information from which we may gain reward.

All of this is underpinned with the knowledge of the revelation. The ‘traditional’ subjects of Qur’an, Hadith, Seerah, Tajweed, calligraphy etc. must also be studied. These are not extra subjects. They are interwoven into every aspect of all education, as well as being disciplines in their own right. A true Islamic system would have no religious studies. It is secular to see religious knowledge separate from worldly knowledge. For a similar reason we would not have a department of religious affairs in the Islamic Khilafah.

The system of excesses

The secular creed puts emphasis on this world. This becomes self-consuming capitalist nations find difficulty in putting things into proportion. They end up obsessively chasing their own tails. This is

described beautifully in the hadith of Rasoolallah ﷺ,

((لو كان لابن آدم واديان من ذهب لأحب أن يكون له

ثالث، ولا يملأ جوف ابن آدم إلا التراب، ويتوب الله

علي من تاب))

**“If the son of Adam was given a valley full of gold he will always want a second. If he has two valleys full of gold he will always want a third.”** [Bukhari]

These principles mould their attitude to everything, education included. Education is either geared to production and generation of money for the sake of this world, or to art and culture that is the mere worship of the aesthetics of this world. Students are encouraged to memorise to excesses in order to pass exams and impress tutors and peers in tutor groups etc. These excesses bring with them many problems. Suicide is common among students, as is drinking to excess. Anti-depressives drugs and/or counselling are a normal part of life on campus. The abased environment in colleges, schools and universities is easily recognised and avoided. However, there are more subtle ways in which Muslims may be fooled. That is to become obsessed with studying, Muslims can put their whole life on hold for three years whilst they immerse themselves in biochemistry or business studies books.

The nature of the system in practice stems from the secular creed. capitalist countries become certificate-based societies and not true meritocracies as they claim.

Capitalism and Islam in the context of knowledge differ in how they both define useful knowledge. The criterion of Islam is that useful knowledge is that which will help us in the hereafter. We should reject the philosophy of Capitalism, and their philosophy of education, and their system of excesses. Everything we learn should be for the hereafter. We may be rewarded purely for learning. That does not mean learning traditional Islamic knowledge only. It may be the learning of the clinical pharmacokinetics of ketoprofen or the Sunnah of Aqiqah, provided they are both for the sake of Allah ﷻ.

Importance of Arabic language

The importance of the Arabic language cannot be overstated. The language of Arabic is the gateway to understanding the revealed Islamic texts. It is the tool by which scholars understand the words of Allah ﷻ. It is the means by which we understand, with clarity, the true meaning of Islam and in turn the true meaning of life itself.

Allah ﷻ chose Arabic for the final revelation to humankind

The Qur'an is the word of Allah ﷻ that was revealed to Rasoolallah ﷺ who gave utterance to it. The Qur'an depicts the Supreme power of Allah ﷻ over all creation. It relates to us the narratives of the older Prophets (Qassas al-Anbiyah), the history of humankind, the mysteries of the universe and the metaphysics of this world. It describes for us why we were placed in this dunya in the first instance, and following this, it relates to us the code of life best suited for humankind to live by. The Qur'an did not come solely to correct the Bani Israil nor the Bishops of Christ, nor the Bedouins, nor the blasphemers nor the beggars. It came for the whole of humankind. It was not revealed in Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew or Latin; it was revealed in Arabic.

﴿وَأَنَّهُ لَنَتَرِيْلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ \* نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِيْنُ \* عَلٰى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِيْنَ \* بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُّبِيْنٍ﴾

*“Verily this is a Revelation from the Lord of the Worlds; With it came down the spirit of faith and truth to your heart and mind - (in order) that you may admonish - in the perspicuous Arabic tongue.”* [TMQ Ash-Shu'ara: 192-195]

﴿وَكَذٰلِكَ اَنْزَلْنَاهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا وَلَنُنَبِّئَنَّ﴾

*“Thus, have We sent it down as an Arabic law.”* [TMQ Ar-Ra'd: 37]

﴿حَم \* وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِيْنِ \* اِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآَنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ﴾



“Ha-Mim, By the Book that makes things clear. We have made it a Qur’an in Arabic, that you may be able to understand (and learn wisdom).” [TMQ Az-Zukhruf: 1-3]

﴿قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عَوْجٍ لِّعَلَّهِمْ يَتَّقُونَ﴾

“(It is) a Qur’an in Arabic, without any crookedness (therein); in order that they may guard against Evil.” [TMQ Az-Zumar: 28]

﴿حَوْلَهَا وَتُنذِرَ يَوْمَ الْجَمْعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ فَرِيقٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيقٌ فِي السَّعِيرِ﴾

“Thus, have We sent by inspiration to you an Arabic Qur’an; that you may warn the Mother of Cities and all around her.” [TMQ Ash-Shura: 7]

The mere fact that Allah ﷻ informed us within the Qur’an that this Qur’an is Arabic should lead us to consider Arabic to be extremely important in Islam. Further to this we should remember that this final revelation was not only for people of a particular region, tribe or generation, it was for all humankind. This point has to be reconciled with the fact that this revelation was actually received by a relatively small community that spoke Arabic only and not received, initially, by the whole of humankind.

﴿وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَجَمِيًّا لَقَالُوا لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ أَأَعْجَمِيٌّ وَعَرَبِيٌّ قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءً وَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ فِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرٌ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى أُولَٰئِكَ يُنَادُونَ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ﴾

“Had We sent this as a Qur’an (in the language) other than Arabic, they would have said; ‘Why are not its verses explained in detail? What! (a Book) not in Arabic and (a Messenger) an Arab?’ Say; ‘It is a Guide and a Healing to those who believe; and for those who believe not, there is a deafness in their ears, and it is blindness in their (eyes); They are (as it were) being called from a place far distant!’” [TMQ

Fussilat: 44]

﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ﴾

“We sent not an apostle except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people, in order to make (things) clear to them.” [TMQ Ibrahim: 4]

This should emphasise the fact that Allah ﷻ chose this language over others. There is within this some wisdom, that it is the most appropriate language for conveying the deen with clarity not only to Arabs but also to all humans.

Arabic is the only language in the Qur’an

Every single word of the Qur’an is Arabic. There are a few isolated words that by origin are from foreign languages. Examples are “sijil” meaning baked clay [Hijr: 74], “qistas” meaning scales [Al-Isra: 35] and “ghassaq” meaning intense cold [An-Naba: 25]. Etymologically these are Persian, Turkish and Greek respectively. These words are however ‘Arabised’. That means that the morphology of these words is completely compatible with the grammatical structure of Arabic. Each word exists in forms in accordance with the forms (taf’ila) of the Arabic language. They would therefore be compliant with the same basic rules applied to ancient Arabic words. These words were also in general usage amongst the Arabs, way before the revelation of the Qur’an.

Effect of Qur’an on Arabic language

The people of the Peninsula before Islam had several dialects; however the dialect of Quraish was familiar to all the Arabs due to their participation in the pilgrimage and the ‘Ukaz fair and others. The advent of Islam brought a standardisation of Arabic. Dialects such as Tamim, Qays, Himyar and others gradually disappeared. The Qur’an helped develop and enrich Arabic in many ways. This is especially the case with the introduction of new meanings to words that now had clear and specific nuances. Jahiliyyah, which means pre-Islam, is an example of such words - other words included Salat, Siyam, Mu’min, Kafir, Fasiq and Munafiq etc. Various legal terms were also introduced into Arabic from the Qur’an; examples are al-li’an, al-zihar, al-iddah and al-hadhanah.

Countless other terms have been introduced into Arabic from the various disciplines within the general culture of Islam. Several other sciences actually emerged from the study of the Qur'an. These included recitation, interpretation, grammar, rhetoric and jurisprudence.

Miracle of Qur'an

Abu Hurairah narrated that Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((ما من نبي من الأنبياء إلا أعطي من الآيات ما مثله آمن عليه البشر. وإنما كان الذي أوتيته وحيا أوحاه الله إلي، فأرجو أن أكون أكثرهم تابعا يوم القيامة))

**“Every Prophet was given miracles, because of which people believed. What I have been given is divine inspiration which Allah has revealed to me so I hope that my followers will outnumber the followers of the other Prophets on the Day of Resurrection.”**

The period of Jahiliyyah saw the Arabs achieve high literacy and brilliance in poetry. It was an era of excellence for language and a pitiful period for morals and conduct. Although these Arabs produced masterpieces of prose, they had certain weaknesses making their works profoundly meaningful. Each poet would excel in only one genre. For example Zuhayr bin Abi Sulma was known in the field of rhetoric, Imru'al Qays produced descriptions of youth, and 'Antarah excelled in descriptions of bravery and celebrations of love.

Islam introduced a form of literature that was new to the Arabs. The Qur'an was not poetry or Khutba or the speech of the kaahin (soothsayer). Instead it was a type of prose that astonished and perplexed the Quraish. The quality excelled in its rhetoric, tone, style, and meaning. Its recitation moved the hearts of listeners and convinced them of its message. Many of the enemies of Islam recognised the quality of the Qur'an. 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah once said, “By God I have never heard such a speech before, it is neither poem nor the saying of a kaahin.” Al Walid ibn Mughirah exclaimed that the Qur'an was truly beautiful and that

nothing could surpass it. More importantly he concluded that it was not the work of a human.

It is known that Abu Sufyan, Abu Jahl, and Akhnas would sneak out in the middle of the night and listen at a safe distance to the Rasoolallah ﷺ reciting Qur'an. They would sometimes remain in a transfixed state all night listening to the prose of the revelation. Some however had a different take on the Qur'an. In order to discredit it they pronounced that the Qur'an was the mere invention of Rasoolallah ﷺ himself. Thereafter, Allah ﷻ challenged the Quraish to produce a handful of chapters like it.

﴿أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِّثْلِهِ مُفْتَرِيَاتٍ وَادْعُوا مَن اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“Or they may say, ‘He forged it.’ Say, ‘Then you bring ten Surahs forged like it, and call (to your aid) whomsoever you can, other than Allah - If you speak the truth!’” [TMQ Hud: 13]

When they failed Allah ﷻ reduced the challenge to just one Surah.

﴿وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُوْرَةٍ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

“And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a Surah like it; and call your witnesses or helpers (If there are any) besides Allah, if your (doubts) are true.” [TMQ Al-Baqarah: 23]

Later, some of the Arabs tried to compose verses in the style of the Qur'an, such as Musaylamah the Liar, but his pathetic attempt became a mockery. Some of those who were staunch opponents of Islam had their hearts turned in response to hearing the Qur'an, such as Umar ibn al-Khattab and Jubayr bin Mut'am ﷺ. Among the Sahabah ﷺ that were previously poets in Jahiliyyah period were Labid and Khansa. Labid once said, “Allah has given me the Qur'an in exchange for poetry.”

## Ijtihad

The process of extracting the law from the texts of Islam is termed Ijtihad. This weighty task may only be performed by those that are fully qualified, the Mujtahideen. The main skill of the Mujtahid lies with his ability to comprehend clearly situations in the affairs of life and also in his ability to comprehend the Islamic texts. The understanding of the shades of meaning of words, grammatical construction and explanations from other texts, are all essential for the understanding of the sources of Islam. A superficial knowledge of the language of Islam is by no means sufficient to attain the in-depth comprehension necessary to extract law. The first requirement of the Mujtahid is the possession of the Arabic tongue.

The process of Ijtihad in real terms is what actually brings Islam to life. That is, it allows the laws that are written in the Islamic texts to be lived by us in our day-to-day affairs. This animation of the text can only be brought with the aid of the Arabic language.

## Nature of the Arabic language

Arabic is almost unique in its grammatical structure and its ability to express issues clearly with a tremendous economy of words. It is precise in the construction of phrases and sentences and even the very word structure themselves. The concept of roots is central to word structure. Regular verbs are made up of three and sometimes four consonant letters - for example K-T-B (kataba, he wrote). This root verb may then be fully conjugated as with any verb in any language. This verb may also be used with several elaborate tenses, moods and inflections not present in most languages. So kataba (he wrote) may be converted to kutiba (it has been written), yaktubu (he writes), kaatib (writing/writer) and maktoob (written), to mention a few. This root can also be converted into several derivatives and verbal nouns; for example Kitab (the thing that is written ie a book), maktab (place of writing ie office or library) or Kaatib (the man that writes, a scribe). Following this root structure a term such as the modern word for bookshop, maktaba, can be traced back to the very simple word K-T-B, he wrote.

Roots, etymology and source meanings and derivatives are the essence

of the Arabic language. They are the means by which concepts, objects and principles can be described in words. New words do not necessarily have to be borrowed from other languages. If experts excel in the search for Arabic words, the whole Ummah may excel in Arabic. Words incompatible with the grammar of Arabic must, not under any circumstances be allowed into Arabic. In the long and short term this action will corrupt the language and weaken its usage. This topic is way beyond any summary that can be presented in this book. There are many more convincing evidences to prove that Arabic has the innate capability of describing situations and adapting to new events without ever violating its structural basis. Thus, it is a perfect language for legislation and the conveying of concepts that is not adversely affected by the passage of time. We should bear in mind how important the preservation of the Arabic language is to Muslims. This is not only in terms of maintaining the lexicology but also the knowledge of the word morphology, etymology, syntax, semantics and rhetoric.

The Sahabah ﷺ understood the importance of Arabic well. Umar ibn Khattab ﷺ once asked about the meaning of a word in the Qur'an while he was on the Minbar. A Bedouin stood up and recited a piece of poetry that explained the meaning of that word. Umar ﷺ then advised Muslims to take good care of poetry (of that era) because it contained the explanation of Qur'anic words. Such care continued to be given to the Arabic language even after the Sahabah ﷺ. Most poetry selection, grammar and other aspects were recorded by Muslim generations after the Sahabah ﷺ. Due to such efforts we are able to refer to Qur'an and Sunnah in the present time. Naturally, such reference is restricted and guided by the rules of understanding the Arabic language and those given by the Shari'ah, which are contained in Usul ul-Fiqh.

The strength of the Islamic Ummah is with the understanding of Islam, and the gateway to it is through the Arabic language. Therefore, the strength in Arabic is necessary for a strong Islamic Ummah.

## Language, culture and politics

*"What words mean few can say, but with words we govern men."*  
[Benjamin Disraeli]

Language is the means by which humans convey concepts and thoughts to one another. Be this person to person, place to place or from period to period. As humans our actions and behaviour are directly or indirectly controlled by the concepts we carry. Our beliefs are the single most important factor governing our behaviour. We debate, accept, reject, refute and adopt our concepts through the medium of language. Therefore, language is paramount in forging concepts and their dissemination. The subject of language therefore touches all aspects of life, especially politics. It has been the driving force behind the decline and the rise of many nations and civilisations.

### Language and culture

Language is inextricably linked to the culture associated with it. There are currently over 5,000 languages in the world today. This high number reflects the diversity of global cultures. The ability to communicate through language is a divine trait (qadr) that Allah ﷻ instilled in humans.

﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ  
أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ﴾

*“And He taught Adam the names of all things; then He placed them before the angels, and said; ‘Tell me the names of these if you are right.’” [TMQ Al-Baqara: 31]*

Western philosophy has its own disparate views on the origin of language, As with most issues in Western philosophy they have focused mainly on discussing how we developed language rather than acknowledging that it is qadr. On one extreme it is thought that humans come into the world as a tabula rasa (blank page) and we build up our vocabulary word-by-word based on experiences. This Operant Conditioning Theory is based on the observations of how animals behave in the laboratory. The opposite of this is the idea that, from birth, we have an innate capacity for language learning. The building blocks (without the actual words) of language are in-built. Thus, knowledge of how we are to arrange words in a structured systematic manner is in-built. Again I must reiterate that although Western philosophers may argue over whys and wherefores, we should accept that it is qadr [a divine

quality that Allah ﷻ instils] that we are able to use language.

Environment and predominant culture have a distinct relationship to language. For example, according to the current Inuit Eskimo Dictionary there is in excess-of 30 words for snow in Eskimo, whereas Aztec employs a single term for the concepts of snow, cold, and ice. Similarly Arabic has several terms for dates (in various stages of ripeness, quality and region of origin). In English there are many formal words for; money, intoxicating beverages and the act of copulation. However, in colloquial English the number of synonyms are almost un-quantifiable. This is an indication of the high status assigned to liquid - assets, liquor, and lust in English speaking cultures.

No one language is superior to another. All languages have the same basic components of verb (V), subject (S) and object (O). Although they differ in their arrangement e.g. VSO “eat cows grass” (Classical Arabic), SVO, “cows eat grass” (English) and SOV “cows grass eat” (Hindi/Urdu) etc. Linguists have categorised them broadly in to categories with several sub-categories e.g. Indo-European (Germanic, Romance and Slavic) and Afro-Asiatic etc. Arabic and Hebrew come under the category of Semitic languages, a subdivision of Afro-Asiatic.

The Indo-European culture is widely reflected in the various Indo-European languages. It is though that 4,000 years ago there was a diaspora of Indo-Europeans from the Caspian and Black Sea areas. They spread in tribes; southeast to Persia and India, southwest to Greece, Italy and Spain, westward to Central Europe and north to Eastern Europe and Russia and northwest to Scandinavia. All these tribes had the same culture and similar languages. Thus, the Indian Veda scripts, Greek philosophy and Norse mythologies are all written in related languages. Common to all these cultures are the beliefs in polytheism and pantheism. This is the belief that a divine being is present in all things in nature and that humans can become at one with that deity through meditation and spiritual ascension. Transmigration of the soul, and the separation of the soul from the body are central themes in; Hinduism, Buddhism, Persian and Graeco-Roman philosophies. The Vikings called their gods Aser, the Persians Ahura and in Sanskrit Asura. These words Asear, Ahura and Asura are dialectal variants of the same word. The same commonality is found in the words for a Supreme Being in Sanskrit, Persian, Latin and

Old Norse; deva, daeva, deus, and tivurr respectively. These same beliefs were held by the Persians, hence the Pagan Arabs of Jahiliyyah had an affinity for the Persians. Indo-Europeans believed in “insight” as meaning having an inner understanding of an issue. In Sanskrit the word vidya is the same as the Greek word idea and the Latin word Video. In Indo-European culture the visual sense has always been linked to knowledge and understanding. They have a distinct bias over the other four senses. Hence in English the term “I see” is synonymous with “I understand”. Christianity in origin came from the Middle East. However, when it spread to Europe it was changed to suit the beliefs of the Europeans. Pagan Indo-European principles have stamped their hallmark on 2000 years of Christianity. The pantheistic belief of the Europeans deemed the earth, water, sky, rocks, stones, animals and fire are all objects of worship. Paramount among this plethora of animate and inanimate deities were the seasons. The change of season in pagan religions has always been a source of marvel and wonder. Days such as the day in which the hours of day-light equals the hours of darkness ie the spring and winter equinoxes, and the winter and summer solstices were cause for commemoration in pagan beliefs. They were a time for the followers of these religions to give praise to the deities of the sun, the moon, fertility, growth, harvests and bringing of the mysterious wonders of winter. Christianity was merely a form of Judaism that was mass-produced for export to the pagan Romans and northern Europeans. The worship of the seasons manifests in the spring equinox celebration of Easter and the autumn equinox celebration of harvest festival. The pagan feast of Christmas is a celebration of the passing of the shortest day of the year. From the 25th of December in most countries of Europe one can literally see the day length getting progressively longer and longer. The worship of the pine tree, Yule log, holly, ivy and mistletoe are all now central to the Pagan-Christian festival of Christmas. The Easter egg, symbolising fertility and birth, has now become the central focus in the feast of the pagan god; Ester.

Returning back to non Indo-European language and culture, the main issue I want to address is that of Semitic language. Within the Semitic languages there are many common words and concepts. The term nabi has the same conceptual meaning in both Arabic and Hebrew. This is a meaning that is not accurately represented in the Indo-European term ‘prophet’. Nabi is the one that brings information to humans on how to

live our lives and answer questions such as why we are here in this world and what happens when we leave this world. Key to this definition is that the source of the information is from Allah ﷻ. Cultural aspect such as a seven day week being assigned numbers rather than names (for the majority) with yawm-al-ahad (day 1) as the first and yawm-al-sabbat (day 7) as the last. This may be contrasted with the Indo-European week starting with the day of the Sun god, Sunday, and ending on the day of the god of Saturn ‘Saturday’. It was the Emperor Constantine changed the Christian Sabbath, as mentioned in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:7-11), from the 7th day to the day of Sun worship. The common linguistic nuances between Arabic and Hebrew and how they differ from Europeans are too numerous to mention here. The fact that there are some common words between Arabic and Hebrew does not mean that Islam is anything other than absolutely unique. This is known from Islam in general, but was also reinforced by certain specific incidences in the Sirat-a-Rasoolallah ﷺ. For example, the rebuttal of the accusations of the Jews of Medina regarding fasting on ‘Ashura (10th of Muharam). The Jews charged Rasoolallah of imitating their religion when the law came to state that it is recommended to fast on that day. The Muslims were told to keep fast on the day before or after in order to be different from the Jews.

#### Conflict and controversies

The diversity of languages in theory should create few problems. It is akin to skin shade. It is only the most ignorant of human beings that consider this to be a source of schism. However, when ignorance in the form of nationalism and patriotism emerge racism and bigotry always follows. These two forms of manifest ignorance have characterised a whole century of darkness. Nationalism and patriotism have been the seeds of blood shed in the bloodiest period that humankind has ever seen. Language has been the spark to the powder keg in many a bloodletting.

A controversy over Serbocroat and Albanian language in Pristina University was one of the issues that sparked the unrest in Kosovo in the 1990s. Language has been a factor in many Nationalistic movements such as the Kurds and the Basques etc. Protest against Afrikaans being taught to Sowato school children lead to the 1976 riots. They did not

want to be taught the language of these who they perceived to be the oppressors.

### Politics

Language is very much related to authority. Nothing augments the spread of a language more than political power. This has been seen with English and the effect the British Empire had on the World. In more recent years the complexion of this language has shifted to American English. This resulting from their post-war domination of the globe and with US popular culture and political hegemony. There are more limited examples that also clearly demonstrate the effect of ruling and language. In linguistics there is a maxim that; “The difference between a language and dialect is that a language is a dialect with an army and a navy.” The language of Afrikaans epitomises this principle. This was a form of common Dutch that peasant farmers spoke in a small corner of Western Europe. The dialect had no written tradition and most of its speakers were illiterate. Some of the speakers of this dialect found themselves translocated to the Cape of Good Hope. After the Great Trek north these voortrekkers refined their cultural norms and adjusted their lifestyle to farming of the harsh terrain of the Orange Free State and Transvaal region. If it were not for the establishment of the political authorities in Pretoria and Bloemfontein this Dutch dialect would not have even been given a name. However, it is this language that has the infamy of bringing to the World the word, apartheid. This illustrates how the establishment of a political system may be part and parcel of the establishment of a language. This principle is also demonstrated by the in the rapid expansion of the domain of Islamic governance. The spread of Islam at the time of the rightly guided Khulafa and for several centuries later went hand in hand with the spread of Arabic. The Arabic language is vital for ruling in Islam as all the rules in Islam were revealed in Arabic. The spread of Arabic being directly related to the political authority is something that even the Western Linguists have acknowledged.

“Whereas Latin developed into different languages, such as Italian, French and Castilian (Spanish) in the course of the centuries, Arabic did not split up into separate languages over the same period and in a comparable geographical area. The reason was that Arabic was the language of religion, Islam, as well as of government. This meant that in

the first place the written language was shielded from the usual linguistic decay; and secondly, that the colloquial speech did not diverge as widely as might otherwise have been the case. As a consequence the spoken Arabic of countries as mutually remote as Iraq, the Sudan and Morocco, can be described as dialects rather than separate languages.” J A Haywood, 1965.

The significance of language has to be born in mind when analysing societal affairs. Language and its association with ruling can be used to benefit humankind or it can be used for devious ends.

### Islam revival and decline

Language and thought are very much linked to one another. We sometimes talk to ourselves or think out loud, which facilitates our thought processes. The procedure of explaining our ideas, whether from our own original thought or adopted from somewhere else, usually helps us to understand the issue at hand. The use of powerful convincing language is the most powerful means influencing other people’s thoughts. This in turn translates into influencing other people’s behaviour. The exact mechanism of how language interfaces with thought, may not be that well documented. However, few can claim, with conviction, that language and thought are completely independent. There are many examples of how individuals have changed their behaviour after being influenced by an eloquently presented argument. Similarly large masses have managed to come under the spell of magical words. Conversely, situations where the use of language is not forcibly linked to the thoughts and actions, may also influence the masses, albeit in a negative manner.

Since the beginning of the seventh century AH Muslims have been in intellectual decline. This period was the starting point to the slow decline into the abyss that we find ourselves in today. It should not be without remark that this corresponded to the period of the Mamluks and the start of the Ottomans, the change from Arabic to Turkish. The power that is tied-up in the Islamic texts can only be un-locked with the key of Arabic. Arabic is the tool used for accessing all the knowledge contained within the Qur’an. We in turn as an Ummah are only as strong, intellectually, as our grasp on the knowledge of Islam. The eroding of Arabic from our lives lead to an eroding of the understanding of the

texts. Ataturk and the Shah of Iran both took drastic measures to eradicate Islam from the society at large but also form the minds of the people. Changing the script and purging the language of “Arabisms” was one of their main strategies for the long-term suppression of Islam. In later years the rise of the Egyptian film industry, and its accompanying corrupt dramas and low quality Arabic further aided the decline of Arabic. This was actively encouraged by the Naser regime. It is an industry that Mubarak has also exploited to his own ends. Amongst craftsmen there is a saying, that goes, “look after your tools and your tools will look after you”. This means that if the carpenter cleans his tools after use, sharpens chisels and planes and stores his drill-bits appropriately so they will remain in good condition and will aid him rather than hinder him in his work. This principle may also be applied to Arabic. Our tool for getting through life is Arabic, because it is through the Arabic language that we access the codebook and manual of life. If we were to neglect Arabic, which is our tool for life, we will be hindered in our progress through life. Conversely if we are to preserve Arabic this will aid us.

The military prowess of the Turks is beyond reproach. However, during the early spread of Islam the one of the main characteristics that differed from Ottoman period was the issue of delivering Arabic to the annexed lands. When the early Muslims carried Islam to others they did not merely carry the military authority, but they also carried the political authority, the language and the whole general culture of Islam in a very pure form. This was reflected in the intellectual abilities of the newer communities. For example Imam Bukhari collected, compiled and verified hadith. As part of his validation process he laid down his own criteria, one of which was analysing linguistic style. He would accept or reject a hadith based on language. This goes to show that Bukhari must have had a phenomenal understanding of the Arabic language in order to assess a saying based on style. In deed, he was truly an exceptional individual in many respects but in his language ability he must have excelled. We should remember that his birthplace was far from the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, the brilliance of Bukhari says more about the calibre of the people that brought Islam to that region than it does about the man himself. Those particular communities, and the Khilafah at that time, were only too aware that Arabic had to be given along with Islam. The example of Bukhari is not isolated. Indeed if we are to look through

history it is a minority of the well-known scholars after the second/third generation that came from the Peninsula itself.

#### Neo-colonialism

The Global culture is today dominated by the English language. This is not by accident it is by design. This started with the tradition colonialists of the British, Belgian, French, Portuguese and Spanish. They controlled and dominated with an iron fist. They also took their languages to the colonies in order to maintain their grip. Benjamin Disraeli, the British PM at the height of the British Empire once said; “Colonies do not cease to be colonies because they are independent.” The context of this statement is important. It was said at a time when Britannia supposedly ruled the waves. Disraeli had control of the biggest empire that the world had ever seen.

Britain was not in the business of giving away its hard fought land. Independence was never on the agenda at that time. However, Disraeli had foresight. Between the World Wars Britain realised that granting independence was a way in which they could hold on to power in the colonies without actually having to dirty their hands by ruling. So post W.W.II there was a mad rush for independence. This apparent independence, was a granting of home rule by a constitution written in English by English speakers to be interpreted by British trained lawyers, Judges, Presidents, Prime Ministers and Kings for the good of the English. The first rulers of Pakistan and India, were better equipped in English than in the language of the newly formed country. The reality of independence and the emancipation from the British and the English language and culture is that the official legal language in many countries is still English and those that have changed have a legal system in chaos. Fifty years after independence in the great Arab Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan a king was crowned who speaks next to no Arabic. “Colonies do not cease to be colonies because they are independent.”

The good period of Islamic history was closely associated with a good conceptual understanding of Islam amongst Muslims. This was also inextricably linked to a good understanding of the language of Islam; Arabic. Language is important in politics and culture. Language is important in revival.

Why does  $F=ma$ ?

Humans have always sought to find their direction in life. In orientating ourselves we have focused on the question ‘why’. However, the development of Western civilisation has charted a course from the search for purpose to the search for descriptions of mechanisms. Today the West is actually hindered by an obsession with the question ‘how’ as opposed to ‘why’. Asking ‘Why’ is innate in humans; Allah ﷻ created humans with a discriminating mind. This mind is capable of choosing the correct belief or the wrong belief.

﴿فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا﴾

“And we showed him (man) the two paths (of good and bad).” [TMQ Ash-Shams: 8]

﴿وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ﴾

“And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong of it and what is right of it.” [TMQ Al-Balad: 10]

‘Why’ is the most central question that the creed of Islam answers. We were created by Allah ﷻ to worship Him ﷻ. Our existence is a test, to see how well we perform in terms of this worship. The creation and the destruction of this world are definite realities that lie within Allah’s ﷻ decree. All the answers about our purpose in life were answered for us by Allah ﷻ through the Prophets (as), Al-Anbiya’. Hebrew and Arabic contain the same word for Prophet. Thus, even in Judaeo-Christian tradition (the precursor to the West today) the question of ‘why’ was paramount to their outlook on life. Once the fundamental question of ‘why’ has been settled in our minds we have the luxury of proceeding through life with ease and tranquillity. We get on with life fully aware of our purpose and direction. We care little for in-depth descriptions of how the world came into existence and how it will end. We are informed that the end of the world will be horrific beyond description and that we are compelled to prepare for it.

Most children go through a period of asking ‘why’ for almost everything. Many parents ignore this, putting it down to the various

annoying traits associated with post ‘troublesome-two’ toddlers. However, ignoring these questions diverts the energies behind these questions. The child is genuinely striving to understand things that many adults have taken for granted for decades. In the West, this energy is re-channelled to describing the ‘how’ of things, rather than the ‘why’ of things. The answer to many of these questions is “Allah ﷻ made it that way”. This is a standard answer to many things that a child, or adult, may ask. However, if the one who answers the question does not believe in Allah ﷻ, then he or she will ignore the question. There is a certain truth in the fact that Westerners, besotted with secular humanism, find most of these questions unanswerable. Child psychology has many disparate schools of thought about how to manage these questions. Western education at every level is plagued with this approach; describing how things work, whilst zapping the energy of why.

‘Why’ is changed to ‘how’

A perpetual searching for holy grails predominates in Western philosophy - How did things happen? How will things happen? For example, how the Big Bang was meant to have occurred, how the continents drifted apart or how the chemistry of life supposedly emerged from the primordial soup etc. Scientists still ask the same questions posed by Aristotle; How is the universe constructed? Where is the mind? Much of the new science relates to old questions, only this time, asked in a different way. In answering them they end up obsessively chasing their own tails. However, ‘how?’ is not a substitute for ‘why?’. If we look at the question of why grass is green and not blue, the answer to the question ‘why?’ is that Allah ﷻ made it that way. The current ‘scientific answer’ is that chlorophyll absorbs blue and red light and reflects green. This is an answer to the question ‘how?’, but it is being passed off as an answer to the question ‘why?’

The seeking of how things work vs. why things work

The issue of ‘how’ seeps deep into all aspects of the Western way of life; covering philosophy, research and manufacturing and every level of education. European Enlightenment placed humans as their own legislators. Humans as their own guides, obviously found the question ‘why’ much harder to tackle than the question ‘how’. They therefore



exhausted their energies on describing how things work. An in-depth study of the mechanistic and material aspects of things resulted. Fascinating phenomena were reduced to formulae. Awe-inspiring observations were reduced to a series of mundane, detailed descriptions. The ground's ability to hold down bodies is a happening experienced by us all. We all manipulate and utilise this. It is an attribute that Allah ﷻ instilled in the earth. However, Newton, reduced this entrancing experience to a dull equation and term; gravity. Supposedly an apple fell on Sir Isaac's head and he suddenly thought, "Ah, F=ma" [force = mass x acceleration]. This apple is on a par with the apples of the William Tell and Snow White stories.

Einstein gave an explanation for space, time and everything. Crick and Watson reduced all the intricacies and complexities of inheritance and development to a spiral shaped molecule (DNA). Hubble described the origin of the universe and inferred from this its ultimate fate. These are just a few landmark discoveries, without any mention of Charles Darwin. Very young school children are taught the intricacies of the water cycle purely from the "how" angle with no attention paid to "why". They may understand and accept that water circulates from the sky, to the ocean and to sky again, in an auto-regulating manner. Conceptually it is implicit that this cycle has no need for an external regulator, the Creator ﷻ.

Therefore, Allah ﷻ is not necessary in the equation. Regardless of whether the water cycle is an accurate description of how this works, it is more important that our children and we believe that Allah ﷻ sends down the rain. Allah ﷻ informed us that,

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي يُرِيكُمُ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَيُنشِئُ السَّحَابَ

الْقَالَ﴾

"It is He Who shows you the lightning, by way both of fear and of hope; It is He Who raises up the clouds, heavy with rain." [TMQ Ar-Ra'd: 12]

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ

فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ﴾

"It is He who sends down rain from the sky; from it you drink, and out of it (grows) the vegetation on which you feed your cattle." [TMQ An-Nahl: 10]

There are literally dozens of verses of the Qur'an that make mention of Allah ﷻ sending down the water from the skies. Allah ﷻ actually criticises those who do not acknowledge that the rain is sent down by His ﷻ command,

﴿وَلَمَّا سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ مِنَ بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ﴾

"And if indeed you 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, 'Allah!' Say, 'Praise be to Allah!' But most of them understand not." [TMQ Al-Ankabut: 63]

A similar example can be seen in iron. When carbon was added to iron preparations, it replaced bronze in its use in weapons and tools.

﴿لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ

عَزِيزٌ﴾

"We sent aforetime our apostles with Clear Signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of Right and Wrong), that men may behave correctly forth in justice; and We sent down (the ability to make use of) Iron, in which is (material for) mighty war, as well as many benefits for mankind, that Allah may test who it is that will help, Unseen, Him and His apostles; Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might (and able to enforce His Will)." [TMQ Al-Hadid: 25]

The West considers it was the use of tools that changed man from hunter-gatherer to farmer - supplying and ensuring his own stock of food. This differentiated the animal from human. Regardless of what

the West say, there is no doubt that the use of tools and in particular iron has been one of the things that set us apart from the rest of Allah's ﷻ creation. There is no doubt that the use of iron has been one of the main issues that has moulded the development of human kind. Whether it was in primitive armoury, the machines of the industrial revolution, the tools of agriculture or ballistic missiles. We believe it is Allah ﷻ who taught us the use of iron. Allah ﷻ states that He ﷻ created humans with this discriminating mind, able to make the correct judgement. This principle is linked with the fact that Allah ﷻ created humans uniquely. We are able to understand the issue of tools and the power of iron in war and manufacturing. The education system should not just describe these issues. Every attempt must be made to relate these phenomena back to Allah's ﷻ Decree.

If we are to observe the world about us correctly it should surely increase our faith. This should be the basis of all Islamic education. Indeed this is an attitude taken directly from the Qur'an.

﴿وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ \* فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ  
هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْآفِلِينَ \* فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ  
بَازِغًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لئن لم يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي  
لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ \* فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ  
هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا  
تُشْرِكُونَ \* إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ  
وَالْأَرْضِ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

*“So, also did We show Ibrahim the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that he might (with understanding) have certitude. When the night grew dark upon him he beheld a star. He said, ‘This is my Lord’. But when it set, he said, ‘I love not things*

*that set.’ And when he saw the moon rising, he exclaimed, ‘This my Lord.’ But when it set, he said, ‘Unless my Lord guides me, I surely shall become one of the folk who are astray.’ And when he saw the sun rising, he cried, ‘This is my Lord! This is greater!’ And when it set, he exclaimed, ‘O my people! Lo! I am free from all that you associate (with Him) Lo! I have set my face, firmly and truly, towards Him Who created the heavens and the earth, and never shall I give partners to Allah.’” [TMQ Al-An’am: 75-79]*

The West's account of history: Many hows but no whys

2 Million - BCE Man started to use primitive tools

4000 BCE - Bronze casting begins in Near East, use of plough

3500 BCE - Invention of the wheel and plough (Mesopotamia) and the sail (Egypt)

3000 BCE - Use of Bronze in Thailand. Egyptians work iron into implements

1000 BCE - Start of the Iron Age; iron replaces bronze for weapons and tools

512 BCE - Chinese produce cast iron from blast furnace

430 BCE - Democritus suggests that everything is made up of atoms

622 CE - 1st of Hijrah calendar

1521 - Reformation of the Christian Church

1543 - Copernicus presents his heliocentric theory suggesting that the sun and not the earth is the centre of the universe

1609 - Galileo develops a telescope that brought new evidence supporting the theory of Copernicus

1610 - Europe's Scientific Revolution; Kepler (1571-1610), Bacon (1561-1626), Galileo (1564-1642), Descartes (1596-1650)

1628 - William Harvey discovers how blood is circulated around the body

1687 - Isaac Newton describes the laws of motion in his Principia

1839 - Theodor Schwann suggests cell theory; all living things are made up of cells produced by other cells - later 'proved' by Rudolf Virchow

1709 - Abraham Darby discovers coke-smelt processing of iron

1760 - European Enlightenment; Voltaire (1694-1778), Diderot (1713-84), Hume (1711-76), Rousseau's Social Contract (1762)

1760 - Start of industrial Revolution in Britain

1859 - Darwin publishes The Origin of the Species

1897 - Thompson discovers the electron - fundamental particle that gave main characteristics to most substances

1900 - Freud's Interpretation of Dreams - beginning of psychoanalysis

1905 - Einstein's theory of relativity uniting space and time in one mathematical description - showing that mass can be converted to energy and vice versa

1915 - Einstein's theory of gravitation explains the arrangement of the universe

1924 - Dismantling of the Khilafah

1929 - Hubble discovers that the universe is expanding, thus leading to the Big Bang and the Big Crunch theories

1953 - Watson and Crick theorised about the role of DNA in inheritance - biochemical recipe for regulating the life of all cells

1971 - Transplantation of genes from one organism to another makes biotechnology a reality

1978 - First 'test-tube' baby

1990 - Human genome project starts

1997 - Dolly the sheep born - the result of genetic cloning

2000 - First draft of completed sequence of Human genome produced

## History - Reality and Romanticism

Palestine only saw peace under Islamic rule

The level of violence currently being meted out by Israel is not unprecedented. Although it is now hitting the headlines, the history of the Israeli State since 1947 has been characterised by brutality. Bloodshed on this scale has been commonplace in this part of the world. The history of this region is something that is obscured in most Westerners' minds. This is not only a result of the media bias in the West in favour of Israel, but it is also a result of the skew employed during the teaching of history of the region in Western schools.

The history of the area is long and has been eventful. The world's two ancient civilisations, of Egypt and Mesopotamia (now called Iraq), flourished simultaneously 3,500 years ago. The desert of north Arabia separated them. This was, and still is, as difficult to cross as the most hostile sea. The route linking them was round the northern fringe of the desert where some hills brought rainfall and rivers, producing what has been known throughout recorded history as "the Fertile Crescent". From Egypt the first step into the Fertile Crescent, after crossing the Sinai, was Palestine, and that strip between the sea and the desert has always been a passage for traders. The most powerful state in the Middle East, in turn Persia, Egypt, Rome, Byzantium, and the Muslims usually controlled it.

In the judgement of anyone who had just walked across the Sinai desert, Palestine must have seemed like a land of milk and honey. More importantly it has proved the most fertile spot on earth for religions. The Bani Israil went there after exile from Mesopotamia. Christianity and Islam, both similarly consider the region significant. The birth of Christianity was there. For Muslims it was the first Qibla and the place of the Isra (night journey) and Mi'raaj (ascension).

Following the First Jewish Revolt in 66 CE, the Temple on the Temple Mount was burned to the ground in 70 CE by vengeful Roman soldiers besieging Jerusalem. The Jews were once again exiled from Jerusalem for their rebelliousness, and the Temple Mount was to become a garbage heap throughout the Roman and Byzantine periods. It was this rubbish heap that became transformed when Jerusalem was opened by Umar bin al-Khattab. The Patriarch of the City Sophronius offered the keys of the city to the Amir-al Mu'mineen himself. A peace treaty known as the Umari treaty was framed and ratified in 15 Hijri (636CE). This read;

"In the name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Compassionate. This is the assurance of safety (aman) which the servant of Allah, [the second Caliph] 'Umar [Ibn al-Khattab], the Commander of the Faithful, has granted to the people of Aelia [Jerusalem]. He has granted them safety for their lives and possessions; their churches and crosses; the sick and the healthy of the city; and for the rest of its religious community. Their churches will not be inhabited nor destroyed [by Muslims]. Neither they, nor the land, on which they stand, nor their cross, nor their possessions will be confiscated. They will not be forcibly converted, nor any one of them harmed. No Jew will live with them in Aelia [Jerusalem]..."

The persons who attested to it were Khalid Ibn al-Walid, 'Amr Ibn al-'As, 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn 'Awf, and Muawiya Ibn Abi Sufyan (may Allah be pleased with them).

The fact that Islam secured the rights of the people of Jerusalem was demonstrated by the fact that the Christians entrusted the keys to the Holy Sepulchre Church to the Muslims. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre lies in the northwest quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. The most renowned Christian historians have stated that the various Christian groups that use the church could not trust one another to let them in when it was their turn (National Catholic Reporter).

One of the conditions of the treaty that the Christians demanded was that "No Jew would reside in Aelia with them". It was Islam that resolved the disputes between the various Christian groups. It was Islam that resolved the disputes between the Jews and Christians. Doctrinal differences between the Christian denominations were endemic.

Arguments over beliefs and practices were perennial problems leading to bitter battles. They have had a long running history of internal bloodshed over religious controversies. These have been exemplified by the thirty-year war in Europe, the reformation or the Counter Reformation. Blood to the Christians is symbolically sacred for their rituals. In practice they had little qualms about spilling the blood of their own brethren. They had even fewer inhibitions about terrorising Jews and Muslims. The Spanish inquisition may be taken as a prime example. It is imperative to remember the bloodthirsty nature of those who adhered to Christianity when reviewing the history of Jerusalem.

Prior to the Muslim conquest of Palestine, the Temple Mount was used as a garbage dump and a dung-heap. The inhabitants had no respect for the place. It was Umar bin al-Khattab ؓ who had the area thoroughly cleaned. It was the Umayyad Khalifah 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan who built the Dome of the Rock between 685 and 691 CE.

When the Crusaders invaded Jerusalem in 1099 CE, they slaughtered Muslims and Jews and burnt the Jewish synagogue. They converted the Dome of the Rock into a church and used Masjid Al-Aqsa as a stable for their horses. The Crusaders were barbaric and they brought nothing but destruction to Jerusalem. Not dissimilar to the Romans, before them, they did not value the holy places of worship. In contrast, when Salahuddin al-Ayyubi liberated Jerusalem on a Friday in 1187 CE, there was no massacre. There was no looting. There was no destruction of places of worship. He took crusaders as prisoners of war. He restored Masjid Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock to their former glory. What the Western Christians have always found hard to comprehend was that the Christians of the Islamic State fought alongside the Muslims to liberate Jerusalem from the Crusaders. The Christians of the Islamic State witnessed the rule of the Crusaders. The Christian of the Islamic State had also witnessed the rule of Islam. They were best positioned to compare and contrast. Their response speaks volumes about Crusader rule; it also speaks volumes about how they were treated by the Muslims and the Islamic Khilafah.

The history of blood letting continued through the centuries. From when the Kharezmians (Mongols), connected to the armies of Genghis Khan, invaded in 1244 CE slaughtering both Muslims and Christians, to

1917 when the British invaded Jerusalem. The British General Edmund Allenby triumphantly entered Jerusalem in December 1917. Like a good Christian, he humbly dismounted to walk through the Jaffa Gate. This is when he proudly declared “today the wars of the Crusaders are completed,” The British press celebrated his victory with cartoons of Richard the Lion-Heart looking down at Jerusalem above the caption “At last my dream came true.” Since then Jerusalem and Palestine has seen nothing but destruction and massacres. Even the Christians were unhappy to see the British. Lord Balfour witnessed anxiety articulated by the Christians of Jerusalem. A report at the time stated; “He could express nothing but surprise that any human being could suppose that Christian interests should suffer by the transfer of power in Palestine from a Mohammedan [sic] Power to a Christian Power, especially when that Christian Power was Great Britain...” It went on to say, “It was not credible, therefore, that places possessing sacred associations with large bodies of Christian believers should in any way suffer by being taken away from Mohammedan [sic] authority and put under a Christian mandatory.” [League of Nations - Official Journal June 1922]

The British also continued to implement aspects of the Shari'ah to maintain the peace in Palestine. They recognised only Islam had the ability to maintain peace within Palestine.

“When the British Government occupied Palestine on the conclusion of the WWII, it made a point of maintaining the status quo, realising quite rightly that, in delicate matters such as this, any change might easily lead to serious disputes and unforeseen results...In Jerusalem, where so many Churches are represented, only the observance of the established order of things can ensure religious peace and, at the same time, internal and external peace” [League of Nations Permanent Mandate Commission - Minutes Of the fifteenth session 1929]

These examples illustrate that only Islam has the ability to secure peace and stability in Palestine and to guarantee the rights of the people. Any other system only benefited the people who ruled, and neglected rights of the citizens of Palestine. If Muslims ruled Palestine with other than Islam then it would not secure the rights of the people of Palestine. Only if the Shari'ah is implemented completely then the rights of the people will be secured as the Shari'ah is not from man, it is from our

Creator, Allah ﷻ.

### State sponsored terrorism

“Know that we have granted and given licence ... to Adam Robernolt and William le Sauvage ... to annoy our enemies at sea or by land ... so that they share with us half of all their gain.” These words were taken from a letter of marque issued in 1243 by the English King Henry III. A letter of marque was virtually a terrorist’s license; it allowed a captain (a privateer) and his crew the right to plunder without punishment.

Some may think that attacks on symbols of material superiority, religion and dynasty in order to obtain recognition and material gain, are a phenomenon born of the twentieth century. However, the whole of the last millennium has been characterised by mass plunder of minerals as well as terrorism on the high seas and ports of harbour. Poor nations have been ravaged by richer nations, and the richer nations vied with one another using the most underhanded means.

None epitomises this international threat of terror more than the arch-privateer, and great British hero, Sir Francis Drake. When in 1580 Drake sailed up the Thames in the Golden Hind after circumnavigating the globe, he left behind a trail of unparalleled plunder. On his journey he had ravaged the coasts and shipping of Chile and Peru. The Golden Hind was below her watermark, loaded with bars of gold and silver, minted Spanish coinage, precious stones, and pearls, when he left South American waters to continue his voyage around the world. Even after jettisoning half his loot to keep afloat, Drake returned with a 4,700 per cent profit. Naturally, Queen Elizabeth I knighted him.

Drake made a name for himself by robbing from the Spanish, the superpower of the time. Spain may seem like they were wronged by Drake, but the manner in which Spain gained her wealth was no less piratical than the antics of the British terrorists. The emergence of Spain as a world leader started with Columbus. In August 1485 Christopher Columbus, the Genoese terrorist, fought under the French flag in the battle of Lisbon, which resulted in an unprecedented haul of loot from Venetian galleys en route for England. However, it was his epoch-making voyage to the West Indies on behalf of the Catholic monarchs of Spain

that changed the scope of state sponsored terrorism and methods of colonialism through sheer brute force. This marked the beginning of Spain’s empire in the New World, referred to as the Spanish Main.

The Spanish Main lured pirates with the promise of untold riches, as it contained treasures beyond the Europeans’ wildest dreams. The Spanish conquistadors (conquerors) ruthlessly plundered the Aztec and Inca nations of Mexico and Peru. In the centuries that followed, enormous quantities of gold and silver were shipped back to Europe. In their lust for gold, the conquistadors, led by Hernan “the Killer” Cortez, completely destroyed the civilisations of the Aztecs and the Incas. The Spanish firstly enslaved local people to work the silver mines. Many of them died from their beatings and demonstrated their unwillingness to work. So the Spanish decided to bring African slaves to do their backbreaking work. Bartolomeo and Christopher Columbus, Francisco Pizzaro and Cortez may not have been state-sponsored pirates, but they were definitely state-sponsored marauders of the land.

Once the gang of thieves that represented Catholic Europe consolidated their foothold in the Western Hemisphere, the Spanish treasure ships and depots soon attracted the attentions of the French and English pirates. There was more than just material rivalry between the European nations of the time. Protestant Holland and England were considered heathen states in Spanish eyes. They considered them small and insignificant, their political systems were simplistic, their societies barbaric and their religious beliefs a danger to the civilised world.

Decades of these sniper shots at the strength of the Spanish from England started to infuriate them. They had lost out financially, to a limited extent. Considering the amounts lost in proportion to the almost inexhaustible amounts of gold and silver that they had tapped into. However, by mid-1586 their credibility as a superpower and their status in Europe started to wane. After numerous raids one particular incident sparked a response. It was the sacking of Santo Domingo (1 January 1586) that sent shock waves throughout Catholic Europe.

Santo Domingo was the pride of the Spanish Main, the jewel in King Philips’ colonial empire. To them the city stood for Spain’s mastery of the seas, Catholic superiority and the sheer wealth of the Empire of Philip

II. Drake's new years day attack, was well calculated to cause a response. Drake was to be the scourge of Spain, a religious fanatic, who was raised in a bitterly anti-papist home. He was the son of a lay preacher. His loathing of Catholicism not only had its origins in his father's teachings but in his own early experiences, when his family had to flee the West Country during the Catholic uprising of 1549. He realised the importance of piracy in his quest to attack the papist states dominance of the world. Drake saw himself as a struggler for his country and his religion. Spain saw him as a terrorist and thief, demonising him with the name El-Draco, the dragon. He realised that if he were to sack one of the financial centres of the New World, this would be an immense blow to The Spanish Empire.

The wounded superpower struck back in a declared war against terrorism in revenge for Jan 1st 1586. The Armada was Spain's war against terror. She sent an attack against the English and those states that supported them in their alien and hostile religious beliefs, the Protestant Netherlands. Spain's intention was to smoke out those responsible for threatening her commercial interests, taking innocent lives and causing instability to her transatlantic hegemony.

King Philip had long been contemplating an attempt to restore the Roman Catholic faith in England. The English acts of piracy offered Philip a reason to attack. The Treaty of Nonsuch (1585) by which England undertook to support the Dutch rebels against Spanish rule, along with damaging raids by Sir Francis Drake against Spanish commerce in the Caribbean in 1585-86, finally convinced Philip that a direct invasion of England was necessary.

In a later period the French also had a good track record of sponsoring piracy. The most famous of whom was Rene Duguay-Trouin who was commended by Louis XIV for his acts of piracy against the English. It wasn't just the hereditary monarchs of the time that involved themselves in this form of terror. Oliver Cromwell had given his stamp of approval to the brutal buccaneer Henry Morgan. At the time Cromwell had requested to trade in the Spanish Caribbean but had been refused. So he decided to use the buccaneers to capture certain Spanish possessions. This resulted in the taking of Jamaica by the British, after a flurry of letters of marque had been issued. Similar to Drake, Morgan went on to

perform many acts of terror over the years following the capture of Jamaica. This included the sacking of Panama, which was comparable to Drake's sacking of Santo Domingo. Morgan was cruel and brutal and committed many atrocities. Like Drake he too was knighted by Charles II after the restoration of the monarchy.

There are many obvious parallels with the way the superpower of the day responds to attacks on their commercial and political interests. The manner in which Drake is revered and honoured by the British today, in contrast to the way in which the Spanish regard him, also has striking contemporary and historical comparisons. Osama bin Laden, for whatever reasons, is loved and loathed by different peoples of the world, as is Bush (Sr. & Jr.), Powell and Schwartzkopf. Historic comparisons can be seen for Ar-ruj and Khier-ed-din Barbarossa, Atilla the Hun, Salahuddin Ayyubi, Mandela and Biko, Cecil Rhodes and Napoleon.

We have previously discussed how the massive influx of gold and silver into Europe, during this period, could be considered the start of global economics. By anyone's account, the milking of South America's minerals had the most profound effect on the development of Europe. This was probably the most important century in the shaping of modern Europe, and perhaps the modern world. It was a century of radical ideas such as the Renaissance in Italy, the Reformation in Germany, and the scientific revolution that was spearheaded by Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Descartes. Politically England split from Rome, the Dutch revolted against Spain, the East India Companies were established, and the Muslims' control of the Mediterranean started to diminish. But this was also the century of transatlantic slavery and the massacre of the inhabitants of the New World. Westerners may romanticise about how great that period was, but we should remember that this was a century characterised by bloodshed, trafficking of humans as commodities and state sponsored terrorism.

#### Independence

*"Colonies do not cease to be colonies because they are independent."* [Benjamin Disraeli]

The right of self-determination and independence is the sub-text of

every peace conference and negotiation procedure occurring in the World today. Conflicts and disputes are far from settled over regions such as Sri Lanka, Spain and Northern Ireland. The issue of independence has affected nowhere more than the Islamic world.

The language of politics is filled with words with double meanings. Words become en vogue for a short time. Some words mean one thing one year and another the next. Some words are good when applied to certain regions and bad when applied to another. Reunification when applied to Germany was seen differently than when applied to North and South Yemen. Alternative words can always be used to reassign a particular slant to an issue - for example reunification or annexation, recession or necessary downturn, separatist rebellion or independence.

There are also a few words that have near Holy Grail status. That is, their political status, is one that many are striving for, and that this status is the ultimate political achievement. Independence is the epitome of such a word. The term is very appealing as it conjures up notions of freedom from colonialist oppression in economic, cultural and political terms. Freedom from the shackles of colonialism ought to be the political destiny of Muslims. However, independence has become nothing more than an empty slogan. Nations that had fought hard for independence have found that the clasp of the old oppressor is still present, only now in a different form. This needn't be the case. It is up to us to look beyond the slogan of independence and assess what true independence actually entails.

For the last two centuries the term independence has been seen as being equated with emancipation - an almost universal term coinciding with the best state for a people to be in. Wars of independence are commemorated, independence days are celebrated and the heroes of independence movements are quite literally idolised.

Supporters of the call for independence cite the example of America's independence from Britain. The great figures of the wars of independence that liberated the fledgling state from the claws of British dominance are held as heroes not only in the minds of the Americans but also in countries much further afield. Indeed the plight of all former and present British colonies have many similarities with eighteenth century

America. Colonisation is where the similarities end. The driving force behind the birth of the USA was ideological. Determined thinkers and intellectuals struggled to forge a system that was free of the religious and social bigotry that was present in Europe at the time. They toiled to build a truly secular state where everyone was free to trade and capital became the basis of the state.

The very 'Declaration of American Independence' states the ideological nature of this new state; "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. To ensure these rights, governments were instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." This clear and concise statement laid out the basis for a visionary system of government that the US adhered to in an ideological fashion to this day. Further to that they built themselves to be major force in the world arena. This is not to say that their system is correct, rather to state that they were driven by an ideology. Albeit the wrong ideology.

The clarity in meaning and sentiment of the declaration can be contrasted with the thoughts and speeches of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the architect of Pakistani independence. "viz; that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial adjustment as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority...should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign." Which when translated into English, meant 'a homeland for Muslims'. This it seemed was his one single objective. He had no thought or consideration as to the correct system of life that Muslims should live by. This in itself was a futile objective. He was guilty of sapping the energies and sincerity of the Muslims for his own limited designs. Similar examples can be brought from all over the Islamic Lands.

The whole nature of the European colonial powers in the Twentieth Century was entirely different from the time of American independence. In 1939 Britain, France and the Netherlands were committed to the evolution of their colonial territories to self-government. These commitments were reinforced in terms laid down under which they were granted mandates from the League of Nations over territories formerly



belonging to the Khilafah and Germany. More to the point independence was a cunning stunt dreamt up by the British to dismantle its battered Empire whilst maintaining as much influence in the world as possible. This was a new phase of colonialism. Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand had already been granted home rule and the 1931 Statute of the Commonwealth had started the wheels in motion for the independence of the 'non-white' colonies.

On face value it may seem that the British Empire collapsed suddenly when compared to the Hapsburgs or even the 'Uthmani (Ottoman) Khilafah. Both of these survived for centuries after declining from their peaks. However, the British had a plan that they had learned from the loss of the US in 1776. They learnt that an iron-fist rule from the capital leads to revolt, war and risk of humiliation. Britain handled Canada, Australia and New Zealand with a velvet-glove and reaped the benefits. Then at the turn of the nineteenth century, Britain was given a bloody reminder as to the best approach to independence by South Africa (1899-1902) and Ireland (1900-1922).

The British, in the twilight years of their Empire were arrogant about their system of government. They held it sacred and considered it to be the best in the world. At the top was a powerless constitutional monarch. One rung below was the party system. Below this was the civil service, an intellectual administrative elite, nurtured to obey the orders of politicians who were usually intellectually inferior to them. The management of such a complex and illogical system was similar to cricket. It required time and effort to learn the rules. Recruits to Whitehall from the British public schools were in abundance. However, it was harder to seek and shape up "the better sort of natives" for running the former colonies. Nevertheless, Britain found ways of preparing obedient clients to sit on the Legcos (short for Legislative Councils) and Excocs (Executive Councils). By 1930 they had got the system of changeover to near perfection. Indian recruits to the bureaucratic machine of inanity, the Indian Civil Service (ICS) were more British than the British.

It is naïve to think that the post-independence Legcos and Excocs and even administration and rulers were not tinged by the conniving plans of the British colonialists. Indeed any list of early officials from Malaysia, Ghana, Sudan, Nigeria, Pakistan, India and so on and so forth will read

like a who's who of the old British Establishment. The new rulers of these states were agents to the colonialists. The whole system of government and judiciary was merely a legacy left behind by the British. These systems were drafted, designed and deployed to maintain British interests after pulling out.

In contrast to Britain, France adopted a different approach. French hand-over was marked by bloodshed and brutality, the worst example of which was Algeria. France was determined to hold on to Algeria having granted independence to her own protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia in 1956. She considered Algeria part of 'Metropolitan France', re-incorporated into the Fourth Republic after German occupation. In 1945 France ruthlessly repressed a popular uprising. Algerian fighters achieved independence after eight years of blood letting in 1962. At Evian, de Gaulle finally recognised Algeria's sovereignty. However, this agreement contained ample provision to safeguard continuing French interests. Three decades later the French colonialists are one of the major sources of the woes for the Muslims of Algeria.

The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Portugal all have similar sagas to Britain and France. What is clear is that the nation states that attained so called independence from these states are today in a sorry situation. Far from being 'the sick men' of Europe, Africa or Asia they lack the dignity or stature to be called 'men'. Independence did nothing to reverse the spiral of decline of these nations.

After World War II many within the Islamic World became obsessed with the word independence. This was an infatuation with independence itself devoid of any political understanding, least of all with any Islamic dimension. As we have shown, independence per se was not of paramount importance. What was crucial, however, was the replacement of colonialism with an ideological system. In retrospect this was understandable. Muslims saw the actuality of a bandwagon of independence gathering momentum. Britain created Pakistan in 1947 and gave independence to Ceylon and Burma the following year. Also rather than send troops to quash riots in the Gold Coast, the post-War Labour Government sent a committee of enquiry to hurry the natives towards self-government. The independence of Indonesia from the Dutch, and the struggle of the Vietnamese against the French all

contributed to the cool air of independence that swept the globe. The target of independence was well within the sights of sincere Muslims particularly between the years 1945-60.

Today Muslims have experienced the bitter after taste, having eaten from the rotting fruits of pseudo-independence. As a result we have the same enthusiasm for independence as our predecessors, but we are now equipped with the realisation that the whole system must be changed and not merely the national anthem, the flag and the colour of the skin of the president.

The call for independence has proven to be a distraction from revival. It is in total contrast to the correct Islamic political thought. What made the Islamic State the nexus for revival was that it was ideological. An atmosphere has been generated in which Islam is cited as the system to replace colonialism and neo-colonialism.

Today we should not celebrate the coming of pseudo-independence to the Islamic Lands. Muslims should iconoclastically expose the idols of independence. Far from worshipping these figures we should be ridiculing them. The Kufr nation state is depraved and backward. Moreover, it contradicts Islam.

Although the colonialist powers are not present in military uniforms on our land, our task at hand is still arduous and far from complete. What we should be calling for is not independence purely for the sake of independence. We should be calling for the return of Islam as a complete way of life. What will follow from this will be a true political, economic and cultural independence from the shackles of the colonialist worldview of the capitalist ideology.

## *Political Imperialism*

The illusion of international law

In 1872, Gustave Moynier of the Red Cross in Geneva, horrified by violations of the law in the Franco-Prussian war, proposed an international criminal court. The whole idea was re-visited in 1948 when the UN general assembly passed a resolution envisaging an international tribunal. However, what followed over the next half century was international inactivity, in terms of attempts to right the wrongs performed during war.

In 2002, it seemed that the world is poised on the eve of the genesis of a body that will be responsible for trying cases of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and general aggression. This court will supposedly overcome the clumsy realities of the ad-hoc tribunals that were set up recently to try Slobodan Milosevic, or earlier the Nazis in Nuremberg and also the atrocities committed in Rwanda. The United Nations expects that an International Court of Justice will be up and running with permanent headquarters in The Hague by 2003. More than 60 countries recently ratified a statute in April 2002. The text of this was actually drawn up and first signed in 1998. The date of 1 July 2002 had been set for the implementation of this landmark agreement, since the minimum requirement of 60 ratifying nations has been achieved.

The most interesting thing about the signatories is not the 60 present, but the abundance of absentees. These include Israel, Russia, China and most Arab states. In December 2000 President Bill Clinton signed the treaty committing the US to the idea. However, the Bush administration, which was worried about the prospect of the court having the power to put Americans on trial, was quick to distance itself from it. This was performed in a similar manner to the unilateral abandonment of the anti-ballistic missile treaty, the rejection of the Kyoto protocol on climate

change, and also the UN treaty on gun running. The discussions of an International Court of Justice illustrate how topical the issue of international law is. This leads on to a further discussion of the issue of international law, international tradition and the concept of international justice.

#### Natural relationships and conventions

Every state naturally forms agreements with other states according to its interests. This type of relationship occurs by mutual consent and has always existed between human communities. Rudimentary traditions can be traced back to four millennia BCE. These covered activities such as the sending of emissaries, formalities involving the initiation and cessation of hostilities, and the arrangement of truces during holiday (holy day) periods. Indeed the modern day Olympic Movement celebrates just such a lull in hostilities amongst the ancient Greeks.

The pagan Arabs had several inter-tribal conventions, such as not hindering the visitors to the Ka'bah. This was not law as such. This was merely a convention, agreed upon due to the repetition of this action. Study of the Seerah of Rasoolallah ﷺ shows Arab tradition to be important in moulding the political landscape of the Peninsula. This is important in understanding many verses of Qur'an and incidences in the Seerah. For example, events pre and post the Treaty of Hudaibiyah (where Muslims' passage of pilgrimage was prevented) should be understood in the light of what was customary amongst the tribes. The Muslims' plight gained sympathy from the tribes around the peninsula.

#### The Islamic state and international tradition

Rasoolallah ﷺ acknowledged the phenomena of international tradition. On the occasion when two emissaries were sent from Musaylamah the Liar, a man who claimed Prophethood after Muhammad ﷺ, they read a message that started; "From Musaylimah Rasoolallah to Muhammad Rasoolallah..." He ﷺ replied to this, "If it were not for the conventional security granted to envoys I would have cut off your heads."

Another Arab convention was not to fight during the sacred months. When an expedition of 'Abdullah Ibn Jahsh ﷺ killed Amru Ibnul

Hadhramy, imprisoned two men from Quraish and seized a caravan from Quraish, the Quraish rallied opposition against the Muslims. They promulgated to the Peninsula that Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions had violated the sanctity of the sacred months. According to them, he had breached the Arab conventions. Allah ﷻ settled the issue through revelation. This boosted the morale of the Muslims and poured scorn on the Quraish's ridiculous accusations.

﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ  
وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ  
أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ  
يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوا﴾

*"They will ask you concerning fighting in the sacred month. Say, 'Fighting therein is a grave offence, but graver is it, in the sight of Allah, to prevent access to the path of Allah, to deny Him, to prevent access to the sacred Masjid and drive out its people therefrom. Tumult and oppression are worse than killing. Nor will they cease to fight you until they turn you back from your deen if they can.'" [TMQ Al-Baqarah: 217]*

#### International law is distinct from international tradition

The naïve not only take international law as an article of faith but also worship its very being, considering it sacrilege to act outside international law. "International law is at the very apex of all legal systems, that it is a source of legitimacy for all municipal systems of law." (Kelsen H, Principle of International Law, 1966). To assess the reality of international law, we must review the very fundamental basis of law and then extend this to the international situation. Laws must firstly come from a lawmaker that has legitimacy in the eyes of those who follow the law. With Muslims, the lawmaker is Allah ﷻ, and by definition, we have submitted ourselves to His ﷻ command. Secondly the laws must be acceptable to its adherents. As Muslims we believe that Allah gave us an acceptable code, compatible with the human constitution. Allah ﷻ knows best our make-up. In the realm of public life another issue must be considered; enforceability. The laws of public life, in any state, need some

form of enforcement, without which laws become merely theoretical.

#### International law is not universal

The track record of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights speaks for itself in terms of its acceptable universality and implementation. Moreover, the issue of enforceability exposes international law to be illusory. There is no international policeman. There is no credible international court with meaningful authority. Case-after-case, has proved international law to be a farce. As with “ethical foreign policies” and a “Third Way” economy, international law is another example of meaningless psychobabble. What these oxymorons also share is that they allude to muddled beguiling principles.

Operation Desert Fox, may be taken as an example. The act of oppression was met with a mixed response from the international community. There was disparity within the Security Council itself. France, Russia, China and other members all opposed it. Based on Article 39 of the UN Charter; “The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to peace, breach of peace, or act of aggression.” Clinton and Blair violated the written law of the Charter by acting bilaterally. Acting in this manner they demonstrated the abject insignificance of the Charter. Theoretically, the US and UK should be punished for violation of the Charter. Even within the UK Labour Party, the very party of government, there was disparity. Countless articles, letters to the editor and interviews appeared by MPs and Ministers voicing different opinions on the international legitimacy of the bombing. We should not see the bickering and arguments as a ludicrous travesty of the law. We should see these shenanigans as evidence that international law is merely an illusion. The same arguments may be applied to the US’s unilateral bombing of Sudan and Afghanistan. The activities of George W Bush’s administration with regards to Afghanistan, Iraq and the holding of “unlawful combatants” in Guantanamo Bay all further illustrate how international law is really just non-existent.

Although there are scores of cases that could be used to illustrate this discussion, one of the best examples is that of the Pinochet fiasco. The incompatibility of individual national laws and international law, in this case, demonstrated the sheer farcical status of international law. This

epitomised the fallacy of international law. The case’s complexities pushed legal minds into overdrive on three continents. The case centred around two thorny issues. Firstly, whether Pinochet enjoys “sovereign immunity” as a former head of state, and whether his crimes are covered by the concept of “universal jurisdiction” which overrides the very narrow definitions of “jurisdiction” that individual countries impose on themselves for dealing with crimes that occur outside of their borders. Sovereign immunity is actually an ancient international tradition paralleled with diplomatic immunity. It is thought to have evolved to allow nations to deal freely without legal impediment. Nowhere in British law does it explicitly state that this immunity extends to a former, as opposed to a current head of state. Pro-Pinochet lawyers extrapolated this to former rulers. However, many international lawyers have disputed this interpretation. They cite treaties stating that absolutely nobody has immunity from prosecution for so called “crimes against humanity”. The lack of sovereign immunity is stated in the Nuremberg Charter (which Britain had a key role in drafting). The Nuremberg and Tokyo war crime courts (and the subsequent UN resolutions affirming these decisions as law), both of which Britain ratified, stated that any public official can be prosecuted. Legal scholars argued that these principles had been reiterated explicitly in the statutes of the Yugoslav and Rwandan tribunals. An article appears stating this in the treaty agreed in Rome, in July 1998, to set up a permanent international criminal court. At the end of the day, the whole trial fell apart because of Pinochet’s ill health. He left the UK, a frail and pathetic figure, only to jump up, out of his wheel chair with the sudden rush to his brain of the revitalising fresh air of Santiago. Some may say he got off lightly because of his good fortune of becoming ill. Perhaps he got off merely because so-called international law is such a shambles.

The subject of international relations is bigger than treaties and agreements. It is for this reason that his case has raised many important issues for other former rulers. Based on the Pinochet precedent, Bush (Sr.) could be tried for the invasion of Panama, Bush (Sr. & Jr.), Powell and Schwartzkopf for Iraq or Henry Kissinger for the bombing of Cambodia. Libya could seek the arrest of Reagan for the bombing of Tripoli. Lithuania could bring charges against Gorbachev for civilian assaults in 1991 and so on and so forth.

The Islamic state will disregard the written international law

Although international law does not really exist, its rhetoric certainly does. For this reason it is necessary to understand that the idea itself is unequivocally wrong. If countries must coexist under one umbrella the laws they abide by must be truly universal. However, in reality what values are truly universal? Freedom is not, Democracy is not, and even a single definition of human rights is not. If there is no consensus on the most axiomatic question about the purpose of our lives, what common ground can there possibly be? The smoke screen of international law and human rights ironically becomes an excuse of oppression.

International law and its vehicles are used to manipulate other states and secure the interests of those nations at the helm of the United Nations. The threats posed and the problems caused by international law cannot be solved by reformation of the law, since it is its very conception that is erroneous. This is the only way to incite other nations to disenfranchise from the international law. This will ensure the abolition of international law, the annihilation of all of its structures, the severance of its tentacles and the long overdue punishment of its guardian agents.

Once this is done, the nations can then engage according to a contemporary international tradition. International tradition is something that Rasoolallah ﷺ used to his advantage. His political astuteness enabled the Islamic State to achieve dominance, a matter that international law will never permit for the Muslims. We learn from this lesson that the Islamic State in the modern age can also manipulate the established norms that exist between nations. The Khalifah must be politically astute enough to use the intentional conventions to benefit the State's international standing, without falling into error and political suicide by submitting to international law.

﴿وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا﴾

*“And never will Allah permit the disbelievers to have authority over the believers.”*  
[TMQ An-Nisa: 141]

Noble of Nobel live in Disneyworld, not our world

The United Nations and its leader, Kofi Annan, on 12 October 2001 won the Nobel Peace Prize for “their work for a better organised and more peaceful world”. The Norwegian Nobel committee said that the United Nations and Mr Annan would share the \$943,000 prize. It praised the UN for being at the forefront of efforts to achieve peace and security in the world. However, the prize was awarded with a fanfare in the same week that the bombing and killing of innocent civilians started in Afghanistan. The committee selected this year's winner on 28 September 2001, two weeks after the events of 11 September 2001.

Mr Annan became UN secretary-general in 1997. He was the head of UN peacekeeping operations when the United States lobbied against Boutros Boutros-Ghali winning a second term. In an unprecedented vote of confidence, Mr Annan was unanimously re-elected to a second term by the 189 UN member states in June 2001. Thus, this year he was doubly rewarded for doing as he is told, taking home a gigantic salary and bottomless expense account.

Is it not paradoxical that Kofi Annan was awarded an award for peace at such a time of turmoil? This should not come as a surprise. The whole concept of Nobel prizes is riddled with irony from the onset. The Nobel prizes were created by the Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel in his will and are presented on the anniversary of his death in 1896.

It was not just the ghost of Alfred Noble that praised Annan. President Bush said that the UN should take on the job of rebuilding Afghanistan when the military attacks are over, which might include supervising elections. He said; “I think when you look around, the UN is the only organisation that in the past has done the kind of work that will be necessary in Afghanistan.” So, exactly what kind of work does Bush define as “good work”? Perhaps Mr Annan can do what is “necessary” to suit President Bush. His past performance has proved that he is up to the task.

Many of us remember Kofi Annan for his “good work”, such as his attempt to negotiate with Saddam Hussein and his failures in Sierra Leone. He is actually indirectly guilty of precipitating and prolonging

the blood shed in Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Somalia. As head of the UN peacekeeping department Annan failed to prevent the killings in Srebrenica.

One thing is for sure; the Muslims weren't at the party in Stockholm. I'm also sure the noble Nobel will understand if the survivors of the genocide in both Rwanda in 1994 and the massacre of Muslim men and boys in Bosnia a year later refuse to join the chorus of praise for Mr Annan and the UN. Both of these groups could quite rightly accuse him and the UN of failing to prevent the death of their relatives and neighbours. Muslims have come not to expect too much from this organisation. However, it is in their job description to prevent such genocide. Events like the Nobel awards ceremony just demonstrate to the world how they had no intention of creating world peace. The Nobel awards ceremony was merely a session for dancing on the graves of the Muslims of Srebrenica.

Annan's track record at the department of peacekeeping exhibited his credentials for his job as secretary general. He shows how he is able to interpret the UN charter as generously as possible to allow the attack on Afghanistan to go ahead. Article 51 permits states to defend themselves against attack. It says nothing about subsequent retaliation. It offers no licence to attack people who might be harbouring a nation's enemies. The bombing of Afghanistan, which began before the UN Security Council gave its approval, is legally contentious. That is according to their own "international law". Yet the man and the organisation that overlooked this obstacle to facilitate war are honoured for their contribution to peace.

There are many criticisms of the UN that could be made. However, for the moment let us just look at that other bastion of Western civilisation, Nobel, the organisation that honours butchers, murderers and terrorists. Probably the farce, of recent years, starts with the day Henry Kissinger received the Nobel Peace Prize. Henry Kissinger was later joined in the rogues gallery by many other shady figures. These include; Yasser Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres in 1994. Before that in 1993 Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk. Prior to this both Arafat and Mandela were considered terrorists by the British government.

So, have the Nobel committee, over the years, brought a bad name to a good upstanding organisation? Perhaps contradictions and farce are just part and parcel of all these pillars of Western civilisation. Alfred Nobel himself was a figure of paradoxes and contradictions. He invented the most powerful explosives of his day. These are still being used in modern warfare. Nobel's contribution to humanity was the invention of dynamite (1867). Prior to this he invented specialised "blasting caps" to make nitro-glycerine easier to handle by the users. His logic was that if he designed explosives that could be so devastating to human life no one would dare use them in war, as they were just too awful. War would be a thing of the past because these weapons would wipe out the whole of humankind. He left the bulk of his fortune in trust to establish what came to be the most highly regarded of international awards, the Nobel Prizes. So from the start to present day the nobility of the Nobel are irony personified.

## Social and Family Life

### Protection of society

The sub-human circumstances in which the Muslims were transported to Guantanamo Bay were justified by Richard B Myers, an American General in his statement; “They were capable of gnawing through hydraulic cables in their transport plane to bring it down.” The verb gnawing is normally only associated with rodents, particularly rats. The West, obviously view these Muslims as criminals. They obviously view them as animals, perhaps species *Rattus norvegicus* or the like. So, are all criminals, in the West, to be viewed as vicious scavenging four legged vermin? If so, there must be a swarm of these animals comparable in size to that which brought the Black Death. Plague is not a term often used in the media, in the context of crime and criminals. However, the term “crime wave” is always en vogue. “Crime wave” as a phrase loses its meaning at some point when a tsunami engulfs society in an ocean of theft, grand larceny, clandestine white-collar crime and overt corporate corruption.

All this discussion of things pertaining to human and things pertaining to animal provides a perfect opportunity to address how inhuman crime actually is. The last week of December 2001, the so-called Christmas week, is a time when many indulge in good will to all mankind. However, in that week in the UK a woman was shot in the head for her mobile phone. A man was stabbed in the head with a screwdriver because he tried to prevent thieves taking and driving away his in-law’s car. Both incidences were given blanket coverage in the news. We can be certain that many other violent crimes were under reported during that period. A few footballers fighting in nightclubs were also reported. Some of the other events that were barely mentioned included; a 10-year-old boy was held up at gunpoint for a mobile phone, two men were shot dead at a New Year’s party and one man was found bludgeoned to death, all in

the same week. There is violent crime, and crime in general, found amongst all sectors of Western society. However, one section of society that often gets good coverage, perhaps for obvious racial reasons, is that of violent crimes in the West Indian community. This is the so-called “black on black” crime. According to UK police figures there were 21 black on black killings in London and 67 other attempted murders during 2001. Many, although not all, of these crimes have been related to drugs. That is, either directly or indirectly. Again, according to police investigations, shootings have been sparked off by important incidences such as; a man’s sarcastic remark about another’s haircut, accidentally treading on someone’s foot and a man being refused entry to a nightclub. In the last incident the man not only shot the doorman but he decided to randomly shoot other people waiting in the queue.

Shootings related to drug-gang turf wars, in the inner cities, are given a high profile in the press. However, shootings are merely the tip of a crime-ridden iceberg that affects all urban citizens. Class A drugs such as heroin and cocaine (particularly its “street” form “crack”, which is favoured by the poor rather than the snorted form that is favoured by “yuppies”) are driving other crimes such as burglary and theft. Home Office research has shown that those arrested for property offences are most often under the influence of drugs - almost 70% of those charged test positive for heroin and/or cocaine. About 30% of those caught shoplifting tested positive for cocaine and 47% for opiates. Violent crime seems to be most commonly associated with cocaine only. Half of all arrestees for assault tested positive for crack. Those using both drugs accounted for a quarter of arrests. These figures do not address alcohol, which is even more widespread because it is legal and more socially accepted - its effects on crime statistics as well as its consumption of the health budget (through alcohol related diseases and alcohol induced assaults and the subsequent occupation of hospital beds) is almost unquantifiable.

Although intoxicants are not the root cause of social instability in the West, they are certainly a significant factor. Muslims are quick to observe this, but non-Muslims are also starting to admit that alcohol fans the flames of the underlying social depravity, moral bankruptcy and debauchery. Rasoolallah ﷺ called alcohol the;

((أم الخبائث))

“mother of all vices.” (Umm al-Khabaith)

Like drugs (another form of intoxicant), drink destroys the well being of society. Rasoolallah ﷺ also;

((كل شراب أسكر فهو حرام))

“Every drink which intoxicates is haram.”

Alcohol is legal in the UK but marijuana is illegal. It is a criminal offence to use it, carry it, buy it or sell it. That is the law of the land. Similarly it is under the law of the land that minors (under 18 years of age) are not allowed to drink in public or buy or sell alcohol. It is noteworthy that around the same period of the New Year news broke that the third in line to the British throne, Prince Harry, had been drinking in a public house and smoking marijuana. The royal family members are not only supposed to uphold the law, they are expected to be role models to their subjects. It is only through the royal ascension that any parliamentary ruling becomes law. Thus, when Prince Harry smokes “dope” and drinks in public he is just breaking his grandmother’s law. A similar crime was seen by the Prime Minister’s own son, Euan Blair. He was found “drunk and disorderly” in central London, after a night of underage drinking. Again his father is one of those who make the laws that he expects other citizens to live by. The son of the current Foreign Secretary and former Home Secretary Jack Straw was actually caught selling marijuana. The behaviour and attitude of these people can be contrasted with that of Rasoolallah ﷺ and his family. Rasoolallah ﷺ once told his dear beloved daughter Fatimah that if she stole he would have her hand cut. Islam not only eradicated the problem of drinking and its ills, but Islam also eradicated corruption in ruling.

However, returning back to the current situation in the West, it is not only the inner city poor and urbanite sophisticates that break the law, even though it is urban crime that hogs the headlines. The right-wing press has praised the rural community for their model behaviour throughout the foot and mouth crisis and the various problems that have struck the farming communities in recent years. However, the reality is

that a massive crime wave has hit the countryside with thieves raiding deserted farmyards. So much for “thriving in adversity” and the Dunkirk spirit. No sector is immune from crime in Britain. In December 2001 the British government was warned in a survey by the British Chambers of Commerce that it must do more to tackle a crime wave against business, estimated to cost £18.8 billion a year. The poll of 3,000 firms showed that 58% had been the victims of crime over a 12-month period. Hotels and catering was the worst hit sector, Yorkshire and Humberside was the most vulnerable geographical area. The survey showed that faith in the police was low in some quarters, with 13% of businesses not bothering to report problems. Furthermore, 40% of companies reported to the police less than half of crimes they had suffered, with small firms the least likely to take incidents any further, worried about the time taken up by an investigation. These businesses consider their time more important than addressing the spectre of crime in the community. This is not only morally reprehensible but also actually myopic in business terms.

The situation is no better in the US. In America a murder is committed every 22 minutes, a rape every 5 minutes, a robbery every 49 seconds and a burglary every 10 seconds. The cost of crime in the US is estimated at \$675 billion each year. According to a recent study from Texas A&M University, Prof. Morgan Reynolds found that of the 500,000 burglaries that take place each month, only 6,000 burglars go to jail. And of this 1% efficiency the average time served by those convicted is one year and one month.

It is all too easy to criticise the West. One must not merely use crime statistics as a broadside in a War Against Error. One must understand that Islam has many concrete solutions to the problems that have been highlighted here. It has already been mentioned that Islam forbids alcohol, thus removing a considerable contributor to the current crime wave. More importantly Islam instils a sense of duty in all members of the community. That is, a duty to uphold the law for the sake of gaining success in the hereafter. We also uphold these laws in the hope that Allah’s ﷻ blessings will be showed on the community that hold fast to these laws. This is beautifully explained in the famous Hadith of Rasoolallah ﷺ, Hadith as-Safeena (Hadith of the Ship);



((مثل القائم على حدود الله والواقع فيها، كمثل قوم استهموا على سفينة، فأصاب بعضهم أعلاها وبعضهم أسفلها، فكان الذين في أسفلها إذا استقوا من الماء مروا على من فوقهم، فقالوا: لو أنا خرقنا في نصيبنا خرقاً، ولم نؤذ من فوقنا، فإن يتركوهم وما أرادوا هلكوا جميعاً، وإن أخذوا على أيديهم نجوا ونجوا جميعاً))

“Those who observe Allah’s restrictive ordinances together with those who indulge in breaching them, both are like those people who cast lots on a ship. Some of them have taken possession of the upper part of the ship while the others have taken possession of the lower part of it. When these latter people wanted to obtain water to quench their thirst they had to pass by those on the upper part of the ship. They said amongst themselves, ‘If we bore a hole in our lower part of the ship, we would not harm those on the upper part.’ Now should the occupants of the upper deck leave those on the lower deck to bore such a hole, all of them would inevitably perish, but should they however prevent them from doing so, they would be safe, and so they would all have been saved.” [Bukhari and Muslim]

Thus, the system is in effect to protect society from certain actions, which, if they were to occur, would be damaging to the whole of the community. These violations take the form of drinking alcohol, murder, adultery, apostasy and theft. The punishments for these crimes are not geared merely to correct the individual, but are examples and warnings to the community. This is explained further in the saying of Uthman ibn Affan ؓ;

“Allah corrects (restrains) by the power of government (sultan) those who are not corrected (restrained) by the teachings of the Qur’an.”

Muslims are accountable for every action performed. There are many crimes that are stipulated in the Shari’ah for which there exists a punishment that is enforced by the Islamic State. Such a principle is important, because it does not merely protect the society, but taking the punishment for such crimes through a court of Shari’ah removes its punishment in the hereafter. It acts as Kaffarah (atonement) and is the means to repent and seek forgiveness. Muslims need to remember that Allah ﷻ knows and will account all actions. Therefore, it is better to receive the punishment in this life and sincerely repent than to face the punishment in the afterlife. Many Muslims during the time of Rasoolallah ﷺ confessed to their crimes that are severely punishable because they didn’t want to have it count against them on the Day of Judgement. It is narrated by Abu Dawud;

((وحدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة حدثنا عبد الله بن نمير وحدثنا محمد بن عبد الله بن نمير وتقاربا في لفظ الحديث حدثنا أبي حدثنا بشير بن المهاجر حدثنا عبد الله بن بريدة عن أبيه قال جاءت الغامدية فقالت يا رسول الله إني قد زنت فطهرني وإنه ردها فلما كان الغد قالت يا رسول الله لم تردني لعلك أن تردني كما رددت ما عزا فوالله إني لحبلى قال إما لا فاذهبي حتى تلدي فلما ولدت أتته بالصبي في خرقة قالت هذا قد ولدته قال اذهبي فأرضعيه حتى تطفميه فلما طفمته أتته بالصبي في يده كسرة خبز فقالت هذا يا نبي الله قد طفمته وقد أكل الطعام فدفع الصبي إلى رجل من المسلمين ثم أمر بها فحفر لها إلى صدرها وأمر الناس فرجموها فيقبل خالد بن الوليد بحجر فرمى رأسها فتضح الدم على وجهه

خالد فسبها فسمع نبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سبه إياها  
فقال مهلا يا خالد فوالذي نفسي بيده لقد تابت توبة لو  
عليها ودفنت))

“A woman of Ghamid came to the Prophet ﷺ and said; ‘I have committed a punishable sexual act.’ He ﷺ replied, “Go back.” She then returned, and on the next day came to him ﷺ again and said, “Perhaps you want to send me back as you did to Ma’iz bin Malik. I swear by Allah ﷻ I am pregnant.” He ﷺ said to her, “Go back.” She then returned to him ﷺ next day. He ﷺ said, “Go back until you give birth to the child.” She then returned. When she gave birth to the child she brought the child to him ﷺ, and said, “Here he is! I have given birth to it.” He ﷺ said, “Go back and suckle him until you wean him.” When she had weaned him, she brought the boy to him ﷺ with something in hand which he was eating. The boy was then given to a certain man of the Muslims and he ﷺ commanded regarding her. So a pit was dug for her, and he ﷺ gave orders about her and she was stoned to death. Khalid was one of those who was throwing stones at her. He threw a stone at her. When a drop of her blood fell on his cheek, he abused her. Rasoolallah ﷺ said to him, “Gently Khalid. By Him in whose Hand my soul is, she has repented to such an extent that if somebody who performed a wrong action, were to repent to alike extent, he would be forgiven.” Then giving command regarding her, he ﷺ prayed over her and she was buried.”

These examples and many more describe how the Islamic system is not just a collection of dos and don'ts - it is about a frame of mind. The correct mindset has to be instilled in the citizens of the state. It is this correct way of thinking that sustains the safeena (boat) of society. We are humans with dignity not animals.

Allah ﷻ has given us laws relating to certain elements of public life, which if violated are catastrophic for society. To prevent the catastrophe of the sinking ship Allah placed the duty on us to uphold certain laws and principles. These are categorised into five issues.

### 1) Belief

The belief is the very essence of Islam. It is the most sacred of all things. Allah may forgive us for our shortcomings in our actions, but deficiencies and error in belief could override any “good” that we have done in this world. The ultimate insult to the belief in Islam is not academics and journalists writing vitriol against the Islamic form of government, or against jihad. Neither is it ill-informed Christians at Hyde park corner walking around with T-shirts proclaiming in Arabic writing “Isa-ibn-Allah”. The ultimate insult to Islam is someone to proclaim his belief in Islam and then later openly proclaim his departure from the deen. This is an act of subversion and sedition in the community. This type of action potentially sends shock waves through the community. It reduces the status of Tawhid to nothing more than a cult. We as humans must understand how weighty the issue of Islam is before we enter into it. Islam cannot be a fleeting fad that can attract transient adherence. It is a way of life. The only true way of life prescribed by the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. If a human cannot see that, he is not forced into accepting it. Therefore anyone who wants to leave Islam after accepting it and being advised, is subject to the penalty of death as is anyone who slanders the creed of Islam.

### 2) Honour

In Islam women are considered an honour and must be protected from all harm, slander, and degrading actions. This is completely unlike the West which sees women as merely objects of desire and uses the woman's body as a product to sell. Therefore Islam protected the woman by punishing those who even backbite against her. Moreover, Islam protects the dignity of the woman by punishing those who are not properly covered in the public life and those who commit offences such as adultery and fornication.

### 3) Mind

The use of alcoholic drinks and any other substances that befog the mind are forbidden in Islam.

## 4) Property

Islam protects the wealth of all its citizens by securing an apparently harsh punishment ie cutting the hand of the thief. This punishment has been the subject of the greatest attack by the West as being barbaric and backward. But this attack is not only baseless but serves to expose the hatred and distortion of the enemies of Islam. In fact cutting the hand of the thief has several strict conditions, eg. it requires two witnesses, property has to be taken from a secure place, if you steal because you are needy there is no punishment, if you steal less than a certain amount (nisab) there is no cutting. These and the other conditions in effect reduce the likelihood of the punishment ever being carried out.

## 5) Life

Rasoolallah ﷺ said that; “The blood of a Muslim is worth more than the Ka’ba and all its surroundings.” Therefore the punishment for murder is death with the right of family of the deceased to forgive and receive blood money.

These securities that Islam protects are the very things which any human being wants. At the societal level these are the five main elements that the system of Islam protects. With the absence of the Islamic State came a marked absence of the means and measures to protect society. However, just as importantly, the respect for, belief, honour, mind, property and life have been eroded. The colonialist systems worked hard to get the Muslims to think that violations of these sacred societal tenets are a mere trivial issue. In the West violations of these five issues are just seen as misdemeanours. However from the Islamic perspective some of these crimes are considered capital offences. It is this attitude of demeaning these five points, which has been imported from the West. When we loose respect for belief, honour, mind, property and life chaos prevails in society.

As for the situation in the West, it seems that it is incredibly dire. Contradiction and double standards underpin a debauched immoral society. So a war in distant lands like the Indian subcontinent and Afghanistan is all that the Western governments need to take the public’s minds off the plague that is engulfing their own countries. This same

public should take a moment to reflect on how the US and UK governments are treating criminals that are wreaking a reign of terror in the most barbaric manner on their own people. Even after being tried and found guilty, are these barbarians shackled and chained and equated to rats? The West should ask themselves who are the more dangerous to them, those individuals that were pulled out of caves in Afghanistan or those that are eating away at the very fabric of their own societies. Who are the real rats?

Neither the Simpsons nor the Waltons

Today family values are widely discussed. Politicians, academics and journalists of all persuasions claim to champion family values. In the Islamic world the policies of choice often contradict the correct values. The governments promote tourism, consumerism, and the wholesale importation of the ubiquitous Euro-American popular culture. They have adopted education curricula that are Xerox copies of those from the West. The current corrupt governments have been the main instigators of the breakdown of correct family structures. Families come packaged with certain attitudes and values. These are what define the character of families. These attitudes or ‘family values’ are moulded, developed and affected by numerous factors. Environmental, social and governmental factors, all contribute to the shaping of family values.

A major part of any political system deals with issues of family structure, law and attitudes. These may be economical (ensuring food shelter and clothing for the families of the state), legal (laws concerning marriage and divorce), social (responsibilities of the family members) and educational.

The State’s citizens must acquire some basal knowledge of family rules. To develop the correct attitudes, we must first have knowledge with regards to family law in Islam. Therefore, the education system plays a key role in establishing this communal basal knowledge. The atmosphere must be such that the individual feels the need and desire to learn his or her duties towards the family. The State will have the media, education system, Imams and Mosques at its disposal for this task of inducing the correct atmosphere.

The Islamic government protects the family values

Many Islamic laws are implemented by the family but enforced by The Islamic Government. Rasoolallah ﷺ delivered a call to humankind and lived as a living example to all generations. In this capacity he was a judge, a commander of the army and a head of state. Moreover, he was an example for all who come to rule Muslims, from the time of the Sahabah ؓ till the Day of Judgement.

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them.” [TMQ An-Nisa: 65]

The first Islamic State was a source of authority that regulated aspects related to the family. Many ahadith were spoken in response to questions asked of Rasoolallah ﷺ in his capacity as a ruler and a judge. For subjects such as divorce and inheritance this is clear. However, even some of the more general issues related to the family were covered in this light. The Islamic laws related to the family obviously originate in the Qur’an and Sunnah. What is also outlined in the revealed text is a series of attitudes and values. We as Muslims should adopt these attitudes. The state should also create a climate in which these general attitudes may flourish.

Abu Hurairah narrated that a man named al-Aqra ibn Habis visited the Prophet ﷺ and was surprised to see him kiss his grandsons, Hasan ؓ and Hussain ؓ.

((عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قبل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الحسن بن علي وعنده الأقرع بن حابس التميمي، فقال: ((إن لي عشرة من الولد ما قبلت منهم أحداً، فنظر إليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثم قال: " من لا يرحم لا يرحم " ))

“Do you kiss your children?” he asked, adding that he had ten children and had never kissed one of them. ‘(That shows) you have no mercy and tenderness at all. Those who do not show mercy to others will not have Allah’s mercy shown on them’, commented the Prophet.” [Bukhari]

It is bemusing today to imagine a powerful head of state kissing his grandchildren in the middle of state affairs. This was the case then, as is seen from the response of the visitor. However, this incident really describes the unique character of Islam. It is intriguing that this same head of state gave comment, advice and judgement on plain ordinary family relationships.

A man once came to Rasoolallah ﷺ and said that he had carried his mother on his own shoulders single-handed through out all the rites and rituals of Hajj. He went on to ask if by doing this, he had repaid his mother for the kindness she had shown him as a child. Rasoolallah ﷺ replied by saying that all he had done had not even repaid his mother for one single contraction of the womb during labour when his mother bore him.

Even to foreign heads of state the same issues were conveyed. This was as a matter of describing the family values of the Islamic State.

Abu Sufyan relates that in the course of his meeting with Heraclius, the latter asked him, “What does this Prophet teach you?” Abu Sufyan replied, “He tells us to worship Allah, the One, and not to associate anything with Him, to discard what our ancestors said, and to perform the Salat, tell the truth, keep chaste and exercise benevolence towards children.”

Prophethood ended with the death of Rasoolallah ﷺ but the functions of head of state continued with the rightly guided Khulafa.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ﴾

*“O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you.” [TMQ An-Nisa: 59]*

These Khulafa were not merely good men that were prominent within a good system during a good period of our history. These were the implementers of Allah’s ﷻ law and a model for later generations. They ruled the state with justice on the model revealed to Rasoolallah ﷺ. In the same manner that Rasoolallah ﷺ was approached, so were the Khulafa after his death. For example a man once came to ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab ؓ, the second Khalifah of Islam, complaining of his son’s disobedience to him. ‘Umar ؓ summoned the boy and spoke of his disobedience to his father and his neglect of his rights. The boy replied, “O Amir al Mu’mineen! Hasn’t a child rights over his father?” “Certainly”, replied ‘Umar ؓ. “What are they, Amir al-Mu’mineen?” “That he should choose his mother well, giving him a good name, and teach him the Book (Qur’an).” “O Amir al-Mu’mineen! My father did nothing of this. My mother was a Magian (fire worshipper). He gave me the name Ju’alaan (meaning dung beetle) and he did not teach me a single letter of the Qur’an.” Turning to the father, ‘Umar ؓ said, “You have come to me complaining about the disobedience of your son. You have failed in your duty to him before he failed in his duty to you, you have wronged him before he has wronged you.”

The government’s control of popular culture

capitalists have particular attitudes to love, relationships, mixing and responsibilities to kith and kin. The nature of Capitalism has resulted in excessive social freedoms. These freedoms have opened a Pandora’s box of ills that de-stabilise families. Mind numbing soap operas, love songs, cable music TV stations, and glossy magazines are the classroom for educating their youth about relationships.

The actual reality is just as horrific as the virtual reality of the media. In Britain, it seems that it is common for children to be born out of wedlock. Free market economies have exploited sex-to-sell. Popular culture glamorises and even idolises dysfunctional families. George Bush (Sr.), whilst President once said, “I want the average American family to be more like the Waltons and less like the Simpsons.” President Bush realised the monster that the system he was head of had created. This is

an example of one of the contradictions of Capitalism. Culture, be it popular or highbrow, has a major influence on family values. Culture in turn is highly affected by the ruling system.

In the Islamic world the same culture is promoted. The greatest corruption is always to be found in the urban areas. It is not a coincidence that these are the main areas where the government has the greatest influence on the minds of the people. Rural parts of the Islamic lands are the main places where the remnants of the Islamic social characteristics are to be found.

In the Islamic State every effort must be made to produce a climate fertile for Islamic family values. Our popular culture would come from the Qur’an and Sunnah. Our attitudes will come from Islam. Our entertainment will come only from those things that are allowed or encouraged in Islam. The Khilafah would not import foreign culture into the state. Muslims would find no place for cheap plastic Mickey Mouse American pop culture. The average Muslim family should be nothing like the Waltons or the Simpsons.

The Islamic Khilafah was responsible for the correct family values

Ibn ‘Umar narrated, Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((كلكم راع و كلكم مسؤول عن رعيته، فالإمام راع و هو مسؤول عن رعيته، و الرجل راع في أهله و هو مسؤول عن رعيته، و المرأة راعية في بيت زوجها و هي مسؤولة عن رعيته، و الخادم راع في مال سيده و هو مسؤول عن رعيته، و الرجل راع في مال أبيه و هو مسؤول عن رعيته .  
فكلكم راع و كلكم مسؤول عن رعيته))

**“Each of you is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. So the Imam who rules the people is a guardian and is responsible**

**for his subjects. And the husband is the guardian of the family and is responsible for his subjects. And the wife is the guardian of the house of her husband and of his children and is responsible for them.”** [Bukhari and Muslim]

The above illustrates that the ruler is responsible for the citizens of the Islamic State and that the husband is responsible for the family. What this actually entails is elucidated in other evidences (ie that the husband should maintain and provide for the family etc.) Similarly the wife is responsible for the children; again the details of this are outlined through other Islamic evidences. There are many parties responsible for generating an atmosphere to ensure the correct family values. These may involve the family members, Imams, teachers and judges and importantly, the media - all of which are directly and indirectly affected by the government.

Today's governments in Islamic lands undermine family values

Governments use the issue of family values when and where it pleases them. Western capitalist systems are riddled with contradictions almost by definition. The confused chaotic hybrid systems that prevail in Islamic lands have a thousand fold more contradictions than those of the West. These systems are merely impracticable perplexities. This is clearly seen in their social systems.

Tourism is one of the main industries of many Islamic countries. These governments put efforts into building tourism rather than building a manufacturing base. Tourism brings with it vice and corruption of immeasurable proportions. Presidents and kings may give lip service to family values, yet they are the first to welcome with open arms the traveller's cheque laden, modern day marauders.

The worth of a woman

Capital is the prominent feature of Capitalism. It is a system and society that places an abnormal emphasis on generating wealth. Economics, in a narrow sense, underpins all life's affairs. Men and women are seen merely as entities that contribute to the economy. Therefore, women as mothers are not valued. Homemaking is an unpaid, labour intensive,

strain on the economy. It has no direct bearing on the GDP. Therefore, the die of feminism was cast in an emotion of disenfranchisement in a cash-driven society. Issues related to working-women have been milestones en route to the feminists' 'liberation' of women.

The value of motherhood in Islam

The whole question of women's liberation in the West highlights the need for clearly defined roles in society for both genders. As people, we have a purpose. As people, we are here to serve Allah ﷻ. This involves adhering to the job description that Allah ﷻ has written for us. Defaulting on this contract will lead to despair in this life and in the next. With our eyes firmly focused on the hereafter we try to understand the position of genders in society.

Motherhood in Islam is highly honoured. This honour is not assessed qualitatively or quantitatively in economic terms. For example in 1993, the average British housewife's work was valued at £369 per week (Daily Express). Honour is not assessed in dollars or Pounds Sterling, but rather on what honour Allah ﷻ has assigned to it. Allah ﷻ has elevated the status of parenting in the Qur'an. From the Sunnah it is seen that motherhood in particular has been singled out. Allah ﷻ revealed,

﴿وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ  
عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٌ وَلَا  
تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا﴾

“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.” [TMQ Al-Isra: 23]

((جاء رجل إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: من  
أحق الناس بحسن صحابتي؟ قال: أمك، قال: ثم من؟ قال:  
أمك. قال: ثم من؟ قال: أمك. قال: ثم من؟ قال: أبوك))

**Abu Hurairah related that a man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, “O Rasoolallah, which of all the people is best entitled to kind treatment and good companionship from me?” He answered, “Your mother.” The man asked, “Then who?” He said, “Your mother.” “And after her?” He replied, “Your mother.” “And after her?” He replied, “Your father.”**

#### Economic evaluation of gender role in the West

Motherhood was not given the same position in the West. Capitalism changed many aspects of natural family structures. This affected the raising of children, responsibilities of parents and care of the elderly. Pre-industrial British economy was based on agricultural goods, craft production etc. This was organised through households. The household members, male, female, young and old all contributed. Industrialisation shifted production from the cottage to factories, shops and offices. Thus, the “home” became re-defined as the place that is not “work”. Women became “relegated” to the keepers of the home.

Womanhood to the Victorian bourgeois consisted of physical delicacy and the exclusion from paid work. However, this dainty pedestal of delicacy was propped up with sturdy hard-working housemaids. The working class women slaved their fingers to the bone servicing the needs of the aristocracy. This division in Victorian society left an ethos of confusion as a legacy for later generations. The twentieth century saw a complete change in this situation. However, the mindset of the people remained confused. This confusion was exacerbated by the rise of ideas of feminism, exploitation of women merely as images for selling in the consumer society and the lack of any intellectual challenge for stronger ideologies. The lauding of the stereotypical “working man” only served to demean motherhood and homemaking.

#### The sexual revolution

The 1960's saw dramatic changes sweep the US. In this respect, America became the trendsetter for the rest of the Western World. Young people, college students in particular, rebelled against what they viewed as the repressed, conformist society of their parents. They advocated a sexual revolution, aided by reduced government censorship, the birth

control pill and later the legalisation of abortion. Unrestrained individualism played havoc with family values. People began marrying later and having fewer children. The divorce rate accelerated to the point that the number of divorces per year was roughly half the number of marriages. The number of abortions rose, as did the illegitimacy rate.

Meanwhile, the economic conditions underlying women's status were changing. Women had fewer children and modern conveniences freed them from labour-intensive chores formerly associated with housekeeping. The growth of the service sector after the War helped create new types of jobs that could be done as well by women as by men. In Britain almost 90 per cent of new jobs created since 1970 have gone to women (Cohan and Borrill, 1993).

It wasn't until women achieved economic clout, by entering the workplace, that the feminist movement really took off. Various rights were granted by the system only after women had established themselves as major contributors to the economy. These rights were not fought for or demanded. They were given by the male dominated misogynistic Western society merely to appease and pacify women - this can be contrasted with Islam in which the rights for both men and women are previously prescribed by Allah ﷻ. Our rights are not affected by our economic status. Women in Islam were allowed to own property, vote for a Khalifah, trade in the markets and even employ men while Western thinkers debated whether women were even human and in possession of a soul.

#### Family values undervalued in the West

Many factors lead to the current Western attitude to motherhood, which is at odds with human nature. Children are brought up by strangers. A mother would work full time, and parent part time. She would give up three quarters of her wages, for childcare, to pay strangers to bring up her children. These are the so called “super mums”. They are not super at all and can lay claim to being mums only in the physiological sense. They con themselves about a thing called ‘quality time’. ‘Quality time’ being a condensed sound bite of parent-child interaction at the end of the day when the parent gets home from work. The social problems that these situations produce are immense.

Alternatively motherhood can be put into animated suspension until a promotion is achieved or a partnership gained. This can be achieved by reversible chemical sterilisation in the form of a pill or by the many innovative means that modern science has thrown up.

“Egg freezing”, is a service enabling women to pursue careers without having to sacrifice their natural craving for children. The Independent quoted Lucy, 33, Writer; “I don’t know whether or not I want children in the long-term...I do resent nature for this...I also think that a lot of women who really want children start to panic and compromise enormously in terms of their partner...So, yes if I had the opportunity to freeze my eggs I definitely would do so...I just would love to...be able to feel the way that men feel.”

Islam evaluates on other than economic terms

Men and women are both the creations of Allah ﷻ and in this respect are absolutely equal in status,

﴿فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ﴾

“And their Lord has accepted of them and answered them, ‘Never will I let to be lost the work of any of you be you male or female, you proceed one from another.’” [TMQ Ale-Imran: 195]

Allah ﷻ created man and woman with a different Fitra (nature) that gives them different roles to play. There are some attributes that are exclusive to men and some that are exclusive to women. Women bear children and wet-nurse babies. Men are physically stronger and are more capable in certain respects. The normal natural differences between men and women are explicitly and implicitly acknowledged in Islam, without interpreting them as one being better than the other. In contrast to Islam, Plato stated, “There is no occupation concerned with the management of social affairs which belongs to women or to men, as such...and every occupation is open to both” (The Republic). This epitomises the Greeks’ lack of comprehension of basic reality. This divorce from reality is something that the West willingly bought into and even cherishes as their

own heritage.

In Islam neither gender is seen as merely an economic entity. The roles and position of the genders are fully compatible with the realities of human nature. Moreover, our adherence to these roles results in a balanced society in this world and our success in the next. The set up of society on the Islamic model creates within it the unquestionable checks and preventative measures against many societal problems. Western governments assign ever-growing proportions of their budgets for solving these types of problems.



## Government and Ruling

### The nanny state

The Labour government that swept into power in the late 1990s was accused of creating a nanny state. The style and nature of the current Downing Street power is atypical of any past British government. Certain specific issues have left New Labour facing dilemmas about when and where a government should interfere with “the people’s” individual freedoms. These dilemmas are not specific to the Labour government. They are a feature of democratic ruling systems in general. When and where should a state intervene in personal choice?

### Incompatibility factor

Laissez faire liberalism may be considered the consummate capitalist model. Indeed non-interventionism became a synonym for Thatcherism and Reaganomics. In the mid 1980s, it was this sole principle to which Margaret Thatcher attributed her popularity. This is understandable as laissez aller (unconstrained freedom) is the capitalists’ *raison d’être*. Thatcher nurtured a culture in which freedom and self-preservation became credo. These articles of capitalist faith resulted in people being distrusting, at minimum, and detesting, at maximum, of the idea of government interference. Thatcherite popular opinion was totally incompatible with an authoritarian government. This mentality created a wedge between the people and the government.

### The liberal dilemma

There are stark stylistic contrasts between the Thatcher/Major governments and that of New Labour. Being man-made neither of their approaches are problem free. The edacious dog-eat-dog world of Thatcherite Britain laid testament to the disparity created by laissez faire

liberalism. However, this simplistic approach swept under the carpet the issue of the societal responsibility in legislation. Indeed Thatcher highlighted this in her famous “Death of Society” speech. On the other hand, Blairite Britain is a world where these societal complexities are faced head on. However, in addressing many of these issues Labour have produced policies containing blatant contradictions. These contradictions do not merely expose weaknesses in Blair’s government; rather they illustrate the fruits of the liberal dilemma.

It was the Tory government that first encountered the furore of British beef and “mad cow disease” (CJD). For years they refused to address the issue. John Gummer, a UK minister, famously fed his daughter a hamburger on TV in an attempt to rubbish the issue. This political hot potato was taken up willingly by Labour. They went beyond the legislation that the Tories were reluctant to adopt, and even went so far as banning the sale of beef on the bone. This was based on scant scientific evidence that beef on the bone had a direct link to new variant CJD. The government prevented the individual from exercising his or her freedom for choice. The arguments and discussions about beef and in particular beef on the bone are all in the public domain. The advice of ill-informed “experts” was the basis of state adoption and legislation.

In the US, suicide is best achieved by a gun to the temple - a quick efficient and effective method. In Britain the first choice is an overdose of paracetamol - a slow, inefficient and desperately painful method. However, the majority of people that purchase paracetamol use it as an analgesic and not a replacement for a snub 38 special. Legislation has been passed to prevent the sale of paracetamol in batches of 100 tablets. More recently the government attempted to limit the sale of vitamin B6, high doses of which the government deemed harmful. Discussions about handguns, foxhunting, the right to have a caesarean section versus normal birth have all hit the headlines in recent months.

These issues can be contrasted with the issue of boxing. The British Medical Association has continually advised that boxing should be banned. The numbers of people that are seriously injured or die in boxing bouts, as a proportion of those participating in boxing, is much higher than the proportions that consume beef and develop CJD. The government here chooses to ignore the opinion of the experts. Boxing

is left to the individual's will. The "experts" in this instance are ignored. Similar contradictions can be seen with tobacco advertising on racing cars and many others.

The basis for the dilemma

Liberal democracies are by their nature paradoxical systems. There is a demand for a law that secures the rights of the individual to be left alone, and a law that enforces the community's utilitarian interests in legislating on behalf of the public good, even at the cost of individual liberty. This dichotomy is rooted not in the politics of Kinnock and Thatcher or even Disraeli and Gladstone. In fact it is a centuries old debate. The debate was the main criticism that John Locke had of his predecessor Thomas Hobbes. In his "Leviathan", Hobbes wrote, life without a powerful sovereign could only be "solitary, poor, nasty and short." This was written during the English Civil War. This event and Hobbes's theories moulded modern democratic states. Locke later said of Hobbes, "He would have us send a sovereign lion to keep the polecats and foxes from devouring one another; but who then will protect us from the sovereign lion."

The theories of Hobbes and Locke were further refined when the dairy farmers of New England, the plantation owners of Virginia and the commercial bankers of New York grew weary of the abuses of King George III. Together they seized their independence. America's founders were driven by two conflicting needs; to free themselves from tyranny, be it colonialist or domestic, and the need to preserve property and private liberties. In framing their constitution they built into the system various checks and balances in an attempt to reconcile this conflict.

Islam's view of state intervention

When and where should a state intervene in personal choice? The issue of 'ibadaat (ritual worship) and mu'amalaat (life's affairs and transactions) is a staple of 'Usul ul-Fiqh. This subject, with its foundation in the traditional sciences of Islamic culture has important implications for understanding political theory.

The state is the vehicle by which public issues are implemented and the people are ruled over. Life's affairs are issues for state adoption. The law,

Shari'ah, comes from the Law Maker, Allah ﷻ. The implementation and regulation of this code lies with the Khalifah. The responsibility of affairs in the realm of ruling, judiciary, education, social system, economic and foreign policy; all are solely in the hands of the Khalifah.

Abu Hurairah narrated that Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((من أطاعني فقد أطاع الله ، ومن أطاع أميري فقد أطاعني

، ومن عصاني فقد عصى الله ، ومن عصى أميري فقد

عصاني))

"Whoever obeyed me, he obeyed Allah; whoever disobeyed me, he disobeyed Allah. Whoever obeyed the Amir, he obeyed me, and whoever disobeyed him disobeyed me." In addition Allah ﷻ states,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي

الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ﴾

"O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those of you who are in authority." [TMQ An-Nisa: 59]

Abu Hurairah narrated that Rasoolallah ﷺ said,

((إنما الإمام جنة يقاتل من ورائه ويتقى به))

"Verily the Imam (leader) is a shield that you fight with and be protected by."

An-Nawawi referred to this "The Imam is a shield' means a protection because he prevents the enemies from hurting Muslims and prevents people from hurting each other. He (the Imam) protects the limits of Islam. People fear him and fear his might."

The Khalifah has the right to adopt even in rituals if it has certain communal implications such the sighting of the moon for Ramadhan and Shawwal.

### Islam and the issue of ruling

Muslims accept the law to be from Allah ﷻ. We are therefore pleased to adhere to it, as adherence will benefit us in this life and in the next. The citizens of the state should know and understand that Khilafah is a duty that Allah ﷻ has prescribed. It is not the working of man. This principle would be the fulcrum for the developing of the good relations between the government and the people. Rebellion against the Islamic State is punishable in this life and in the next. We would not see state intervention as nannying, interference, or loss of liberty. The Khalifah's decision is to be obeyed. However, his decision should be based upon Shari'ah evidence. There is a principle from the sources of Islam that the Khalifah's decision should always be obeyed. In reality no comparisons can be accurately drawn between the Western model and the Islamic State. The main reason being that *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* are not sacred in Islam. Rather obedience to Allah ﷻ is. If this obedience entails obedience to the Islamic state we are all happy to comply. The Thatcherite philosophy could never be nurtured within The State.

The frictions between the people and the government in liberal democracies are symptomatic of the limitations of man as legislator. A deep-seated theory of liberty is totally incomparable with a workable smooth running society. It results in attrition. Islam on the other hand is compatible with the human mind and the human nature. However, an arduous task that the Islamic State must endure is to maintain a level of obedience within the people that is born of their own *Taqwa* and not merely through the might of the law. A union of hearts and minds and state legislation must be achieved. On studying the chaos of the Western system and the corruption of the Western philosophy, it moves us to realise that in order for a fledgling Islamic State to survive much emphasis must be placed on creating unity of thought between the state and the citizens. The eradication of the principle of *laissez aller* is essential for the here and now and also after Allah ﷻ grants us the Khilafah.

### Twelve honest men

'Trial by jury' is a pivotal part of Democracy. Many consider it a shining example of how the voice of the people and the authority of law work in harmony. They perceive that it has stood the test of time. The concept

was enshrined in the Magna Carta during the thirteenth century, "No free man shall be imprisoned except by the legal judgement of his peers". The jury's judgement acts as an independent restraint against unfair judges and incorrect laws. It is as important to Democracy as parliamentary or presidential elections. Like parliamentary election the reality is far from being representative of the people's opinion. The system in practice is riddled with flaws. It is more to do with spectacle and less to do with the truth. Real and fictional court cases have provided TV drama for global audiences. Regardless of the immense imperfections of this system, the key issue to Muslims is that trial by jury is completely contradictory to the Islamic system of justice.

### The reality of the jury system

Democracy per se is contrary to Islam. Our laws are from Allah ﷻ and not from man. We are judged ultimately on the Day of Reckoning by Allah ﷻ. The pressing need to always convict someone, as seen in the West, is not present in Islam. In this life we are judged by a judge who is qualified with knowledge of Allah's ﷻ law. This judge judges according to his knowledge of Allah's ﷻ law and not from his own opinion.

In theory and practice the jury is a group of laymen that decides factual issues in trials. It is predominantly an Anglo-American institution. Its particular characteristics vary between UK and US and among different US states. Generally, jurors are randomly selected from the greater population. The jury usually considers cases in secrecy and announces its verdict without providing a public explanation.

The reality in UK is that more than 95% of criminal cases and all civil cases (with the exception of libel) start and end in the magistrate's court, without a jury. Of those that do go to trial by jury most defendants end up pleading guilty. Thus, the whole issue touches the lives of a minute minority. Yet the common people are duped into believing that they always have the right to be tried by 'twelve honest men'. Civil libertarians defend this, though to most it is an irrelevancy. Many in fact forfeit this 'right'; being tempted by sentencing discounts as a reward for pleading guilty early on, thus saving the taxpayer's time and money.

### Jury selection

These 'twelve honest men' are neither random nor representative of the people. Their selection is almost based on their ignorance of the law. Selection generally tends to exclude lawyers, policemen, doctors, soldiers, magistrates and convicted criminals.

How a jury reaches a decision is not open for discussion or scrutiny. If a deliberating jury toss a coin to come to a decision no one would know. Indeed there is nothing to prevent them doing this. They have no reference point. They may convict based on the colour of someone's skin.

This issue was highlighted in the selection of Semi Valley to hold the Rodney King trial that found the officers caught on video innocent. Semi Valley being a sleepy middle class white suburb. The trial may have been different if it was held in South Central LA.

### Differences across the Atlantic

Differences have evolved between the US and UK models. That is in spite of the fact that they are born out of the same principle. US governmental system in general is garnished with Democracy at every level. Judges in the US are usually elected or appointed. UK judges usually work their way up through the ranks. Essentially US judges are the dregs of the bar and are always open to corruption. They concentrate on power and electioneering. The UK judges are usually the opposite. They are too white, too elitist, too qualified and too remote. Judges with these characteristics coupled with the ragbag bunch that make up the average jury are a recipe for disaster, in terms of making a correct judgement.

### The basis for judgement

Trial by jury has deep conceptual contradictions with Islam. What is wrong with a jury judging by tossing a coin? Is this really inferior to judging by their emotion, whim, ration, intellect or bias and prejudice? No jury have a strong criterion to refer to for judgement. For that matter no judge in the Western systems has a strong criterion to refer to - the jury is free to judge by any criteria. This is one of the main issues that

differentiates the Islamic system.

There is no pretence about a judgement being representative of the people. Unlike Democracy, Islam does not place humans as sovereign. Court cases are overseen and judged by a qualified judge. This judge has a definite reference point - Allah's ﷻ law is his criteria. He is always bound to accumulate as many facts of the case as possible and assess these evidences. These evidences are then compared to the Shari'ah laws. The judge is accountable in this life and in the next life if he is negligent in performing this task correctly. The judge is driven by his belief in Allah ﷻ and Allah's ﷻ system.

### Seeking sure evidence

The Islamic system is a mercy for humankind. The judicial and punishment systems guarantee the implementation of Allah's ﷻ mercy and the overall protection of the society. It is a unique system. Trials are not executed merely to convict. We believe that all violations of Allah's ﷻ law will be paid for, be it in this life or in the next. In fact the system would result in few convictions.

This is not because Islam is soft on crime, but rather because the punishments require such irrefutable evidences. Neither a judge nor a jury is required to mull over masses of circumstantial evidences. In the West, police forces, politicians and public figures are required to be seen to be convicting people. They don't necessarily have to curb crime. They just have to have people tried and convicted. The jury fit neatly into this wider political system. In Islam it is the opposite. Even in the time of Rasoolallah ﷺ there were acts of lewdness that were going on in Madinah behind closed doors that many people knew of. However, Islam did not come to punish people just for the sake of the prestige of the law enforcers. It is better to let individuals get away with a crime in this life. For sure, Allah ﷻ sees their crimes and they will ultimately be punished. The system is not required to drudge up weak evidence, hearsay, rumour, speculation and accusation.

The nature of the evidence and the overall character of the Islamic system would leave no place for the opinion of twelve men. Conviction of serious crime can be only based on two issues. These are confession

and witness testimony. The confession cannot be extracted under duress. In fact the individual should come forward to confess freely with the hope of redeeming themselves for the hereafter. Certain serious crimes will only be forgiven by Allah ﷻ in the next life if the performer fully repents in this life by confession and receiving the required punishment. To achieve the blessing of Allah ﷻ he or she may have to face lashing, amputation or even stoning. The judge would advise the confessor along these lines. As for witness confession, again this has no parallel in the West. The witnesses themselves are required to be of upright character, 'adil. The clarity in which they are required to have seen the act leaves their testimony beyond reproach.

For certain issues up to four witnesses are required to have observed the crime. The physical act of theft, murder or even copulation may have to have been seen in full view with no detail obscured.

The objective of seeking judgement

The judicial system rests upon the principle that the application of the Islamic judgment upon any issue is obligatory. This obligation is not just for electioneering and short-term politicking. The whole judicial system is implemented purely for the sake of Allah ﷻ and gaining success in the hereafter. All those involved in fulfilling this duty must feel the gravity of this role. The need to convict just to please the tabloids or produce palatable crime statistics should never be an issue. The judges themselves are on trial for how well they perform their obligations, as are all of us as Muslims. Our whole lives are trials for which we are questioned, on the last day. It is the adherence to this principle, by all of us, that will make the correct implementation of Islam possible.

Our criterion for actions is obedience to Allah's ﷻ law. Therefore, we are happy to refer every issue to Allah's ﷻ law. The opinion of the people amounts to little in Islam. Therefore, we would have no respect of the very thought of being tried by 'twelve honest men'. Trial by jury contradicts Islam from its fundamental conceptual basis and its practical implementation.