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Peaceful Co-Existence between Muslims and Non- Muslims: An Analysis of Pakistani Society in the light of Seerah Muhammad (pbuh)

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Abstract

At time it is renewed focus paid by UNO on creating dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence among different religions and cultures particularly, between Muslims and non-Muslims in political, social and academic circles and at the regional and sub-regional levels. After Great October Revolution 1917, the need to create peaceful co-existence among civilizations was started to realize as a part of the international politics of the modern world. The medieval legal history however, reveals that before the dawn of Islam, the notion of creating peaceful co-existence among different religions was totally absent. In that particular context, the political system of Islam originated the modern principle of peaceful co-existence among religions and cultures and established by the Prophet peace be upon him (pbuh) at the state of Medinah. Talking about the Pakistani society, the majority of the population is consisted of the Muslims yet peaceful co-existence with the non-Muslim minorities does not exist. This article thus, concludes that lack of harmony and peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims of Pakistan is causing to defame Islam as a peaceful and tolerant religion on the one hand, and is going to destruct the image of Pakistani Muslims as a peaceful nation on the other. This article suggests that the principle of peaceful co-existence between Muslims and Non-Muslims should be widely preached among the Pakistani Muslims as unavoidable Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh).

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It is also suggested that the contribution of the Prophet (pbuh) in creating dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence should also be admired at large by the non-Muslim intellectuals, writers and UNO on the basis of his (pbuh) scientific political approaches and wise steps due to which he (pbuh) successfully established a peaceful society and succeeded to create peaceful co-existence between Muslims and Non-Muslims. To provoke Muslims by supporting means of blasphemy is not the way to achieve the goal of peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims

Keywords: peaceful co-existence; Muslims and non-Muslims in Pakistan; Analysis in the light of Seerah Muhammad (pbuh).

1. Introduction

Islam is not only a religion but a complete code of life. It possesses a legal system that controls not only the worldly affairs of its followers but also their spiritual matters and leads them to live a pure life in this world and to get reward in the world hereafter. The Islamic concept of humanity is based on the principle of equality of all mankind. The modern concept of international law regarding equality before law has its origin in the divine revelation as God declares:

"يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَمُ" [1].

In another verse, God declares that all human beings were from same community/ one Ummah and then Allah Almighty sent to them prophets that resulted in the variety of religions

"كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ... " [2].

In this way, Allah Almighty Himself introduced the universal principle of religious diversity and declared that what is right and what is wrong will be decided by Him on the Day of Resurrection. Thus, Qur'an states:

" لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ... اللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ " [3].

This verse leads that "for every nation We have ordained religious ceremonies. . . Allah will judge b/w you on the Day of Resurrection about you differed".

It is uniqueness of the political system of Islam that it focused on the public interest and made each Muslim state bound to ensure the fulfillment of the basic necessities of its citizens. The freedom to adopt any of the religions is also a fore granted right of mankind bestowed by Allah Almighty Himself while the social terms are evaluated in the light of the conducts of the human beings [4]. It is this reason that we have divine provisions which provide freedom to profess any religion. It is stated in the Qur'an [5]. "لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ"

The principle of admiration and respect of other religions is also introduced by Allah Almighty as He revealed:

"وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ"

It lead not insult those whom disbelievers worship besides Allah lest they insult Allah wrongfully without knowledge [6].

Likewise, the principle of harmony and peaceful co-existence has its origin in the Qur'anic revelation. God advises the mankind not to discriminate among different messengers of Allah as whatever revealed to them was from Allah:

”قولوا آمناً بالله وما انزل اليهنا وما انزل الى ابراهيم واسماعيل . . . لا نفرق بين احدهم منهم“ [7].

These and similar verses clearly established the principles of peaceful co-existence among different religions and pronounced that Islam recognizes no barriers in brotherhood of humankind and that all human beings have equal political, social, cultural and religious rights and can live their lives in the light of the guiding principles of their religions [8]. ”وليحكم أهل الانجيل بما انزل الله فيه.“

This verse leads “Let the people of Injil/Gospel judge by what Allah has revealed therein”. This verse clearly allows the people of Scriptures to abide by their own religion and to decide their issues in the light of the provisions revealed to them. It thus, leads that phenomenon of religious diversity is *ab initio* intended by Allah Almighty Himself as after all, all the religions are based on the oneness of God and that at different religious sanctuaries only name of Allah is mentioned. So every religion should be recognized and given respect. The Qur'an states

”ولولا دفع الله الناس بعضهم ببعض لهدمت صوامع وبيع وصلوات و مساجد يذكر فيها اسم الله كثيرا.“ [9].

“For had it not been that Allah checks out one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques wherein the name of Allah is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down”. In the same manners, when the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was opposed by the pagans and asked to bring evidence regarding oneness of God, he (pbuh) gave the examples of earlier messengers of God like Abraham, Moses and Jesus [10].

In the light of the Qur'anic guiding principles, the Holy prophet (pbuh) established a peaceful state at Medinah where all citizens were in a state of peaceful co-existence and co-operation along with their differences of cultures and religions. As John William (1875) pointed out that “four years after the death of Justinian (569 A.D.), was born at Mecca, in Arabia, the man, who of all men has exercised the greatest influence upon the human race” [11].

Talking about the present situation of the relationship between Pakistani Muslims and non-Muslims, unfortunately, it is based on the principle of hostile relationship rather than peaceful co-existence. The practical situation is too bitter to afford at a Muslim state. We do not have any say for the minority and whenever Muslims want, they harass the non-Muslims in the name of sacred Islam. This bitter condition of tolerance has its origin in the illiteracy, lack of accurate knowledge and misinterpretation of the relevant verses of the Qur'an and ignorance of the Seerah of the Holy Prophet (pbuh). In this context this article is divided into three sections. Section first throws light on the concept of dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence in the politics of

the western world. Second section discusses the theory of peaceful co-existence from the perspective of Islamic politics. It describes the character of the last Holy prophet (pbuh) as an innovator of the principles of dialogue and peaceful co-existence in that particular context. It explores how the Prophet (pbuh) succeeded to establish a peaceful state which consisted of different religious and ethnic groups but each of them was quiet happy under the political leadership of the prophet and under the umbrella of an Islamic state. The third section throws light on the contemporary situation of coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims in Pakistan. In the end there are some conclusions and some recommendations are suggested to overcome the issue of intolerance among the Muslims and to create a peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims in Pakistan. Peaceful co-existence and interaction with the non-Muslims is really the only way to convey the message that Islam is a peaceful religion and to ensure that we are the true lovers of our last Prophet (pbuh).

2. World politics and Theory of Peaceful Co-Existence

Talking about the world politics, it may be divided into ancient, medieval and modern politics. The ancient world politics was based on the theory of clash among civilizations on religious basis, inequality of human beings and people were treating by the monarchs under the influence of Aristotle's philosophy of inequality of human beings [12]. Each nation had its own ethnical and religious prides and had to indulge into long term wars on petty issues. However, the concept of peaceful co-existence was existed among Greek nation that introduced the principle of peaceful co-existence among different nations for economic and social development by way of peace treaties [13]. At that time this principle was established on the basis of political, economic and security issues to protect the interests of each nation against its enemies. The term Peaceful coexistence literally means to live with others in the same place at a same time in a peaceful way [14].

The practice of clash between Western and Eastern civilizations however, continued and caused to breakdown the Roman Empire into Western and Eastern empires. The collapse of the Roman Empire gave birth the medieval period (5-15th century) of the European political history which later declared as Age of Discovery. However, the contribution of religions in the development of the world politics cannot be ignored. The religious dogma has been considered as the most important segment of the nature of the mankind since time immemorial. Religious arrogance, extremism and undue favor have ever been parts of the lives of human beings. The separatist and extremists had to use religious dogmas for proving themselves right [15]. For instance, in the politics of Eastern Roman Empire the religious dogma or Church had great influence while the politics of the Western Empire did not have. Both Eastern and Western Roman Empires followed Christianity but differences of theological views like status of clerical marriages and state control of the church converted them into two adverse religious societies [16]. The desire of one's religious dominancy was also a widespread phenomenon and abusing other religions was a common practice. In most of the cases, the people were forced to replace their religions with the dominant one. In that particular context, the Jew's dominancy adopted the same policy. It was due to that policy that during 523 A.D., a few decades before the birth of the Holy Prophet (pbuh), the Ruler of Yemen, Zu Nawas who was a Jew attacked on Najran and forced it's Christian inhabitants to be converted into Judaism and when they refused changing their religion, Zu Nawas ordered his people to put them into fire [17]. This event has been indicated by Allah Almighty through Qur'anic revelation.

”قتل اصحاب الأخدود.النار ذات الوقود“ [18].

In this way, and until the Great October Socialist Revolution 1917, the western politics recognized the right of the states to go to war (*Jus ad Bellum*), pursuant to which one state could resort to war against another whenever it considered this advisable. The norms of so called international law were operative essentially only in relations among civilized or Christian countries. In relation with independent states of Asia and Africa, the colonial powers did not consider themselves bound by the principles and norms of general international law. Flagrantly flouting the sovereignty of the states, brazenly interfering in their internal affairs, the colonial powers rejected the idea of complete equality of the eastern and western countries as subject to international law [19].

The colonial powers had no interest in the codification of international law and graphic evidence shows that during the period between WWI and WWII, only one conference (1930) for the codification of international law was convened by the League of Nations which ended in failure [20].

The modern world politics however, recognizes the principles of equality, harmony and peaceful co-existence among different nations and religions. The development of this movement is tribute to the theory of V.I. Lenin [21] who stressed out on the need of peaceful co-existence among socialist and capitalist's states. He rejected the theory of war as means of deciding questions in dispute among states and focused to resolve them by negotiations; equality, mutual understanding, trust among states having regard interests of each other, policy of non-interference in internal affairs, strict respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, the development of cultural and economic cooperation on the basis of complete equality and mutual advantages [22].

Soviet doctrine of international law which E. B. Pashukanis (1925-26) defines as the aggregate of norms regulating relations between states [23]. The Great October Socialist Revolution 1917 emerged the legal position of the Soviet State on the question of international relation among different nations of the world. It recognized the principle of co-existence among different nations in general and co-existence between two opposite social systems i.e., capitalist and socialist systems on an international scale to eliminate class struggle between them [24]. It was then the only country that insisted on the implementation of the democratic principles of international law for true equality. In the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR (Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic) of June 4, 1918, it was declared that the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic proceeds in its international relations from recognizing the full equality of large and small nations [24]. Later on, this struggle led the powerful countries of the world to establish the United Nations Organization. For instance, the UNO Charter, 1945 recognizes the individual rights and invites the political leaders in fostering dialogue and responding to aspirations of the and has declared it a joint responsibility of all nations of the contemporary world to intensify the dialogue among cultures and civilizations on the one hand and among different classes and religions of the same state on the other. It also guarantees certain rights which every human being must possess within a territory because they are human beings and citizens. They are declared as entitled to lead free, honorable lives, express their opinions, to take part in formulating political and economic agendas, and share in the task and fruits of development and liberty of religion [25]. It further resulted in the recognition of the 1947 Peace Treaty, the 1954 Geneva Convention; the 1963 Moscow Treaty on the

prohibition of nuclear test etc [26]. In this way, Soviet Union played an important role in the establishment of the principle of peaceful co-existence among different nations of the modern world. Now it is a well established principle of international law that creating dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence among different cultures and civilizations is a necessity in the contemporary world in order to overcome obstacles, prejudices and intolerance of the nations.

The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity states that culture takes diverse forms across time and place, and that such diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the communities and societies that make up humankind. The declaration goes on to assert that, as a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary to mankind as biological diversity is to nature. During the Millennium Summit (at UN headquarters in New York, in November 2000), UNESCO organized a round table that brought together several heads of state to discuss dialogue between civilizations. It was followed by a second meeting attended by intellectuals from various parts of the world, which addressed intellectual and practical questions regarding establishing dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence among different nations of the world [27]. Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights declare that the flourishing of creative diversity requires the full implementation of cultural rights of different people. In this sense, cultural and religious diversity is the common heritage of humanity and must be recognized and asserted for the benefit of present and future generations.

In recent years, the issue of dialogue and peaceful co-existence to promote understanding among different cultures has taken a key role in discussions. The main reasons are probably linked to aspects of globalization like global economic development, EU enlargement and the subject of integration as well as more sinister developments like September 11, 2001, and war of Iraq [28].

The contemporary legal philosophy inclines to suggest that dialogue and peaceful coexistence should be rooted in the hearts and minds of people. The dialogue must focus on the importance of shared values, which give meaning to life and provide form and substance to identities. Tolerance and respect for the other are core values that transcend civilization differences. To promote an awareness and observance of universal values, ethical principles and attitudes lie therefore at the heart of a true dialogue. Moreover, respect for human rights and the search for inclusiveness and unity in diversity become particularly relevant in the context of rapid social and economic transformations. He who cannot hold a dialogue with his neighbor and is not prepared to recognize the human rights of all citizens cannot conduct a dialogue with civilizations, cultures, religions and nationalities in the other parts of the world.[29] There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions [30].

To reduce intensity of proliferating conflicts caused by ethnic and religious antagonisms in the world in the post-Cold War era, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution in 1998 and proclaimed that the year 2001 would be declared as the "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations. This resolution (1998) focused on the need for creating peaceful co-existence, understanding and dialogue culture among civilizations. It was declared that the principle of peaceful co-existence should be taken in a creative global

meaning to protect the humanity of men [31].

Keeping in view this agenda, the UNO /UNESCO has invited to develop an ambitious collaborative program on dialogue together with the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) [32]. There is need to preach the idea of Globalization which will move from the predominance of idle talk, presumptuousness, and narrow-minded egotism at world level, to a deepening of the values of tolerance and the acceptance of one civilization by another. This, in turn, will lead to the supremacy of the highest values of equality, freedom, democracy and respect of human rights and a denial of racism, fanaticism and barbarism [33]. As Wahebah (2004) point out that denying the existence of “the Other” on the grounds that he is poor or weak can in no way serve universal rapprochement or dialogue. For even the weak and poor have been, and are, active players in the formation of world civilization today. Therefore, accepting “the Other” as he is and stimulating his potential is the only way to promote understanding among the people of the world [34].

To sum up, cultural and religious diversity and peaceful co-existence among different nations of the world at international level and among different classes of a country at national level has become a well-acknowledged international term.

3. Islamic Politics and Theory of Peaceful Co-Existence

Islam as religion revealed to the Arabs. The Arab Peninsula was significant regarding its numerous independent political groups based on tribal system. At that time, the concept of one state which consisted of so many groups, cultures and nations was not existed among the Arabs. To safeguard their security and economic interests, they adopted some measures to maintain peace and considered themselves bound by those measures [35]. The same situation was at Yethrib which was consisted of about thirty independent tribes. Each tribe was an independent and autonomous state and had its own system of administration of justice. The Ansar of Medinah comprised two principal tribes, i. e., Aws and Khazraj who indulge into a civil war going on for 120 years. Beside these Arabs there were Jew's tribes who were several thousands in number. There was small number of Christian also [36]. The Jews were proud of being Isra'ili, people of knowledge and a religious nation [37]. They considered Arab as illiterate and misguided nation and titled them as “*Ummi*” which means illiterate and ill-mannered [38]. They took the belongings of Arab, their wealth and property for granted to them as it is stated in the Qur'an: [39] “قالوا ليس علينا في الامين سبيل”

This verse leads that the people of Scripture say that that there is no blame on them to betray and take the properties of the Ummi/illiterates but they tell a lie against Allah.[40] They captured the economy of Medinah and were experts of business, trade and were very rich. Majority of the people of Medinah had to lend from Jews on the basis of *Riba* and remained submissive to them which led the Jews to consider themselves as spiritual, economical and political leaders of the Arab. They were great hypocrites and ever tried to provoke the Arabs against each other and led them to fight [41]. Under these circumstances, it was difficult to imagine the existence of a culture or cultures that might perfect in terms of advancement, maturity, harmony, and self-

sufficiency. The prevailing culture of Medinah was consisted of different nations having different origins, emotions, ideas, feelings and individual interests and above all different religions. It was not an easy task to engage such nations in developing an environment of peaceful co-existence and a culture to bring them closer together, so as to understand the existence of others on equal basis. It was very hard to invite such nations to seed the principle of dialogue culture that promote mutual understanding and exchange of ideas, tolerance and a culture of peace at the level of political decision-making, intellectuals, actors of civil society, and individuals to peaceful co-existence among all. It was very difficult to set ethical values, social attenuates, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence, injustice and prevent conflicts among different religions; a dialogue that begins at home, underpinning national unity and the political, economic, social and cultural integration of the region; an environment that encourage the process of democratization and nondiscrimination, only a leader of strong personality and expanded visions who might be helped from God could reform such a complex society and who could be better than Muhammad (pbuh) who was sent as Rehmah lil-Alamin [42].

“وما ارسلنك إلا رحمة للعالمين”

In this verse God declares: “And We have sent you as mercy for the mankind, Jinn and all that exists”. When the Holy Prophet (pbuh) migrated to Madinah, the first issue was the settlement of migrated people at Medinah. The Prophet (pbuh) however, resolved the issue with his (pbuh) great ability of understanding and gave the idea of brotherhood among local and immigrant which was accepted by the local people heart heartedly. To establish law and order and a peaceful environment which is necessary for the prosperity of a nation, the prophet (pbuh) called for representatives of all tribes, Muslims, non-Muslims, Jews and Christian and addressed them in these wording:

“You are divided at present into various tribes which are completely independent of each other with the result that in the event of one being attacked by an enemy from without, the rest of you remain neutral and one tribe alone has to face the collective might of the invader. This could lead to defeat and ultimate destruction of all tribes one by one, if they fight the enemy severally. Would not it be better if all of you join to form a single government so that the enemy knows that it would have to face the collective might of all the tribes of Medinah? Here then it is treaty which will provide safety from the enemy and will help improve the economic and social conditions of all the signatories”[43].

In this way, the prophet (pbuh) introduced the principles of universal brotherhood and co-existence among different tribes irrespective of their different cultures, ethical values, race, color and religions. This strategy also led them to accept heart heartedly the political leadership of the Prophet (pbuh) as they realized the sincerity of the Prophet (pbuh) with the people of Medinah [44].

This also resulted in the recognition of the first ever Constitution of the modern world without any amendment which was drafted by the Holy Prophet (pbuh) under the title “Mithaq al-Madinah” in 622 A.D. It is important to note that in this draft, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) gave respect and equal status to all the nations of different cultures and religions who were living under the umbrella of that Muslim state. Article first of the Constitution states that the believers, Muslims of Quraysh, Yathribi and those who follow and fought with will form one

Ummah to the exclusions of others [45]. The wording of this article leads that the Holy prophet (pbh) included the allies of the Muslims in the definition of Ummah even though they were non-Muslims. This step later resulted in the universal peace at the state of Muslims. This strategy further adopted by the Muslim rulers and soon succeeded to conquer the biggest part of the world.

Moreover, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) recognized the existence of different cultures and religions on equal basis and gave them equal status to the Muslims. For instance, considering Jew's strong social and economic position in the society, the Prophet (pbuh) sought to develop friendly relationship with them and started meeting their Rabbis and other respectable chiefs. Off and on he (pbuh) had to visit them on the basis of equality to create an environment of peaceful co-existence and co-operation. Furthermore, when the Prophet (pbuh) found that the Jews fasted on the 10th of the Muharram as the day of deliverance from the slavery of Pharaoh, he (pbuh) also fasted with them to show solidarity towards Jews [46].

By giving equal status to other religions the Prophet (pbuh) tied a bond between Islam and other religions even with atheists whom Islam aims to rehabilitate as integral members of a universal human society. He gave the message that behind the dazzling religious diversity of mankind stands an innate religion which is inseparable from human nature, Islam as the one and only true religion [47].

The Prophet (pbuh) envisaged a culture which was free from the prejudices which sought to cancel out others, to impose their nihilistic brand of ideas and to prevent human civilizations and cultures from becoming the building-blocks of internal national unity, of peaceful social coexistence and of a safe and stable future that safeguards common ground and peace for all of mankind.[48] The prophet (pbuh) never claimed power at any period of his mission yet his behavior had a remarkable personal influence over all with whom he (pbuh) was brought into contact. His (military triumphs awakened neither pride nor vain glory. Even in the time of his greatest power he (pbuh) maintained the same simplicity of manners and appearance as in the days of his (pbuh) adversity [49].

Internationally, at that time the world was passing through rapid changes and swift successions of events, clashes of civilizations, wars and the most obvious being those that resulted in absence of dialogue and of peaceful co-existence among different civilizations [50]. In that particular context, the Prophet (pbuh) established the principle of co-existence at both national and international level to accomplish a peaceful world order [52]. The Prophet (pbuh) founded his internal and foreign policy on these principles. He first entered into a peace agreement with the people of Mecca to establish regional peace and then started to communicate with other nations of the world. Knowing the fact that dialogue and peaceful co-existence between nations and cultures was important for protection of various cultures and religions of the humanity, he (pbuh) observed, practiced and rooted the advancement of mankind and its values. As Nathaniel Schmidt observed that the essential sincerity of Muhammad's nature cannot be questioned and an historical criticism that blinks no facts, yields nothing to credulity, weighs every testimony, has no partisan interests, and seeks only the truth, must acknowledge his claim to belong to that order of Prophets who whatever the nature of their physical experience may have been, in diverse times, in diverse manners, have admonished, taught and uttered . . . laid down principles of conduct nobler than those they found" [53].

All this created such a peaceful environment that under the umbrella of Muslim state at Madinah, the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims all were agreed to live by abiding the norms of harmony, coexistence and cooperation. In this way, the culture which was introduced by the Prophet (pbuh) as head of the Muslim state of Madinah was based on the principle of dialogue and peaceful co-existence in the light of high moral values like mutual respect, equality, equity and justice and rejection of fanaticism and hatred.

4. Condition of Peaceful Co-existence between Muslims and Non-Muslims in Pakistan

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a sovereign country in South Asia with a population exceeding 180 million. It is the second most populous Muslim majority country in the world. Religious minorities make up around 3.6% of the total population and Pakistan has the second largest Shi'a population in the world. After Islam, Christianity and Hinduism are the largest religious minorities in the country [54]. Being the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973 pronounces that Islam shall be the state religion of Pakistan yet at the same time it gives freedom to profess any religion and to manage religious institutions accordingly. Art 20 of the Constitution states that every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice and propagate his religion and shall have the right to establish, maintain and manage its religious institutions. The Pakistani society is a multi-cultural society. It is consisted of different ethnic groups like Punjabi are about 44.68%, Pashtun (Pathan) 15.42%, Sindhi 14.1%, Sariaki 8.38%, Muhajirs 7.57%, Balochi 3.57%, other 6.28% etc [55]. The majority of the population about 96.4% is Muslim. Among them 85-90% are Sunis and 10-15% are Shi'ah Muslims. Only 3.6% are Non-Muslims including Christian and Hindus.

It is however, great misfortune for us that this 3.6% of our population does not feel content with the Muslim majority. The concept of peaceful co-existence is totally absent among the Muslims and debate regarding creating dialogue culture among different religions is rather ceased to exist. Every month or couple of months, there is some news about throwing some non-Muslim into fire or killing him by exploiting the notion of sacred Islam or blasphemy law. The non-Muslims of Pakistan are afraid of the Muslims and this is very alarming situation for a sincere Muslim and true lover of the Prophet (pbuh). Only a bird eye view of the Seerah of the Prophet (pbuh) reveals that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) successfully established a state where everyone was guaranteed safety and peace and issue of sacred religion did not arise rather the non-Muslims were quiet happy under the umbrella of Islam and preferred to refer their all affairs to the Holy Prophet (pbuh) as they knew that they would be treated well and with justice. At time when Islam was weak and passing its phases of growth but the notion of sacred Islam did not cause harm to the non-Muslims. Unlike today, they were not afraid of the Muslims.

It is matter of great regret that contemporary situation of relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims is in its worst status and Pakistanis are notorious regarding their mal treatment with the non-Muslims who are few in numbers. Although in every city rather in each union council, at each ward there are many *madaris* which are spreading religious education and understanding about Islamic norms, Sunnah of the prophet (pbuh) yet practical situation is that we are not agreed to consider them as human being or citizens of Pakistan because they are not Muslims and thus, are not equal to us. For every misunderstanding we are ready to deprive them from their properties and even from the right to live and thus, spreading the concept that Islam has no space for

the non-Muslims. Extreme religious misconceptions and intolerance has made the whole society as an ignominy and disrepute among the civilized nations of this global village. By ignoring the fact, that by such activities, we are defaming our own religion, the sacred Islam which is for all till the Doomsday, we are repeating this sin proudly.

At present 96.4% Muslims of an Islamic state Islamic Republic of Pakistan have been failed to establish the principle of peaceful co-existence in their relationship with 3.6% Non-Muslims. Have Muslims forgotten the Sunnah (pbuh) who introduced the modern concept of peaceful co-existence among different religions and declared the non-Muslims as a part of Ummah under the umbrella of the Islamic state? It is reported that during 2013, that almost 39 Non-Muslims, Christians and Hindus were charged with blasphemy and were killed by the mob of Muslims without investigation by taking law into their hand [56]. This attitude is totally against the Islamic system of justice and administration.

The number of incidents related to attacks on minorities in Pakistan is continuously increasing in the country which shows that Pakistani Muslims do not follow the Sunnah of Prophet (pbuh) who ever showed great respect to the non-Muslims. We often hear the news that an angry mob of the Muslims attacked non-Muslim's homes and burnt their houses along with their residents over alleged blasphemy which after investigation proves nothing [57].

In most of the cases, the Imam Masjid of that particular community found guilty of provoking the Muslims by way of announcement from the mosque. In this way, the Muslims themselves defaming and misusing the mosque that is considered as Bayt Allah Almighty and a place of worship and peace. Further, the trend of suicide attacks on minorities is also increasing and 46 suicide attacks were reported in 2013 which is an increase of 39% as compared to 33 suicide attacks in 2012 [58].

Yet all minorities in Pakistan live in a constant state of utter fear, not knowing what the next day will bring as even simple, every day activities like reading, writing, speaking, even picking up a piece of paper may be perceived as blasphemy in a blood thirsty land [59].

It is all contrary to the Seerah of the prophet (pbuh) when non-Muslims felt content under the umbrella of the Muslims state while at present, the non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic state are afraid of the Muslims and are trying to seek asylum from others. It is a result of increasing intolerance among the Muslims, absence of peaceful co-existence with the non-Muslims rather if some Muslims try to create friendly relationship with the non-Muslims of Pakistan majority of the clerics condemn it and starts to recite the verses against non-Muslims which are specific by nature and revealed in the context of battle or fighting of that time. This entire situation led the non-Muslims to live in unsympathetic conditions and now minority communities in Pakistan are deserting the country and are seeking refuge elsewhere.

According to a latest report about 14,000 Pakistani Christians have sought asylum in foreign countries [60]. As pointed out by Farrukh H. Saif, (Executive Director of the World Vision in Progress) that the situation is serious, minorities, especially Christians and Hindus are being targeted for acts of terrorism, mass violence and

abuse of the 'blasphemy law'. Because of this situation, an increasing number of families are choosing to leave Pakistan. Thousands of Pakistani Hindus seek refuge in India, while Christians, Ahmadis, Shi'as and other religious groups have reached East Asia and South Asia and have registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), hoping to be able to settle in a country where they can enjoy equal rights" [61]. The flight of the Pakistani Christians began in 2009, when Christian neighborhoods and villages in Punjab were attacked by Muslim extremists. Hundreds of homes were burned and hundreds of Christians from Gojra and Korian took refuge in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Hong Kong and Malaysia. Moreover, in March 2013, Islamic fanatics attacked 'Joseph Colony', a Christian area in Lahore.[62] It is also reported that around 5,000 Hindus migrate from Pakistan to India and other countries every year due to religious persecution [63].

Unlike the Muslims, the minorities cannot hold religious gatherings in the communal ground as they ever in a situation of fear of causing offence by nearby Muslim residents particularly, if there is a *madrasah*. This is also against the fundamental rights of human being, the founder of which is Islam. The Sunnah of the Prophet (pbuh) reveals that the non-Muslims were free to celebrate their religious rituals. It is due to this policy that even non-Muslims of today admires him (pbuh) as pointed out by Annie Besant (1936) that it is impossible for anyone who studied the life and character of the great Prophet (pbuh) of Arabia, who knows how he (pbuh) taught and how he (pbuh) lived, to feel anything but the reverence for that mighty prophet (pbuh). . . yet I myself feel, whenever, I read them, a new wave of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher [64]. This attitude of Pakistani Muslims is also against Article 20 of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973 which states that everyone has right to celebrate its religious ceremonies. It is also against the purposes of United Nation Organization which came into existence to establish peace throughout the world and to develop friendly relations among different religions and nations and to help nations work together to improve the lives of poor people, to conquer hunger, disease and illiteracy, and to encourage respect for each other's rights and freedoms [65].

Talking about the property and housing of the minorities, it is also in danger and is under threat from the majority of the population. There are number of cases which can be mentioned here. However, a recent event is being discussed here. It was on 4 July, 2014, when a group of a political party along with the 'land mafia' tried to acquire a piece of the temple land of Hindus measuring 20,000 square yards for commercial purposes. The temple compound had a settlement of several thousand Hindu families living there for decades. They came almost daily to harass and terrify the poor Hindu residents living in the compound and issued death threats to them to force them out of the settlement and grab the land meant for the establishment of a dispensary [66]. These are only few examples while pages of daily newspapers are filled with such stories.

The other nauseating thing is that during any tension between majority and the minorities, the religious books of the minorities and their places of worship are burnt rather they are alleged to commit blasphemy. The tone of the Muslims during the whole scenario remains insulting and abusing tending to provoke minorities. It is against the clear instructions of God and Seerah of the Prophet (pbuh). It is stated in the Qur'an: "And dispute not with the people of the Book except with better means. . ." [67]. In another verse God declares: "Revile not those whom they invoke besides Allah, lest they may spitefully revile Allah without knowledge"[68]. Likewise, the Holy prophet (pbuh) ever showed great respect to *Turah* and *Injil* [69].

Another important issue is that the law and order situation is very weak and the government has no concern with the issues of the people. Particularly, in cases of tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims, the government disappears rather seems to be afraid of religious extremism on the part of the Muslims which has put the minority communities into fear of survival. In majority of such events, the government had so far neither made arrests nor taken action against any Muslim group involved in the attacks. This gives an impression that the government has been failed to control frequent attacks against minorities and establish peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims of Pakistan [70].

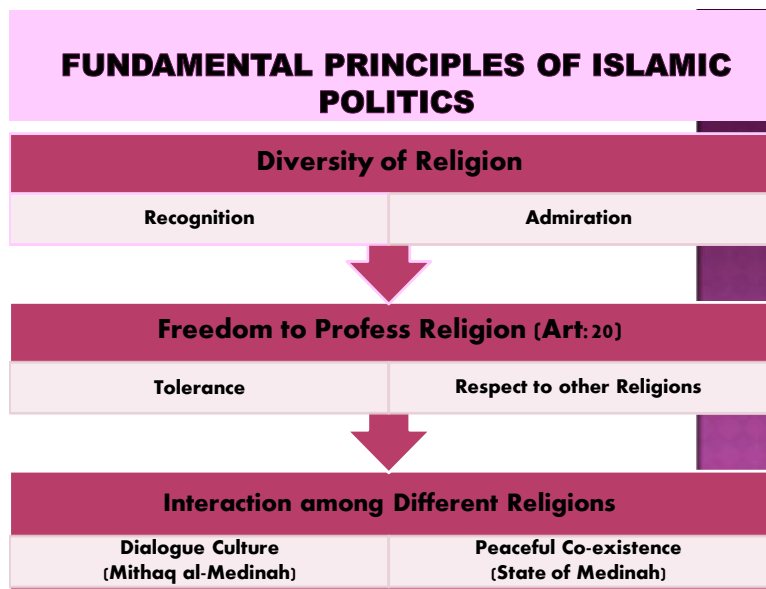
The most critical reason behind the absence of peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims in Pakistan is the silence of the Muslim scholars, intellectuals and *muftis* over such events. This silence is against the Sunnah (pbuh) who was the founder of peaceful co-existence between Muslims and the non-Muslims and was the founder of the modern concept of international relations. A literate and educated person can imagine the consequences of such treatment with the non-Muslims at an Islamic state while a large number of the Muslim Ummah is resident of non-Muslim developed countries for earning and for seeking a respectable life. Such type of treatment not only causing to defame Islam but is creating certain difficulties in the way of the progress and development of poor and under developing countries like Pakistan. It is also resulted in changing the policy of developed countries to help the under developing Muslim countries. For instance, during a session at US Congress in June 2014, the senators urged US to “cut off aid to Pakistan” over cruel treatment of Christians and women [71].

We are unable to recognize that the advent of modern means of communication has made the world as one society and every minor issue is being conveyed to the developed countries, the majority of which are non-Muslims. This make them annoy and irritate them and consequently the Muslims are suffering a lot. Against each issue against non-Muslims at an Islamic state, there are enormous problems for the Muslims at non-Muslims developed states. This often results in the blasphemy against the sacred personality of the last Prophet (pbuh). In other words we ourselves provoke them to exploit our feelings, emotions and respect to our Prophet (pbuh) upon whom every Muslims is ever ready to sacrifice his life. Why not we ponder about our contemporary submissive and subservient condition among the nations of the modern world? At present the Muslim Ummah is lag behind the non-Muslims and these are non-Muslim developed countries from whom we are seeking knowledge, getting scientific education and above all upon whose aid our survival is dependent. Our economy and our education are running under the slogan of “US Aid” while both are considered the vertebrae of the development and progress.

At present the movement for promoting dialogue culture is being transformed into a solid tool and working mechanism for setting global agendas and yielding concrete results. The United Nations Organization has also introduced the global Education for All (EFA) movement and declared it as an inseparable part of the agenda of each reforming society. This movement aims to reform the education system in all countries. Different symposiums and conferences are being arranged to invite other religions to enhance their attention to the history and culture of the Islam [72:167].

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This article thus, concludes that religious arrogance, extremism and undue favor have ever been parts of the lives of the human beings which can only be overcome under divine guidance and a practical model. The following flowchart thus, gives an overview of the most important and fundamental principle revealed to the Prophet (pbuh) as guiding principle. The primary and fundamental principle of Islamic politics is diversity of religion that is intended by Allah almighty Himself as acceptance of this principle leads recognition and admiration of other religions as after all, all the religions are based on the oneness of God. This primary principle directs another basic principle that is freedom to profess any religion as the admiration of this principle leads to tolerance and respect to other religions. The other principle which is based on the fundamental principle is interaction among different religion which results in the creation of dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence among different religions.



It is also concluded that the Holy prophet (pbuh) without any doubt was the first political leader who introduced and established dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence among different religions of his (pbuh) time.

In perspective of Pakistani society, this article concludes that due to illiteracy, exploitation of the illiterate segment of the society by the so called clerics and misinterpretation of revealed laws regarding relationship with the non-Muslims, the Muslims of Pakistan are themselves defaming their religion on the one hand and are causing to lesser the image of Pakistani nation as a civilized nation among the civilized nations of the world on the other. It is also concluded that the Muslims of Pakistan have been failed to realize the bitter condition of the minorities and their feelings about the Muslims.

This article thus, suggests launching a movement to reduce the intensity of the situation and to create peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims in the light of the Seerah of the prophet (pbuh). To be fruitful, dialogue should be started with the non-Muslim communities on behalf of the government and clerics of Pakistan. The principles of dialogue and peaceful co-existence which were introduced by the Qur'an and

successfully established by the prophet (pbuh) should be rooted in the hearts and minds of the Muslims and for this purpose each mosque and madrasah should be utilized to nurture a common base for peaceful existence. This movement must focus on the importance of shared values. Tolerance, peaceful co-existence and respect for the other should be core values as these principles transcend the differences among different religions and nations. To promote an awareness and observance of Islamic universal values regarding peaceful co-existence all educational institutions should be used. Education at all levels, through formal, non-formal and informal approaches, has an inherent ability to nurture and sustain dialogue and peaceful co-existence. We need both an education for dialogue and peaceful co-existence and dialogue for common education. To achieve it, the agenda should include revisions of curricula, textbooks, learning materials that will foster peace, dialogue and intercultural understanding at all educational levels between the Muslims and non-Muslims of Pakistan

It is also recommended that the dialogue should not focus on history; instead, it should pay attention to the development of man's present and future, avoid the intolerance that is sadly, increasing in various walks of life, and denounce wars, oppression and despotism [73:168]. We should hold dialogue amongst ourselves first, criticize ourselves before criticizing others, and ask ourselves what we have done to ourselves and to others to make them doubt or misunderstand us. In this way, dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence will promote a positive relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims.

It is also suggested that the contribution of the Prophet (pbuh) in creating dialogue culture and peaceful co-existence should also be admired at large by the non-Muslim intellectuals, writers and UNO on the basis of his (pbuh) scientific political approaches and wise steps due to which he (pbuh) successfully established a peaceful society and succeeded to create a peaceful co-existence between Muslims and Non-Muslims. To provoke Muslims by supporting means of blasphemy is not the way to achieve the goal of peaceful co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims.

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