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THE ETHICS OF THE CONQUEST, WAR AND PEACE: A STUDY OF THE EARLY ISLAMIC HISTORY

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Abstract

Islam is the religion of peace, goodwill, mutual understanding, and good faith; it will not acquiesce in wrongdoing. It men will hold their lives cheap defense of honor, justice, and the religion they hold sacred. The Islamic ideal is that heroic virtue combined with unselfish gentleness and tenderness as exemplified in the life of Prophet Muhammad. Muslims believe in courage, obedience, discipline, duty, and a constant striving by all the means in their power for the establishment of truth and righteousness. They know that war is an evil, but they will not avoid it if their honor demands it and a righteous Imam commands it. In other cases war may have nothing to do with their faith, except that it will always be regulated by Islam's human precepts. The present article seeks to place the traditional legal discussion of the morality of the conquest, war and peace in the early Islamic history within an ethical context.

Keywords: Conquests, War and Peace, Islamic Ethics, Leadership and Qualities.

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Introduction

Understanding certain principles of Islam enable the reader to judge the events that took place during the time of the Prophet and beyond. The size of the Islamic Empire during the rule of Caliph Harun al-Rashid extended from China and the Indonesian Islands in the east, to North Africa, Spain and France in the west and much of that in between. This unexpected rapid spread, which still puzzles many contemporary historians, would not be so surprising when one discovers Islam's social, political and moral principles. These principles were and still are the elements that enabled Islam to flourish in the past and in our modern days. The birth of Islam in the early 600 CE was indeed a world of social, political and intellectual reforms that swiped throughout the Arabian Peninsula and much of the old world. The holy Qur'an and the guidance of Prophet Muhammad are the fountains of this intellectual and social reform. Studying old world history, there is evidence of the drastic change that followed.

Many people in the West are wrongly accustomed to the term jihad to mean "Holy War." This assumption implicates terror and bloodshed incurred by Muslims to Christians, since the term "Holy War" is mainly the result of the 250 years long Crusade wars. Under no circumstance is "war" in Islam "Holy." Investigating the nature of the term jihad we discover that people in the West have been misinformed about its meaning. The word jihad came from the Arabic root-word juhud, which means: exertion of effort, strive or struggle.¹ Furthermore, its usage in the Qur'an does not reflect the Western meaning of Holy War, "And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the

¹ For different aspects of this all-round struggle, see the chapters on jihad in the major hadith collections. For example, Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitab al-Jihad wa'l-Siyar, AbūDawud, *Sunan*, Kitab al-Jihad. Raghīb al-Isfahani has defined this term as "struggling against one's self"; see *Al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an*, Misr/ Matba'ah Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, 1961.

doers of good."² Interpreters of the Holy Qur'an explain this passage to be saying, "Those who strive with might and main, with constancy and determination, the light of guidance and mercy of God will come to assist them and cure their defects and shortcomings. Striving to be closer to God, to cure an illness of the heart or to do good for others cannot be construed in any way as "Holy War." It should also be noted that, to Muslims, the Islamic conquests are seen as acts of altruism: they are referred to as *futuh*, which literally means "openings"—that is, the countries conquered were "opened" for the light of Islam to enter and guide its infidel inhabitants. Thus to Muslims, there is nothing to regret or apologize for concerning the conquests; they are seen as for the good of those who were conquered (i.e., the ancestors of today's Muslims).

In the formative years of Islam, Islamic military strategy was both a response and a strict implementation of God's commands as revealed in the Islamic scriptures. Thus, for the Islamic leadership, the scriptural command to pursue peace meant making and maintaining peace with, for instance, the unbelievers in Hudaibiyyah for 10 years, even though such a peace clearly did not advance the cause of the Muslims.

The Islamic leadership also made peace with the Jews of Khaybar as well the people of Najran and continued to adopt the same strategy in the period following the death of the Prophet. In a message to Ashtar al-Nakh'i, whom he had appointed ruler of Egypt, Ali b. Abi Talib advised him of the need to "make peace if the enemy inclines towards it and if it pleases God, for such a peace will bring comfort to your soldiers, relieve you of some of your cares, and bring security to your country. But beware of your enemy after making peace, for the enemy may feign commitment to peace and (eagerly) wait for the chance to take you by

²Qur'an, 29/69.

surprise. So, be firm and do not trust your enemy."³

Is Islam Religion of Freedom and Dignity?

Islam strove to free man from all types of enslavement and bondage; man should be a slave and submit to none but Allah, his creator and the creator of all mankind and the universe. From the perspective of Islam, slavery was a form and a means of humiliation and degradation. According to Islam, all human beings should be free to embrace the faith they choose for themselves, free of any compulsion, for God insists, "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error."⁴ As is evident from this holy verse, Allah honors man by conferring upon him the freedom to choose whatever faith he deems best for himself. By bestowing upon man the freedom of choice in matters of faith, He simultaneously makes him responsible for his acts, decisions, and choices. Islam thus makes human freedom and responsibility indivisible. For Islam, freedom of faith is the first and foremost human right man is entitled to; depriving man of freedom of faith implies dehumanizing him and depriving him of his basic elementary human rights. With freedom of faith is born the notion of preserving the freedom to propagate such a faith.

Islam instituted the right to preserve one's soul, material possessions and honour. It prohibited harming other people's souls, violating their honour and robbing them of their money. The Prophet insists that, "A Muslim is forbidden to hurt another Muslim either by shedding his blood, taking his money or violating his honour."⁵ Islam also demanded that man's relation to Allah should be direct and unmediated by any other party. The Scriptures state in this regard, "When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close: I listen to the

prayer of every supplicant when he called on Me."⁶

Islam prohibits flaunting descent and boasting of superiority of race, insisting that there are no people of superior or inferior descent, since all men are born from Adam and "Adam was created from dust."⁷ In Islam, humans are distinguished only in terms of their fear of Allah and his good deeds. Holy Qur'an regularly emphasizes that, "The most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you."⁸ From the perspective of Islam, differences in language, colour, descent, race, talent and aptitude are immaterial; what matters, in the final account, is whether a person has been righteous and virtuous or not.

Islam called for peaceful co-existence long before modern international laws, conventions and treaties did. Islam's call for peace, coexistence, amity and transparency in relations and dealings between both individuals and nations is grounded in one of the major Islamic scriptural principles; the spiritual equality of mankind as one single and unique creation. Islam calls upon Muslims to base their relations with non-Muslims on a mutual respect of treaties, a strong commitment to honoring agreements and pledges and a concerted effort in avoiding wars. Islam strictly forbids Muslims from waging a war against unarmed civilians and outlaws sabotage, violations of honor, and (arbitrary) destruction of property, possessions and the like even against enemies guilty of atrocities of this very kind against Muslims.

bû Bakr, the first Muslim Caliph, formulated a detailed set of rules for Islamic conduct during war. He gave the following instructions to a Muslim army setting out for Syria, which was then governed by the Byzantine Empire, "Stop, O people, that I may give you ten rules for your guidance in the

³Ali b. AbîTalib (n.d.).*Nahj al-Balâghah*, Compiled by Muhammad Abu'l-Hasan al-Râdî, vol. II: p. 140.

⁴Qur'an, 2/256.

⁵Tirmidhi (n.d.).*Sunan al-Tirmidhi al-Birr*, Hims, 18; and Ahmad b. Hanbal (n.d.).*al-Musnad*, Beirut, vol. II: p. 227, 360.

⁶Qur'an 2/186.

⁷This is in fact part of a Hadith in which the Prophet declares, "You all belong to Adam and Adam was created from dust... People should refrain from boasting about their fathers or they run the risk of being forsaken by Allah."

Cited by Tirmidhi in *al-Manaqib*, 73.

⁸Qur'an, 49/13.

battlefield. Do not commit treachery or deviate from the right path. You must not mutilate dead bodies. Neither kill a child, nor a woman, nor an aged man. Bring no harm to the trees, nor burn them with fire, especially those which are fruitful. Slay not any of the enemy's flock, save for your food. You are likely to pass by people who have devoted their lives to monastic services; leave them alone."⁹

Similarly, 'Umar b. al-Khattâb, when ruler of the Islamic state, sent a message to his army commander Sa' d b. AbîWaqqas, in which he stated, "I command you and those serving under you to avoid committing sins because sins are more dangerous than the enemies themselves. The Muslims are granted victory because their enemies disobey God, and, but for their disobedience (and sins), the Muslims would not be able to defeat them because of their greater number and their far superior military equipment. If we equal them in the commission of sins, they will (most certainly) excel us (in fighting). Never presume that our enemies are more evil than we and will therefore not defeat us even when we also commit sins. Those who are evil will be defeated by others who are even more evil."¹⁰

Islamic strategy aimed at instilling in Muslim conquerors, much as Islam sought to do in all human beings, a strong sense of self-control which would forever prevent them from any deviation, corruption or depravity. Conscientiousness would induce them to fulfill their duties and exercise their functions, honestly and to the utmost of their abilities. There is no sure guarantee that outside control can always be present, but self-control and conscientiousness will be a part of the individual at all times. Self-control, as Islam conceives of it, should be born out of a fear of Allah and of a

conviction that the Creator of the universe is forever watchful over humans and human acts.

The Early Islamic Conquests Became a Historical Fact

By the standards of history, the reality of Muslim conquests is unassailable, for history proper concerns itself with primary sources; and the Islamic conquests are thoroughly documented. More importantly, the overwhelming majority of primary source materials we rely on do not come from non-Muslims, who might be accused of bias. Rather, the foremost historians bequeathing to posterity thousands of pages of source materials documenting the Islamic conquests were not only Muslims themselves; they were—and still are—regarded by today's Muslims as pious and trustworthy scholars.¹¹ Approaches to the Islamic Sources We have seen that most modern accounts of the early conquests, whether Arab or Islamic in tendency, rely on the large body of medieval Arabic historical writings that describe these events in detail from an explicitly Islamic point of view. Among the most authoritative books devoted to recounting the conquests are: Ibn Ishaq's (d.767) *Sira* (Life of Muhammad), the oldest biography of the Prophet Muhammad; Waqidi's (d.820) *Maghazi* (Military Campaigns of the Prophet); Baladhuri's (d.892) *Futuh al-Buldan* (Conquests of the Nations); and Tabari's (d.923) multi-volume *Tarikh al-Rusulwa al-Muluk*, (History of Prophets and Kings), which is 40 volumes in the English translation.

The early Islamic conquests are a transforming event in history. They are also difficult to explain. How could a people who had lived for so long on the margins of the civilized world rise suddenly to defeat the two superpowers of the day, the Byzantine and Sasanian empires? Where did they find the manpower to invade and overrun so many lands? And, most surprising of all, how did they then keep control over these lands and ultimately transform them? For even in defeat, the empires had reason to believe that the alien

⁹Ibn al-Athir (1965-1966).*al-Kamil fi al-Târikh*, Beirut, vol. II: p. 335; Muhammad Hamidullah (1953). *Muslim Conduct of State*, 3rd edition, Lahore, p. 301; and John Alden Williams, (1972).*Themes of Islamic Civilization*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, p. 262.

¹⁰ Ibn al-Athir, 1965-1966: vol. II, p. 335; Hamidullah, 1953: p. 302.

¹¹<http://www.raymondibrahim.com/islam/the-historical-reality-of-the-muslim-conquests>

conquerors would eventually ask for nothing better than inclusion in the conquered empire for themselves.

Military operations against the Byzantines and Sasanians didn't begin in earnest until 634, two years after the Prophet Muhammad's death. The intervening time (632–634) was taken up by internal conflict in Arabia, known as the wars of the apostasy (al-*ridda*). For at that time, upon the death of Muhammad, many Arabs renounced their loyalty to Islam. The Islamic leadership in Medina, under the first caliph, Abu Bakr, sent out armies that defeated these rebels, or apostates.¹² Now, for the first time in its history, the entire peninsula found itself unified and armed. Meanwhile, things had been going badly for the two great empires (Byzantium and Sasanian Iran). After a long series of wars between them, they engaged in a final, devastating conflict in the second and third decades of the seventh century. The Persians conquered Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and much of Anatolia, but the Byzantine emperor Heraclius won these back and slogged on to decisive victory in 628. By this time, however, both empires had been bled white, with many of their cities and territories in ruins.¹³

This mutual exhaustion worked to the advantage of the Arab newcomers. So too did the situation of the civilian populations. In Byzantine Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, a majority adhered to Monophysite Christianity¹⁴ rather

than the Chalcedonianism¹⁵ that prevailed in Constantinople and among most of the imperial elite. When Heraclius reconquered these provinces from the Persians, he instituted harsh measures against Jews and dissident Christians, which led to disaffection and resentment. Iraq, the seat of Sasanian empire, was also Christian in its majority, with significant Jewish, Zoroastrian, and other minorities. Here the traditional Persian tolerance in these matters was offset by military defeat and political crisis. So it is not surprising that when the Arabs arrived in all these places, they met little resistance from local civilians. Many of the provincials must have thought that the newcomers would be no worse, and possibly better, than the previous governors, who had been squeezing them dry for the sake of their fruitless wars.

It thus makes the Muslim Arabs' initial success easier to understand. As the *ridda* subsided, their movement of conquest got under way. It may have begun locally, as raiding expeditions met with unexpected success, followed up quickly by larger armies under unified command. Fighting broke out more or less simultaneously in Byzantine Syria and Palestine and Sasanian Iraq. However, the evidence points to Syria and Palestine as the original goal.¹⁶ The Arabs fought in tribal units, with different groups predominating in the conquest of different areas.

The leadership in Medina passed in 634 to the second caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, who found himself conducting a war on two fronts, or rather, two wars. At one critical moment, the commander Khalid ibn Walid crossed the desert from Iraq to Syria to reinforce the Muslim forces there. For the most part, however, the war on each side proceeded according to its own

¹² Elias S. Shoufani (1973). *Al-Riddah and the Muslim conquest of Arabia*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press; Fred McGraw Donner (1981). *The Early Islamic Conquests*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 82-91; Ella Landau-Tasseron (1984). "The Participation of Tayyi in the Ridda," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 5, pp. 53-71.

¹³ Michael H. Dodgeon, Geoffrey Greatrex, Samuel N. C. Lieu (2002). *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars (Part II, 363-630 AD)*, London: Routledge, pp. 182-200; Beate Dignas, Engelbert Winter (2007). *Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity/ Neighbours and Rivals*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 44-49, 109, 115; and Kaveh Farrokh (2007). *Shadows in the Desert/ Ancient Persia at War*, Osprey Publishing, pp. 244-260.

¹⁴ Monophysite, in Christianity, one who believed that Jesus Christ's nature remains altogether divine and not human even though he has taken on an earthly and human body with its cycle of birth, life, and

death. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/3899/61/monophysite>

¹⁵ The Chalcedonian understanding of how the divine and human relate in Jesus of Nazareth is that the humanity and divinity are exemplified as two natures and that the one hypostasis of the Logos perfectly subsists in these two natures.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chalcedonian_Christianity

¹⁶ Donner, 1981: p. 96.

rhythm. Many battles were fought, most of them Muslim victories. These included the Yarmuk, in or around 636, where a large Byzantine force was badly mauled, forcing Heraclius to withdraw from Syria;¹⁷ and al-Qadisiyya, probably in 637, where the main Sasanian army in Iraq was likewise smashed to pieces.¹⁸ 'Umar left Medina to visit Palestine and Syria, by most accounts in 638; while there, he is said to have received in person the surrender of Jerusalem. Soon afterward a small Arab force set off for Egypt, accepting, in 641, the surrender of a Byzantine post, oddly named Babylon, near what later became Cairo. The conquest of Alexandria, the Egyptian capital, took longer, but soon the Arab Muslims controlled Egypt and its fabulous wealth.¹⁹ Meanwhile, in 642 a victory at Nihavand, in western Iran, opened the Iranian plateau to the Muslim armies. Here in the ethnic heart of the Sasanian Empire, aggravated by difficult terrain, resistance proved tough. Around fifteen years were required to complete the conquest of Iran.²⁰ The Muslims then kept going, more gradually, eastward into Central Asia, Westward into North Africa, and in other directions.²¹

By the end of this initial phase of the conquests, the Sasanian Empire had ceased to exist altogether. However, despite repeated raids by land and by sea and occasional large-scale expeditions, a truncated Byzantine empire continued to hold out and resist, a fact of great

importance for the doctrine and practice of jihad as these developed over the coming years. Within a very few years, the Arab Muslims had conquered vast territories, including fertile lands and wealthy cities. Now they faced the question of what to do with them. As in all conquests, the options included expropriating and expelling the natives, exploiting their labor from a distance, settling on the land as a new aristocracy, or merely concentrating on trade. The Quran and the young community's earlier experience in Arabia provided some guidance.²²

Strategic Leadership and Qualities: The Islamic Approach

Ever since Allah created mankind and made out of it different nations and societies, leadership has been a basic requirement for and an important element in the organization and lives of nations and societies. Leadership, an important component of the life and survival of any state, is, however, subject to laws and principles. Islam requires that each Muslim group, society or nation, regardless of size, should elect a leadership, so as to preserve its unity, work towards a common aim, and avoid fragmentation and divisions. The aim of electing or appointing a leadership is also to ensure justice for all members of a group, society or nation. The Prophet declares in this connection that, "any three people in any given place should elect one of them as their leader."²³ Islam's approach to the issue of appointing leaders is grounded in two basic principles; strength and honesty. These two fundamental attributes complement the other qualities required by Islam in all those who chose to embrace it, namely; righteousness (taqwa), justice (adalah), goodly model (uswahhasanah), commitment to the principles of shûra (consultation).

Righteousness: Political or military leadership in Islam is open to those who are strong in faith and will and honest in intent and

¹⁷Ahmad ibn Jabir al-Baladhuri (1916 and 1924). *Kitâb Futûh al-Buldan*, (trans.) Philip K. Hitti and F.C. Murgotten, New York: Columbia University Press, vol. I, pp. 207-212.

¹⁸Tabarî (1992). *The History of al-Tabarî, (The Battle of al-Qadisiyyah and the Conquest of Syria and Palestine)*, (trans.) Yohanan Friedmann, Albany: State University of New York Press, vol. XII, p. 62.

¹⁹Baladhuri, 1916 and 1924: pp. 346-349.

²⁰Tabarî (1989). *The Conquest of Iraq, Southwestern Persia and Egypt*, (trans.) Gautier H.A. Juynboll, Albany: State University of New York Press, vol. XIII; For a detailed source analysis of this battle and a comparison with the accounts concerning the conquest of Isfahan, see the fundamental study of Albrecht Noth (1968). "Isfahan-Nihawand," in ZDMG, CXVIII, pp. 274-296.

²¹Edward Gibbon (1906). *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, New York: Fred de Fau and Co., vol. 9, pp. 134-182; Donner, 1981: p. 251; and Hugh Kennedy (2007). *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In*, Philadelphia: Da Capo Press.

²²Michael Bonner (2006). *Jihad in Islamic History: Doctrines and Practice*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pp. 59-60.

²³Narrated by AbûSa'd al-Khudrî and cited by AbûDawûd (n.d.). *Sunan*, al-Jihad, n.p., p. 2608.

purpose. A weak or treacherous person is therefore not allowed to assume leadership. Strength in war is measured by bravery, experience in the techniques of war, and mastery of military deception (cf. the Prophet's, famous dictum: 'war is the art of trickery').²⁴ Power is also measured by the ability to fight hard and expertise in military equipment, in line with the Qur'anic injunction, "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the enemies of Allah and your enemies."²⁵

A leader's capacity and potency in governing is judged in terms of understanding of Islamic law, ways of litigation, and justice, as commanded by Islamic law, and in line with God's injunction, "Allah commands justice, the doing of good."²⁶ Similarly, a leader's strength and capacity for governing is gauged in terms of his ability to enforce the law and to execute rulings and sentences against both the strong and the weak. Honesty implies fulfilling one's duties to the best of one's abilities, fearing Allah, and submitting to His laws. The Islamic scriptures command in this respect, "Therefore fear not men, but fear Me, and Sell not My Signs for a miserable price. If any do fail to judge by what Allah hath revealed, they are unbelievers."²⁷

Islam's insistence on the necessity of electing a strong, capable, and evenhanded leader at the head of an Islamic state, community or group is also clear from the Prophet's, famous reaction to the great companion AbûDharr's request to be appointed a ruler, "You are weak, and governing is a trust, and those who breach the trust will feel ashamed on the Day of Judgement."²⁸

A person appointed to lead a group of Muslims is assumed to hold a trust. Abuse of leadership therefore constitutes a betrayal of the trust of Allah and of all Muslims. The Qur'an

instructs Muslims in this regard: "O ye that believe! Betray not the trust of Allah and the Apostle, nor misappropriate knowingly things entrusted to you."²⁹ Similarly, the Prophet, cautions his followers that "whoever has authority over Muslims and appoints someone over them who is not the best man that he can find betrays God, His apostle and all Muslims."³⁰

Righteousness is a most essential criterion for electing a leader. If a Muslim's leadership is based on and grounded in righteousness, Allah will aid his cause and grant him victory in any war that he wages in the name of justice. The Qur'an promises the faithful that, "They are those who have been evicted from their homes without right - only because they say, 'Our Lord is Allah.' And were it not that Allah checks the people, some by means of others, there would have been demolished monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which the name of Allah is much mentioned. And Allah will surely support those who support Him. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might. (And they are) those who, if We give them authority in the land, establish prayer and give zakah and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And to Allah belongs the outcome of (all) matters."³¹

Righteousness is, then, the surest means of attaining success and securing the guidance and aid of God in one's undertakings. The Islamic scriptures remind Muslims that only the righteous "are guided by their Lord, and it is these who will prosper."³² Besides, righteousness can be a source of good judgment and insight. The Prophet Muhammad cautions in this regard, "Beware of the insight of the believer for he sees through the light of Allah."³³

Justice: The kind of justice required by Islam in a leader is comprehensive and inclusive, the kind of justice that includes all and excludes none. Justice, from this perspective, is

²⁴Bukhari (n.d.). *Sahîh*, al-Jihad, Beirut, p. 157; and Muslim (n.d.). *Sahîh Muslim*, al-Jihad, Beirut, p. 1740.

²⁵Qur'an, 8/60.

²⁶Qur'an, 16/90.

²⁷Qur'an, 5/44.

²⁸ Muslim, *Sahîh*, al-Imarah, 1825.

²⁹Qur'an, 8/27.

³⁰Bukhari, *Sahîh*, al-Jumu'ah, 29; and Muslim, *Sahîh*, al-Imarah, 19.

³¹Qur'an, 22/40-41.

³²Qur'an, 2/2.

³³Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, 4/382.

the right of every man, regardless of his faith, race, or identity. Islam's notion of justice thus corresponds to what has come to be accepted in modern times as a humane notion of justice, whereby all people of all orientations, views or ideologies, regardless of their faith, race, or ethnicity, should be treated justly and equally. This notion of justice, never known before Islam, has remained at the heart of Muslim rule and strength. Allah instructs in this regard, "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing."³⁴

Allah commands both the ruler and his subjects to be committed to justice, even when such commitment entails personal harm and hardship and/or harm and hardship to their nearest and dearest. Allah instructs the believers in this regard, "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not (personal) inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort (your testimony) or refuse (to give it), then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted."³⁵ The Prophet comments in the same regard, "If Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad, were to steal something, Muhammad would cut off her hand."³⁶

It is reported that while 'Umar b. al-Khattab, the second Caliph, was distributing the spoils of war among the soldiers returning from the battlefield, the man who had killed his brother, Zayd b. al-Khattab, who had since converted to Islam and joined the Muslim army, turned up to claim his share. Noticing him, the Caliph turned his face away in anger, and when the man asked, "Do you hate me, 'Umar?" The Caliph replied, "Yes, I do, because you killed my brother. I hate as much as the earth hates blood." To the man's next question, "Will you, then, deny my rights?" the Caliph replied, "No,

for Allah said, 'O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.'³⁷ And added, "I care nothing about your love or hatred. That is something only women care about."³⁸

Goodly Model: A leader should aspire towards setting a good example for his followers and subordinates through a firm and unswerving commitment to justice, integrity, uprightness and rectitude. The Prophet, the first commander of an Islamic army, was a paragon of justice, equity and virtue, and the Muslim commanders who succeeded him sought to imitate his example. Allah reminds the Muslims in this respect, "There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and (who) remembers Allah often."³⁹

At the heart of leadership in Islamic Strategy was always a concern for the wellbeing of soldiers. The Islamic military leadership sought to be kind-hearted, patient, understanding, and tolerant of ignorance, shortcomings and weaknesses, in conformity with Allah's address to the Prophet, "So by mercy from Allah, (O Muhammad), you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude (in speech) and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you."⁴⁰

Khalid b. Walid, the commander of the Islamic army at the battle of Yarmuk, was a shining example of the honesty, uprightness and justice required of a Muslim leader. The story of his meeting with one of the Byzantine leaders is often cited to illustrate and highlight these much needed qualities of a Muslim leader. Leaders of the Byzantines were so impressed by his military genius that one of them, Jarjah, asked Khalid to come out and meet him during a

³⁴Qur'an, 4/58

³⁵Qur'an, 4/135.

³⁶Tirmidhi, *Sunan*, al-Hudud, 1430.

³⁷ Qur'an, 5/8.

³⁸Sulayman al-Tammawî (n.d.), *al-Idârahî 'Ahd 'Umar b. al-Khattab*, n.p., p. 213.

³⁹Qur'an 33/21.

⁴⁰Qur'an, 3/159

temporary cessation of hostilities in the battle of Yarmūk. On meeting, the Byzantine leader asked Khalid, "O Khalid, tell me the truth, for a free man does not know how to tell lies. Did God hand the Prophet, a sword from heaven and the Prophet, give it to you so that you would defeat anyone against whom you might fight?" When Khalid replied that that was not the case, the Byzantine leader asked, "Why are you called the Sword of Allah, then?" and Khalid's reply was, "God sent us an Apostle. Some of us believed in him and others did not. At first, I did not believe in him, but God led me to the right path and I embraced Islam. The Prophet prayed to God and said to me, 'You are one of the swords of God.' That is how I came to be called 'the Sword of God.' The Byzantine leader then asked, "And what do you call men to?" and Khalid answered, "We call them to the monotheism of Islam." To the Byzantine leader's next question, "If someone entered Islam today, would he get the same reward as you?" Khalid responded, "Yes, the same and even more." And to the Byzantine leader's question, "How could it be so?" Khalid replied, "We lived with the Apostle of God and we saw his miracles and wonders. Whoever saw what we saw and heard what we heard would have no difficulty converting to Islam. But if you, who did not see him and did not hear him, believed in him, your reward would be greater, provided your intentions were pure." On hearing that, the Byzantine leader headed towards the Muslims' camp and, on reaching it, stood next to Khalid and cried out in a loud voice, "O Khalid! Teach me Islam."⁴¹

This Byzantine leader was not fascinated by Islam, since he knew nothing about it, nor was he convinced of the teachings of this faith since no one, prior to his meeting with Khalid, had told him about them. Rather, he was impressed by Khalid's personality, equity, fairness, and the good example he set for his soldiers and subordinates. Owing to the virtue and equity shown on the part of the Muslim leader, bloodshed was averted and not only the

Byzantine leader, but also his soldiers embraced Islam and took it upon themselves to call men to monotheism and defend the Islamic faith. Qur'an reminds the believers in this regard, "When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest, and you see the people entering into the religion of Allah in multitudes, Then exalt (Him) with praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness of Him. Indeed, He is ever accepting of repentance."⁴²

Consultation

The principle of consultation is considered by Islam as an essential element and even the very basis of a good and just leadership. Consultation is the best ground for equipping a leader with practical training in the art of sharing of responsibility and accountability. Through it, wrong is set right, and a leader can learn to share power rather than wield it blindly. Consultation is meant to curb the sense of detachment, superiority and misuse of power and provide the leader with a sense of perspective about his role and importance.

Trappings of high office may induce a sense of detachment and superiority, and consultation is therefore a means of stopping a leader from being driven, either by a sense of superiority or self-importance, into undesirable acts or ill-informed decisions. Good leadership is measured in terms of its accountability and the close associations it maintains with those it serves. God commands in this regard, "...So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely (upon Him)."⁴³

A commitment to the principle of consultation by a leadership is a measure of its obedience to God's command whereby consultation is ranked equal to the pillars of Islam. Allah, be He raised above, said, "And those who have responded to their lord and established prayer and whose affair is (determined by) consultation among themselves,

⁴¹Abd a-Rahman 'Umayrah (n.d.).*HādihāHuwa al-Tariq*, Riyadh, pp. 28-29.

⁴²Qur'an, 110/1-3.

⁴³Qur'an, 3/159.

and from what We have provided them, they spend.”⁴⁴ The Prophet said, “Those who seek God’s guidance and those who consult others never regret.”⁴⁵

When the Prophet learned of the strength and the great number of soldiers from the tribe of Quraysh facing him in the battle of Badr, he said to his soldiers, “O people! Give us advice.” al-Miqdad b. ‘Amr responded, “O Prophet of God! Do as God has commanded, for we will be with you and support you. We will not say as the people of Israel said to Moses, ‘O Moses, indeed we will not enter it, ever, as long as they are within it; so go, you and your Lord, and fight. Indeed, we are remaining right here.’⁴⁶ But we shall say, “Go, you and your Lord, and fight. We will fight with you.”

Sa’d b. Mu’adh, leader of the Khazraj, asked, “O Prophet of God! Do you want our advice?” The Prophet replied, “Yes,” and Sa’d said, “We have believed in you and followed you. Do as God has commanded. I swear by Allah who truly sent you that every one of us will follow you.” Then the Prophet said, “Go, and may the blessing of God support you. I can see the death of our enemies.”⁴⁷

When the Islamic army had taken its positions, ready to face its enemies in the battle of Badr, Habbab b. al-Mundhir said to the Prophet, “O Prophet of God! Has it been decided to stay in this place, or can we volunteer our opinions?” adding, “This is not the right place. We should move further down so that we shall be in a position to control the water.” To this, the Prophet replied, “that is good opinion, indeed.”⁴⁸ The advice volunteered by Habbab proved a key factor in the great and decisive victory attained by the Islamic army in the battle of Badr. Thus, seeing that such a victory would not have been possible if such advice had been dismissed or unheeded, consultation is a most important quality of a successful leadership.

⁴⁴Qur’an, 42/38.

⁴⁵Tabarâni (1968).*al-Mu’jam al-Saghîr*, Egypt, vol. I, p. 251.

⁴⁶Qur’an, 5/24.

⁴⁷Muhyi al-Dîn Abd al-Hamid (n.d.).*Sîrat Ibn Hishâm*, Makkah, vol. II, p. 615.

⁴⁸Abd al-Hamid, n.d.: p. 260.

Factors behind the Success of Conquests

The early Islamic conquests are one of the great bursts of military achievement known to history and arguably one of those with the longest-lasting effects. After Muhammad’s death, the Muslim armies embarked upon a series of campaigns in the ancient Fertile Crescent (present-day Syria and Iraq) and quickly conquered the territory. The conquest of Egypt soon followed, and by 650 the heartlands of Islam—the area between Egypt on the west and the Iranian plateau on the east and the Arabian Peninsula—were ruled by the Muslims.⁴⁹

In the centuries following the great conquests, extensive and detailed narratives of them were written in the Arabic language. Most of these sources present the events from an Islamic point of view that corresponds to the view of believing Muslims over the centuries, right down to the present day. While these medieval Arabic authors do not neglect the poverty of the Arabs before Islam and their love of fighting, they have no doubt regarding the events’ true cause: the Arab Muslims fight and conquer because God has commanded them to do so, and has given them both motivation and opportunity. The Arabic sources contrast their willingness to sacrifice themselves with the behavior of the opposing armies, frightened and unenthusiastic, even (in some stories) chained together in line of battle. Furthermore, these

⁴⁹ Surveys of the conquests include Marius Canard (1926). “Les Expéditions des Arabes contre Constantinople dans l’histoire et dans la légende,” *Journal Asiatique*, 208, pp. 61-121; S.A. Hasan (1970). “A Survey of the Expansion of Islam into Central Asia during the Umayyad Caliphate,” *Islamic Culture*, 44, pp. 165-176; 45, 1971, pp. 95-113; 47, 1973, pp. 1-13; and 48, 1974, pp. 177-186; Donner, 1981: chaps. 2-4; Khalid Yahya Blankinship (1993). *The End of the Jihad State: The Reign of Hisham Ibn AbdalMalik and the Collapse of the Umayyads*, Albany, NY: Suny Press, chaps. 6-9; and Elizabeth Savage (1997). *A Gateway to Hell, a Gateway to Paradise: The North African Response to the Arab Conquest*, Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, chaps. 4 and 6.

Arabic sources generally portray the campaigns of conquests as orderly and planned.⁵⁰

One might legitimately ask how exactly these conquests were achieved, since previously (and thereafter) the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula had not demonstrated the capacity to control the neighboring settled regions, much less distant territories. Part of the reason was the unifying force of Islam. Another element of the conquests' success was a shrewd military strategy. The early Muslims adopted innovative tactics involving the extensive use of light cavalry to move quickly and target enemies at their weak points.⁵¹ Some of these innovations are described in the hadith on the subject of jihad. The weakness of the Byzantine and Sasanian empires also aided the early Muslims immensely. With the exception of the Sasanians, not a single major powerful state fell to the early Muslims. Rather, the Muslims advanced through politically unstable regions or regions controlled by nomads, many of whom converted to Islam and joined the conquest. These auxiliary forces, by supplementing the manpower from which the Muslims could draw their armies, proved crucial in obtaining the ultimate victory.⁵²

Some recent treatments have emphasized the political aspect of the conquests. In particular, F.M. Donner has identified the fledgling Muslim state in Medina as the main protagonist in the story. This state and its leadership first showed their mettle by subduing the Arabian rebels of the ridda in 632–634. Then, as groups of Arab fighters achieved success, somewhat unexpectedly, against Byzantine and Persian garrisons and armies along the frontiers, the Medinan leadership intervened to maintain

control and to make sure of the loyalty of the Arab tribesmen.

The conquests thus resulted in a successful central state, against all the Arabs' historical precedent. In this view, the religion of Islam provided the new state with a secure ideological foundation.⁵³ Other contributions of recent decades have analyzed the internal situation among the Arabs before and immediately following the first wave of conquest, including the tensions between the Arab tribesmen who fought the battles of the first conquest and others who arrived later and demanded an equal share of the benefits.

For many Muslims, the conquests constitute a miracle from God attesting to the veracity of the revelation of Islam. Because of the miracle of the conquests, jihad emerged as one of the core elements of Islam. Without the conquests, the religion would not have had the opportunity to spread in the way that it did, nor would it have been the attractant that it was. Islam was not in fact "spread by the sword"—conversion was not forced on the occupants of conquered territories— but the conquests created the necessary preconditions for the spread of Islam. With only a few exceptions (East Africa, Southeast Asia, and to some extent Central Asia beyond Transoxiana), Islam has become the majority faith only in territories that were conquered by force. Thus, the conquests and the doctrine that motivated these conquests— jihad—were crucial to the development of Islam.

Edward Atiyah attributes the success of the Islamic conquests to three main factors:

- I. The high morale of a new nation buoyed by a new faith and the enthusiasm of this nation fired by a series of early and consecutive victories.

⁵⁰ Bonner, 2006: 61.

⁵¹ Donald Hill (1975). "The Role of the Camel and the Horse in the Early Arab Conquests," in V.J. Parry and M.E. Yapp, (eds.), *War, Technology, and Society in the Middle East*, London: Oxford University Press, pp. 32-43.

⁵² Isaac Hasson (1991). "Les Mawali Dans L'armee Musulmane Sous Les Premiers Umayyades," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 14, pp. 176-213; and Khalil Athamina (1998). "Non-Arab Regiments and Private Militias During the Umayyad Period," *Arabica*, 45, pp. 347-378.

⁵³ Fred M. Donner, 1981; Idem (1995). "Centralized Authority and Military Autonomy in the Early Islamic Conquests," In *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East. States, Resources and Armies*, edited by Averil Cameron, Princeton: Darwin Press, vol. 3, pp. 337-360; Idem (1986). "The Origins of the Islamic State," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 106, pp. 283-296.

II. The genius of the two most important Islamic military leaders, Khalid b. al-Walid and 'Amr b. al-'As, who led a quick succession of victorious military campaigns in Syria, Iraq and Egypt. The victories which these two leaders won were no less impressive than those achieved by Napoleon and Alexander the Great.

III. The use of new military tactics and strategies within a new environment over which they had total control. The environment in question is the vast and untrodden deserts. The Islamic army tactics included the effective use of cavalry in a way that was entirely unfamiliar to the Byzantines. The camel played a vital role in these strategies; it provided an effective means of transporting army units for long distances and in relatively short times. The appearance of the Muslim army at target places was most unexpected and sudden, catching the enemy by surprise, throwing his plans into disarray and causing total confusion among his forces.⁵⁴

Bernard Lewis compares the commanding and impressive facility with which the Arabs used and exploited the desert to the masterful control which the British had for centuries over the sea. While their enemies found the desert a daunting and hostile environment, the Arabs felt at ease in its conditions and exploited them to the full. They were able to effect sudden appearances and strike with maximum effectiveness against enemy forces, before vanishing again into the desert, leaving little or no trace in their wake.⁵⁵

While Atiyah and Lewis are correct on the factors leading to the formidable military achievements of the Islamic army, they seem to have underplayed the much more important role of the Arabs' radical transformation as a result of embracing Islam. It was the new faith of Islam that fired the enthusiasm,

determination and ardor of the Islamic armies and was the crucial factor behind the success of the Islamic conquests. The Islamic army was no different from the enemy forces in terms of military equipment or its use, but had the important advantage of being driven by an extraordinary fervor, resolve, and eagerness to fight for a divine cause and to propagate a divine message. Qur'an outlined the course of action and the conduct which Muslim warriors should adopt when locked in armed conflict with their enemies, "O you who have believed, when you encounter a company (from the enemy forces), stand firm and remember Allah much that you may be successful. And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute and (thus) lose courage and (then) your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient."⁵⁶

The Treatment of the Conquered People

Peace is one of the central principles around which the philosophy of Islam is built and one of the notions that dominate the Islamic scriptures, "And if they incline to peace, then incline to it (also) and rely upon Allah. Indeed, it is He who is the Hearing, the Knowing."⁵⁷ From the perspective of the Islam that responding to God's command and submitting to His will entail entering into a world of peace, security, assurance, contentment and stability as well as a world free of anxiety and uncertainty. The Islamic scriptures enjoin upon Muslims the necessity of a strong and unswerving commitment to the fulfillment of covenants and repeatedly remind them of the importance of this to the preservation of trust between people and peace amongst nations. The Qur'an compares those who renege against their pledges to the foolish act of a woman who spins her yarn only later to break it into untwisted strands, "And be not like a woman who breaks into untwisted strands the yarn which she has spun after it has become strong, nor take your

⁵⁴Ahmad 'Adil Kama1 (n.d.). *Al-Tariqilâ al-Madâ'in*, n.p., from Edward 'Atiyah (1958). *The Arabs*, London/ Pelican Books, p. 34

⁵⁵Kama1, n.d.: p. 336.

⁵⁶Qur'an, 8/45-46.

⁵⁷Qur'an, 8/61.

oaths to practice deception between yourselves.”⁵⁸

Muslim armies of early Islam, with faith firmly fixed in the hearts of its combatants, managed within the space of a very short time to break through the borders of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa. Thirty years after its appearance, Islam succeeded in establishing a nation state that extended from China in the east to the borders of France in the west and from Siberia in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south, eliminating in the process all political and geographical borders within this empire. It first managed to conquer the countries of Syria, Persia and North Africa and extend its influence to Asia Minor. From these countries, the Islamic armies set off to conquer neighboring countries and used these newly subdued countries as a launch pad for even further conquests. The Islamic armies also broke through into Europe and continued to progress in this continent until they reached the walls of Vienna.⁵⁹

The rapid spread of the Islam wasn't due to a systematic campaign of oppression, pressure or torture on the part of the Muslim armies throughout the newly conquered territories. The Qur'an articulates both an explicit and consistent conception of human destiny, grounded in the Oneness and Omniscience of God and the spiritual equality of mankind as one creation, as well as an equally explicit and coherent conception of human rights, grounded in tolerance, forgiveness and co-existence within a diverse pluralist community. And it is this conception of human rights that the Muslim armies and commanders abided by in their treatment of the peoples of the conquered territories. With regard to the latter conception, the Qur'an lays down very specific rules and guidelines of relationship and responsibility between Muslims and others.

⁵⁸Qur'an, 16/92.

⁵⁹ Roger Collins (1983). *Early Medieval Spain*, New York: St. Martin's Press, p. 151; Idem (1989). *The Arab Conquest of Spain 710-797*, Oxford, UK: Cambridge, USA: Blackwell, pp. 39-40; and Hugh Kennedy (1996). *Muslim Spain and Portugal: A Political History of al-Andalus*, New York and London: Longman, pp. 1-14.

In matters relating to the treatment of others, deeds are generally more effective than words. If an army behaves morally and tolerantly, would not that create a more favourable atmosphere for it to spread its religious message? More than that, if an army unswervingly follows the dictates of Islam, moulding its conduct according to the moral teachings of the Qur'an, would not that prove the superiority of the Islamic teachings to those of the other religions and creeds followed by the peoples of the conquered nations and help spread the message of Islam among the followers of these religions and creeds?

No doubt Islam enjoins upon Muslims to fight and lay down their lives for the preservation of their Islamic ideals and to remove evil from the world. But Islam remains fundamentally a religion of peace, for even during wars, it has prohibited cruelty, oppression and intolerance altogether. Peaceful co-existence and tolerance isn't new idea to Muslims; it is as old as their religion. In newly conquered territories, newly converted Muslims were provided with equal opportunities to play their full part in the development of their countries and the wellbeing of their inhabitants. The Muslim conquerors were also prepared to give equal opportunities to non-Muslims and guarantee their protection and freedom of faith and expression. Muslim rulers, for instance, approved the appointments of non-Muslims to important positions, if those appointments didn't involve ruling the whole country.

With regard to employment in government offices, there is a historical precedent to show, "that non Muslim Citizens were employed to government posts during the time of the rightly guided Caliphs, and in the later period to Ministerial positions, army commanders and chief of (their) religious schools."⁶⁰ In Muslim history, there are many historical evidences which show that, "non-Muslims were employed in large numbers and in high Government positions under the Umayyads and the Abbasids

⁶⁰ Muhammad Abduh (1956). *Al-Islam wa al-Nasraniyyah Ma'a al-Ilm walMadaniyyah*, Cairo: Matba al-Nahada, p. 19

and they are known to have become particularly influential due to their economic power and wealth.”⁶¹

For instance, Umar b. al-Khattab had appointed Sabiqaysariyyah in book keeping and the management of other Muslim affairs. On his appointment as ruler of Iraq, Abu Musa al-Ashari appointed a personal Christian clerk. Muawiyah b. AbiSufyan put Ibn Athal, a Christian medical doctor, in charge of collecting the tribute for the County of Hims and exempted him from the tribute. The latter translated several medical books into Arabic for the Caliph. When Egypt was conquered, all the Byzantine labourers were retained and the country kept its original languages (Greek, Persian, and Coptic) as official languages up until the age of ‘Abd al-Malik. Throughout this period, the currency remained unchanged and some Christians were appointed to some senior positions. One of these Christians is Athanasius, known then as ‘the great clerk’, who used his position to build a church, Umm al-Ilah, in al-Raha, using money coming from the leasing of four hundred Hânûtt that he owned.⁶²

Another was Theodosius who occupied a privileged position in Alexandria and who, on paying a certain amount of money to Yazid, was appointed ruler of Alexandria, Mariut and their surroundings, with no accountability to the then Ruler of Egypt. Sulayman b. ‘Abd al-Malik also employed a personal Christian clerk, al-Bîtrîq b. al-Nagâ, and made him governor of al-Ramlah. Al-Mansur appointed a Jew called Musa as one of two tribute collectors in Baghdad and a group of Jewish and Christian medical doctors were on good terms with the Caliphs and other Muslims in important decision-making positions.⁶³

Christian architects contributed significantly to the building and designing of mosques and palaces. One of the characteristics

that distinguished the Islamic empire from Christian Europe during the middle ages was that whereas the former was a pluralist society allowing for the co-existence of peoples of different faiths, the latter was exclusively Christian. Christians and Jews co-existed with Muslims under Islamic rule, and their rights were enshrined in statutory laws enforced throughout the Islamic empire and for the duration of the Islamic rule.⁶⁴

In Kitab al-Aghânî and Wafayât al-A’yân it is reported that Khalid al-Qasrî, who died after 105 H, built a Church just outside of the western fence of al-Kufa Mosque and Christians used to ring the bells during the call for prayer; their hymns used often to drown the voice of the Imam so that he would not be heard, and yet there were no complaints from him. On being informed about this, the Caliph did not object to the behaviour of the Christians and took no decision against them since Islam guarantees religious freedom and encourages the Peoples of the Book to practice their devotions.⁶⁵

During the Muslim conquests of Persia, Europe, Egypt and Syria, the General Commander and Ruler Caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khattab had categorically forbidden his soldiers to take anything from the conquered people. He left the peoples of these conquered territories free to do whatever they wished and he maintained and approved their ownership.

The Islamic conquests were not motivated by an express need to have access to sources of material and financial prosperity, nor was it for the simple need to overcome and subdue others. Rather, it was conducted in a spirit of freedom, development, justice, scientific renewal and invention. Whenever Allah’s word was heeded and his laws were truly accepted and abided by, the Islamic army would withdraw from those conquered territories, leaving the peoples of those territories run their own affairs in the way they see fit and elect a leader who believes and follows the Sharia from amongst themselves.

⁶¹ Muhammad Hashim Kamali (1999). *Freedom Equality and Justice in Islam*, UK: The Islamic foundation, p. 129

⁶² For more information see Arshad Islam (2011). “The contribution of Muslims to science during the Middle Abbasid Period (750-945),” *Revelation and Science*, 1/1, pp. 39-56.

⁶³ See Ahmad Amîn (n.d.). *Duhâ al-Islam*, 10th ed., Beirut.

⁶⁴ Ibid; see also ‘Umayrah, n.d.: p. 53.

⁶⁵ Abu’l-Faraj al-Isfahani (1927). *Kitâb al-Aghânî*, Cairo; see also Ibn Khallikan (1972). *Wafayât al-A’yân*, Beirut.

Muslims pulled out of some of the conquered countries as soon as the rulers of these countries accepted Islam as their religion and made a pledge to preserve Islam as their religious faith. For instance, the Persian Bâzân was approved to rule Yemen by Abû Bakr and Fayrûz was appointed to rule San'a. When the latter was ousted by Qays b. AbdYaghûth, an Arab, Abû Bakr intervened and reinstated him, helping thereby a Persian Muslim to win over an Arab Muslim.⁶⁶

The tolerance of the conquering Muslims had a great effect in encouraging the non-Muslim populations of the conquered territories to embrace Islam, and many of them returned to Islam on account of the discipline and tolerance the newly-arrived conquerors showed towards them.⁶⁷ The main objective of the Islamic war was to uproot evil, whether in the form of tyrants or those who turned against Islam and struggled to undermine it by either misleading their peoples or preventing them from embracing the Islamic religion.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be concluded that there are clear provisions of protection of rights of non-Muslims in Islam. So the government of the Muslim Countries should care for the welfare of its citizens, whether Muslims or non-Muslims. The countries should practice Muslim laws with justice and fairness and ensure equal distribution of facilities and jobs opportunities to all. Muslim rulers thus can play a significant role in providing economical facilitation and the equal rights to the non-Muslims for the fulfillment of the goal of Shari'ah (Muslim law). All people have their individual freedom and rights within the Islamic sense based on the moral laws of Islamic philosophy of life as specified in the holy Quran, Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. Furthermore, they should follow the precedent of Khulafâ Râshidûn (Rightly-Guided Caliphs') and the Islamic history.

⁶⁶ Abd al-MuhsinMadaj al-Madaj (1988). *Yemen in Early Islam 9-233/630-847: Political History*, Ithaca Press, p. 46.

⁶⁷ 'Umayrah, n.d.: pp. 54-55.

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