

The Testament

By

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**In the name of God
Whom we do not worship other than Him**

Prelude

I wrote “The Covenant” in 1982 or a quarter of a century before today as one of the cultural studies of the International Islamic Work Federation. The reader who compares it with my study “Our Faith” which I wrote calling in it to the Islamic revival will find the main topic similar in both. Or even he may find in “The Testament” a kind of an innovation in thinking, its simplicity and spontaneity without forfeiting depth. It is a proof that the line which the author planned for himself since 1976 when he published the book. “New Democracy” is the same line of thought which he is following today. He concentrates on particular points which the passing of time emphasized their importance or adding other elements which did not attract our attraction, but the main line of thought is one and represents “Unity with Diversity”.

In view that the studies of the International Islamic Work Federation are not offered for sale, beside the exhaustion of the stocks of copies we decided to re-print them under the motto “Calling Living Persons” in order that we may not forget and that it will be added to those writings of the living persons.

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The Testament

(1)

Let us be faithful and extradite evil from our hearts. It is the first step on the right path.

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- (1) It is not in a manner of naivety, futile talk or ignorance of basics that we begin our study. Unless exists in the spirit a deep feeling of faithfulness, good and benevolence, an alert orientation to extradite evil and fight its trends, no profit would be obtained from anything that follows. The world that we call “The Advanced World” stumbles and is falling down not because it is ignorant or poor. Education or abundance did not reach the level they reached in this world, but they are suffering from calamities and pain because they did not seek to extradite evil but surrender themselves to it. It is almost unbelievable that great States agree on spending on means of war, destruction, sadness and destination many folds of what they are spending on means of peace, construction, happiness and felicity. They destroy the good elements of living throwing them into the sea or give them as food for animals while millions of individuals in Asia and Africa are dying from hunger. It is impossible to justify such stupidity in a “rational” world except by referring to the hegemony of evil and the power of darkness.
 - (2) We mean by evil harming others and mistreating them positively or negatively without any justification condoned by Islam and other religions in order to suppress crime and maintain peace. All images of mistreatment, harming, exploitation, injustice, extortion, humiliation and debasement are comprised in the domain of evil. Evil reaches the stage of hate and the lowest depth in torture.
 - (3) Evil appears when high morals and values disappear and when selfishness, egocentricity and arrogance prevail. The words “I am better than him” are the launching pad for the devil toward evil. There exist also, in addition, the environment elements, the deviations of education and the impact of inheritance.
 - (4) The heart in the Qura’anic text is the center of affection, feeling and knowledge. It is the organ which discriminates between the good and the evil, between guidance and aberration. From here the Qur’an focuses on the sane heart. The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said. “There is in the body an organ which if it is good, the body becomes good, and if it is corrupted the body becomes corrupted, which is the heart”.

(2)

We will not be faithful indeed unless we surrender our hearts to God. Sciences, arts, literature, philosophies and all other images of guidance have their failures. The only power that prevents the human spirit from caprices and protect it from falling in evil, inspires it with strength and realizes peace in the spirit, the society and the universe, is Divine Guidance.

- (1) Laws, systems and governors' policies fail to implant in souls the sense of goodness, benevolence and to protect them from evil and injustice because this lies beyond their specializations. In addition, doubts and suspicions accompany all that emanate from them. Sciences are unable because they possess a neutral and abstract nature and could be exploited in good and bad deeds alike. So are arts and literature unable because they are only expressions of the human soul's feelings in their advantages and disadvantages, their strength and weakness. For this reason. They elevate the human soul in some instances. They may also degrade it in other instances. So is philosophy, in view of the existence of dialectics and antitheses in it, the impacts of relativity on it and the reflections of their owners and creators on it, hinder it from having absolute truth. Besides, in view that it is the credo of the few and will not acquire a universal nature with all that humanity poses in systems, examples or creeds which are governed undoubtedly by human incapacity and failure to control the human soul and contain its whims.
- (2) Human soul could not surrender its reins except to a force more powerful than it, and no power is greater than that of the Creator. The Creator of the human soul is the One Who molded it, Who knows all its whispers, Who is nearer to it than its jugular vein. His guidance directs it to discriminate between good and evil. He is the One Who gives it peace. Man's belief in a great, wise, powerful, merciful and most beneficent Creator makes him feel peace, that he is not the prey of blind fatalism or erratic coincidence or querulous forces to nature. Inasmuch as this belief consolidates peace inside hearts, it consolidates stability in minds because it establishes the principle of "causality" and "teleology". There is no cause without an effect, no creation without a Creator and no existence without a purpose. The whole universe is linked by a strict, knowledgeable and wise will. This feeling organizes the society by virtue of the controls laid down by Islam. Lastly, the believer feels a close tie that links him to all these universes formed of suns, stars, lands and skies because they are all created by God. They all join him in glorifying Him and follow His orders. The Holy Qur'an speaks, about many worlds, points to the earth, sun, moon, stars, plants animals as if they

are living and speak, that they are “nations like you”. Islam prohibits cutting of trees or wasting water or harming animals and any image of corruption on earth or violating its sanctity. For this reason, the believer feels peace in Islam; peace in his soul which is in the hands of God; peace in the society balanced with justice, peace with the worlds which march toward their final destination according to the laws fixed by God.

It is not for the sun to overtake the moon nor doth the night outstrip the day. They float each in an orbit.

Despair could not push a Muslem toward atheism or suicide because of his belief in the truth of God’s integrity is more powerful than any other factor and when he surrenders his soul, he only follows the Divine call.

*But, Ah! Thou soul at peace
Return unto thy lord, content in His good pleasure. Enter thou
among my bondsmen. Enter thou my garden.*

- (3) In addition to his feeling of tranquility, peace of mind and confidence, man’s boat advances by the guidance of an unfailing compass toward the safety harbor. This is not something of no importance. Belief in God grants us immunity against the numerous seductions and desires that surround life and make the human soul a spoil to them. Belief in God grants us also the force to confront terrorism and tyranny. This force which could reach the stage of a revolution when conditions are prepared or could to bear iniquities until conditions are prepared in order that human soul will not be torn apart between the will from one part and the unpreparedness of conditions from the other part. This may not be considered a surrender but the realization of a long term policy, and a comprehension of the objective conditions because the believer is not afraid of death. He considers it a testimony and one of the two merits.

(3)

Religion is a must. Religion alone possesses the “Inspiration” that carries God’s message through the prophets who assume the duty of explaining and delivering this message. This fact distinguishes religions from philosophies and theories which cannot get in contact with God through inspiration or by way of prophets and consequently their opinion about God was governed by human deficiency.

Development affirmed this “must” to the individual and the society. Religions appeared with the appearance of man, and reflected the first images of belonging. Thereafter the genuine and methodical image was taken with the divine religions considering them the “Framework” of the faith and the mirror of belonging. They reached in strength the degree of instinct in the individual and of necessity in society.

All religions formed together a single edifice in which each religion had laid a building stone. Disputes rose as a result of development, misunderstanding, distortion and acquired interests. Islam is in the path of religions the towering end and the crown of peace.

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- (1) In the previous paragraph we said that we will not be really faithful unless we surrender our hearts to God, and to leave to Him our guidance, and that in order to achieve this, peoples should have a religion because religion alone carries God’s message through inspiration at the hands of prophets who assume the mission of explaining and delivering the message. These “specifications” are not found in theories and philosophies. From here their imaging of Almighty God and the content of His message were governed by human failure. Religions alone present the true image of Divinity which the mind will not refuse but could not alone reach it, in view that this is not a mathematical matter, because religions have their own methods and ways to reach truths and because they are not interested in the manner but in the substance and science is unable to deal with substances. Evidencing proofs in man are not confined on the mind, although the mind governs them. Sound instinct could picture the existence of God and science could not refuse to believe in this existence or refute it. We ignore the substance and the secret of the inspiration but we believe that it is from God by virtue of the soundness of the message which He has sent, its miraculous character and its superiority over any works of the genius and philosophers of humankind as well as by virtue of the truthfulness of prophets. Any possibility of their lying in this major case is totally

improbable and exists permanently and thus liars could not persist and from here we have to believe in inspiration as a reality even though we totally ignore its substance and secret.

- (2) History and development affirmed the truthfulness and genuineness of religions because:
- 1- They offered the most complete conception of Divinity which human mind could comprehend and which philosophers, theorists and custodians of pagan creeds failed to understand. It will appear when making a comparison between these raw imaginations with the miraculous conceptions presented by Islam of Almighty God considering Him the origin of the full, and absolute ideal: He was not created, nor did He procreate. However, he remains the origin of life and creation that minds and hearts perceive but Who is impossible to know by sight and nothing equals Him.
 - 2- The Divine religious messages represent the objective perfection “individually and collectively, and are impossible to be affected by their surroundings.
 - 3- The appearance of these messages’ carriers, i.e. prophets, is a confirmation of the messages because their existence is only for the aim of delivering the message without obtaining wage or reward as if they have been born for assuming this special mission. Their existence is a proof of the message existence and that it was sent by God.
 - 4- From the other hand, it is supported and confirmed that messengers came not from among the ranks of those involved in sciences or philosophies in a manner to describe that their divine message was the fruit of their philosophical study and private intellect. They were ordinary people not distinguished from others and were engaged in professions which people perform. God alone granted them the strength, and sciences and surrounded them with his care, saved them from weakness and incapacity.
- (3) For this reason peoples and nations believed in religions since the beginning of life on this earth irrespective of production and ruling systems, the diversity of times and places. Religions in the present epoch of sectarian ideologies and theories remain the point of attraction of the peoples’ belief. They could not be measured by democracy, capitalism or communism, etc. It was not futile that most of these doctrines fight religions vehemently and claim that religion

is the opium of the people because they hated its genuineness and attachment of the peoples to it. For all these reasons the prestige of religions is much higher than that of philosophies and theories. They are more complete qualitatively and more comprehensive quantitatively. Religions have anchored the moral foundations of human civilization and provided individuals with a permanent self power which is the conscience and a plan in life based on moderation, non-surrender to desires and whims, in particular money, women and rule. It provided the society with a group of systems that ensure for it peace and emancipate the peoples from the yoke of tyrants and consolidated the dignity of the human soul.

- (4) Some may imagine that we are living in the age of “irreligion” but this is not true. Every one has a religion and whoever believes in “irreligion”, it becomes a religion for which sake he fights like a believer fights for the sake of his religion. The careless who appears as if he is not interested in religion is the one who made “His Passion His God” as the Qur’an says. He is the slave of his cravings, film stars and athletes, etc. Communism which declared itself the enemy of religions became a religion in which are the prophets like Marx, Engels and Lenin and its God is material dialectics, the believers in it are the party immersed in hate, greed and ambition.
- (5) In fact, religions were exploited and falsified to peoples. Self-appointed custodians, mercenaries and the sultan’s entourage, spoke in their names. Peoples themselves misunderstood them. All this is not the fault of religions themselves nor are they the only entities taking this attitude. Calls for freedom and equality were falsified and this falsification itself points to the prestige of religions and their importance. Lead and iron are not falsified but gold and silver are.
- (6) The multiplicity of religions and the divergences between them do not disturb us at all. Even we consider it from an Islamic viewpoint, a natural and expected matter. It was mandatory that each nation should have a messenger to call it to faith in its own language, who will take into consideration the conditions of his community because religions are not based on miracles, although they condone miracles in some situations, but are based on following laws enacted by God for the development of communities. From this point, appeared secondary differences between religions. However, the main pivots in divine religions are the same which are the existence of a unique God, Creator of the Worlds, representing absolute perfection, resurrection, reward and punishment and “unity” between all peoples in creed is not important. The important is peace among them irrespective of their divergent doctrines. Qur’anic verses affirm the multiplicity of religions and that they all emanate from God and give

credence one to another. The Bible, the Gospel and the Qur'an, beside others, are sacred books that descended from Heavens and that they differ according to the difference between communities and that if they affected the pivots it is because of falsification, misunderstanding or acquired interests. The Qur'anic verses which refer this discord to falsification, acquired interests or translations are numerous. The Prophet's traditions touching religions-before Islam-affirm this meaning as a beautiful house if not for a crack in it and Islam was the mortar that filled this crack. These traditions point to prophets as brothers, that judgment in the discord between these religions is attributable to God alone at Resurrection Day. No one may confer on himself this right or that attribute because this action will be a kind of atheism. It is naivety and selfishness in some Muslims to imagine that paradise is restricted to Muslims only and that anybody else fate is in hell. This belief contradicts the spirit of Islam, the morals of Islam. No one may confiscate God's judgment or monopolize Paradise for a group of persons or for Muslims. Islam itself is not a monopoly to Muslims. It is for all mankind and there may exist persons who are nearer to it from among non Muslims who "utter with their mouths a thing which is not in their hearts"- Imam al-Ghazali says in a famous statement: People following the Prophet's mission are made of three kinds:

- 1- Those who did not receive his call and did not hear of him at all. These are the residents of Paradise.
- 2- Those who received his call and saw miracles happening by virtue of his intervention and knew of his great and noble characters and morals but did not believe in him. These are the residents of hell.
- 3- Those who received his call, heard of him but did not follow his orders and prohibitions. Those I wish for them Paradise if they have not heard what entices them to faith.

It is clear from this statement that most non-Muslims in the modern age are those on which are applied the first and third groups: The first "Are residents of Paradise" and the third "I hope for them Paradise".

- (7) But all this does not negate that Islam is the closing religion and the peace crown in the march of all religions because it was the last among religions and acknowledges every religion prior to it particularly Judaism and Christianity. Thus it discards the greatest reason for their enmity toward it and consequently peace is realized among religions.

(4)

Let us make prophets our leaders and our ideal example. Let us rid ourselves from the admiration of tyrants who made their policy to be superior on the earth.

- (1) Reviewing the political history of mankind shows that it has been subjected to leaders and rulers who resorted to brute force and whose aim was to be superior on earth. The most prominent example to this is the commanders of the Roman Empire, then the leaders of European countries which were deeply affected with the Roman Empire and followed its policy. We believe that one of the greatest factors which led to the corruption of political thought was highlighting attention on kings, emperors, tyrants, military commanders and neglecting prophets and their followers and companions. Admiration shown by the educated and ruling class in Europe to the Greek and Roman civilizations and their brutal heroes (Alexander, Caesar, Augustus) and others paved the way to the appearance of Machiavelli and acceptance of his sharp separation between politics and moral values; to the appearance of Napoleon, Lenin, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and the like. This admiration permitted the existence of Adam Smith and Karl Marx and their alienation of economics and its dimensions from serving the society. This admiration led to the appearance of capitalism and communism and the prevalence of material components over all other components. The proper situation imposes the exposure of the true characters of these tyrants who enslaved the peoples using force and deceit to bolster their rule. It imposes giving special prominence to prophets who were the leaders who resisted this tyranny, highlighted right in the face of force and implanted the dignity of the human soul and succeeded with varying degrees in saving humankind from the rule of tyrants and princes of darkness. This is the method drawn by the Qur'an when it exposed Moses to the confrontation of Pharaoh and when it made divine messages the pivots of history and the prophets the leaders of the peoples.

- (2) Islam equals between prophets "It does not distinguish between them". It considers them brothers and believes in all of them. The Qur'an mentioned the names of some while it pointed that others existed whose life history was not recounted to the Prophet "*and messengers We have mentioned unto thee before and messengers We have not mentioned unto thee*" Therefore we could not decide for sure whether Buddha, Plato or Confucius and Akhnaton were messengers or not. What we could say is that there exists the

possibility of their being messengers unless their words contain something of atheism.

- (3) In the personality of Muhammad, we find the ideal example of what a caller and a statesman could have been. This fact did not materialize with other prophets-with the exception of Moses whose life is surrounded with legends and his impact is limited to the Sons of Israel. His life history- as a statesman possessing wisdom and right, following good and targeting emancipation and justice- affirmed that this is not impossible albeit difficult. Muhammad realized in al-Madina what his successors realized in the ideal society. Humankind was not in need after him to get inspiration from Plato's Republic because Muhammad's leadership and the nation which he raised are better than all those thinkers. Let us emancipate ourselves from admiration of tyrants. Let us reject the policy of superiority on earth and let us take from prophets, whose line was terminated by Muhammad, the ideal example.

(5)

In order that faithfulness is not transformed into naivety and goodness to inadvertence, in order to protect ourselves from surrendering to passions, excesses or fluidity of attitudes, let us make justice a criterion. Let us control our works, conducts and judgments basing ourselves on justice.

- (1) Although faithfulness, straightforwardness and avoidance of evil in all its images are the necessary preparations preceding all that will follow in works and policies, there exists the possibility that faithfulness may turn into naivety and goodness into inadvertence, that avoiding evil may take numerous images of weakness and surrender, that the affectionate soul will prevail and push man to forms of excesses, transgressions or squanderings or make him see mirage a reality and wishes a fact.

For this reason we must have controls which hinder deviation. We must have a precise watch that does not delay, advance or change with the changes of locations, according to which each will control his conduct and will act at the same time emanating from his self and his belief and are not far away from him or imposed on him from the outside. This watch is the sense of justice.

Justice is the pillar of the society. It could not be degraded as such degradation becomes injustice and squandering. It may arise above it because kindness is above justice, and affection transcends kindness. But these levels would not be required to be reached from all the peoples because they could be levels which they are unable to bear nor are they pivots around which turn the society's transactions and relations in view that no controls exist in them. Consequently, justice became the criterion and we should therefore abide by it and develop in our souls the sense of justice and equity. Thus enticements will be unable to control us.

- (2) When society lays down justice procedures and criteria it may happen that it subjects justice levels in a manner that will consider the poverty of the poor, and the surrender of the weak just matters. As for Islam, justice is the main characteristic distinguishing it. Consequently it does not confine justice on the economy but represents "the purpose": Each one who deeply, and knowingly believes in it acquires the sense of justice that acquaints its owner with justice, in a manner that if he deviates from it, it roams in his breast and pushes him to re-think about matter, or repent or offer atonement for his deviation.

- (3) In addition to the “sense of justice” which occupies the Muslem’s soul as a result of his belief in Islam, Islam does not limit justice in being general mottos and individual orientations but it laid down also rules and principles which should be applied in any Islamic society. This has been contained in the Qur’an verses and the Prophet’s traditions and were implemented in fact during al-Medina Society as the epoch of the Messenger and his orthodox successors.

(6)

In order that we may not go astray in assessing and understanding matters in their reality, to take our judgments in guidance and discernment, we must use our minds. We must learn to the extreme limit as a means for developing our minds, capabilities and we have to use our knowledge within the framework of truthfulness, goodness and justice.

The mind is the tool bestowed by God on humans in order to enable them to discriminate between right and wrong. Moreover, the heart is the tool for this discrimination. The mind is the power and the heart is the trust and what we must seek is to combine both in order to reach the “Strong and Faithful” in the words of the Qur’an because without trust the strong could deviate and become corrupt and the faithful without strength could become weak and fail.

Nothing should block the way in front of the mind except one thing which is God’s Self and what lies after death and the Hereafter. And because human mind fails to comprehend this fact, as witnessed by the statements of philosophers and inasmuch as the mind should stand before this fact and take what inspiration provides, the more it has- the mind- to distinguish by itself alone. Its intervention in the first instance is intrepidity of no value except straying and its negligence in the second instance is a default, inadvertence and squandering of the most precious gift granted by God to man.

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- (1) The Qur’an speaks about two instruments in the human soul which are “the Heart and the Mind”. The heart in the Qur’an is greater than this pinnacled muscle in the chest. The mind is also greater than those gelatinous cells in the brain. It explains that the heart possesses an insight by which it distinguishes between good and bad. It considers the heart a tool by which man “understands”. The Qur’an points also to the mind considering it the tool which understands the wisdom contained in the universal phenomena of life, death, suns, moons, sterility and fructification, etc..
 - (2) The heart armed with the sense of justice will ensure for us knowledge of good and bad and will prevent us from falling in transgressions and squanderings. But knowledge of laws which govern this universe and what nature possesses in resources and powers which could be used to enrich human life and to realize what God wanted for man in dignity that befits His creatures on earth, is a matter belonging to the mind. From here many verses order to look, inspect, organize and use the mind which warns of inadvertence and

symptoms. The Qur'an even made those who bypass God's verses concerning the soul and nature inadvertently worse than cattle.

Lo! The worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the deaf, the dumb who have no sense.

We see that among the most obliging of obligations is to use our minds, and to learn to the extreme limit, to acquire all skills and to believe that slackness in pursuing this is among the express grave offenses and contraventions of the Qur'an's instructions in which the first verse descended to declare "Read". This is one of the greatest causes for the weakness of Muslims in the modern age and the decline of their moral and material prestige.

- (3) Many references in religious books point to the failure of human mind and to the trend that makes belief in everything by acceptance without activating the mind or the thought. This is a grave error in view that the only thing in front of which human mind stops is Almighty God's Self and what lies behind death in the Hereafter, resurrection, reward and punishment, etc. This is because human mind as we have shown is unable to comprehend this and the philosophers, stand witness to it. Inasmuch as the mind is required to stand in front of this and take what the revelation offers, it can have the power to distinguish between things seeking to find in them the fault and the wisdom. Its intervention in the first instance is considered an intrepidity of no value except disarray and its negligence in the second instance a failure and an inadvertence and even squandering of the most precious gifts bestowed by God on man.

From here, discrimination should be clear and defined. Scholars themselves, despite the general stamp of their speech about surrender and imitation, did not deny that the mind is entrusted with the leadership, that belief should be based on conviction. If the mind has a role in this, it is more obliged with the affairs of life. It will be more beneficial for men to glorify the mind instead of repeating the talk about the default of the human mind.

(7)

Work is the expression about life, innovation and satisfaction of the personality. It is a means for everyone to fulfill his duty toward the society and his contribution in its building. From here, it could be said that inasmuch as the donation of each one is profuse, the society will enjoy a life of plenty. Because everyone gives before he takes and there exists no one who takes without giving. Besides, this action will ensure the society victory in the greatest challenges that confront backward societies which is “Development” and defy many images of fabrications which abound in international policy.

One of the specializations of work in the modern age is its association with science.

We believe that there is a work for everyone and one worker for each work. Any default in this axiom relates to a default of policies and systems. Work in Islam is the proof of belief, a criterion of reward and punishment. The duty of each one of us is to work, to seek in his work, the face of God, to serve the society and to execute his work with knowledge and skill, with expertise and loyalty.

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- (1) Work is the proof of life. In all creatures, movement, development, and breathing are considered among the most important symptoms of life. If existence is determined by a framework of time and place, work is the action which fills this framework and makes a meaning for it, or else it will remain an empty framework.

Work for man is an expression of life, of the personality and what this personality can offer that materializes its thought, its expertise and its duty and add these to the society. And as much as their additions are profuse, will the society as a whole enjoy a plentiful life in which all needs are satisfied and no one may feel a shortage or a need, because everyone will be given before he takes and because there will be the one who takes without giving. This will also enable the society to achieve victory in the most fateful of battles that backward society confront which is development in which failure threatens these societies with inability to confront many forms of fabrications abounding in international policy and may expose it to a subservience in everything to the interest of these countries that have no mercy or even to their military aggression.

- (2) Work in the modern age is linked with science and is based on it. Unjust work and cheap work have become a vestige of the past and what could not stand in the face of work linked to modern technology.

- (3) We believe that there is a work for everyone, that unemployment is not unavoidable as some think. Retraining could transfer unemployed to needy domains. There are always needy domains particularly in the services sector. Moreover it is assumed that no one specialist is out of work. This and that is the result of a defect in the policies of the “Work Forces” or educational social, economic and political systems.
- (4) Islam elevated the prestige of work and considered it a confirmation of faith. The Qur’an never mentions ‘those who believe’ without seconding it with “and work good deeds”. Doing good deeds was the fruit of belief and a confirmation of the purity of this belief. Moreover, reward and punishment in the Hereafter are based on work. “What you have done “Or” what you have worked”.
- (5) It will be evident from this great prestige conferred on work whether as regards the individual or the society, life or Islam, that the duty of each one of us is to work and to seek from his work the face of God and the service of the society. Because it is his duty and he will be rewarded by it in this life and in the Hereafter and will contribute in supporting a noble and a prosperous life. His work should be coupled with knowledge, dexterity, skill and loyalty.

(8)

The society is an undertaking and no society may stick together except in the volume of what its undertakings bind it with. The society is founded on two principles: Freedom of thought and justice in work. We have to abide by these notions and follow them.

- (1) The moment two persons meet, undertakings arise in terms of relations, rights and obligations, etc. It becomes necessary to define these undertakings and to fix them in their proper position in a manner that does not harm either the individual or the society.

This matter has been and still remains the axis of extensive political and social studies in which prevailed on some, elevation of the individual above the State (considering it representing the society) while in some other studies, elevation of the State over the individual. Rarely a sound settlement was reached which does not harm the individual or deprive the State of its legal powers.

- (2) We have resolved this matter according to three wide lines which are:
 - (a) An undertaking should exist as long as a society exists. The one who finds assuming this undertaking onerous, should leave the society and find for himself an isolated island to live in it alone (and even in such State he will remain obligated toward nature from the Islamic viewpoint).
 - (b) All that concerns thinking is supposed to be free unless it affects the reputation or dignity of persons, because this thinking represents "conscience". If this thinking is a belief and "the mind" is this thinking, so is research, study and exploration. No harm or intervention should take place in a manner limiting their freedom even when some bad deeds result from this freedom because evil deeds affecting freedom of thinking are less harmful than the evil deeds of intervening in them.
 - (c) As regards work and what takes form as work (particularly in the economy) is subjected to justice and justice will be the criterion. Justice could not be regarded as injustice to another. It is just an immunization of one party against the injustice of the other party. From here evils of intervention in it are less than the evils of leaving it free.

(9)

We are part of the civilization's march of mankind which began from ancient Egyptians till the contemporary period in which all the world's peoples participated. Our pride in our countries and contributions do not ignore or deny what others offered or make us forget that all of us form a single family living on one single planet. For this reason we do not take the attitude of neglect or prejudice against the modern civilization. We could not refuse it in whole and details because we form part of it and because in many of its aspects it represents progress and because we practically live in it. Our attitude toward it is the attitude defined by Islam: "Wisdom is the objective of the believer which he seeks to attain wherever he finds it". Our choices are the elements which govern our attitude.

- (1) Modern civilization which Europe carries today its flame does not belong to Europe alone (Although most glories and blemishes over the last centuries revert to it). Civilization began taking shape since humankind began its march. All peoples of the world contributed in it with what was decided for it. Consequently all claims of monopolizing civilization by any one people are rejected. It is not permissible to a people to claim "this is my civilization" or to consider itself above the others in dignity. Each people has its own pride and each people has its contribution. Moreover, reclusion of any people inside the limits of its country, neglecting modern civilization is no wisdom at all because modern civilization, despite of what it entailed in evils is not void of glories. In some of its aspects it represents an unprecedented wonderful progress. Besides, the idea of neglect and reclusion is sterile, impracticable and contradicts the Qur'an's guidance which stipulated that almighty God created us nations and tribes to get acquainted with each other and not to ignore or neglect each other. No sensitivity should arise about adoption of the good in this civilization because this conforms with Islam's attitude as regards its acknowledgement of previous systems unless they contain contradictions to its teachings. Islamic guidance, through the Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions impose on us to make wisdom our objective and to seek to obtain it wherever it exists, and not to let a people's bad deeds push us to forsake justice.

We do not see a contradiction between our pride in our countries and customs and adopting many images and aspects of modern life. This is just an equation in a world based on equations, in which are made successively additions and renovations which enrich life and are combined forming an integral part of it. Being proud of something is one thing and to remain standstill in situations and aspects is another thing. Pride emanates from confidence and positivism, stillness results from tradition and negativism. The first enriches and the second

debilates. The second and not the first exists in many Islamic societies and this fact is not good at all.

Islam believes in universality, human links and unity of mankind. It acknowledges the existense of discords and distinguishing characteristics of every religion and race. It establishes relations between them on the basis of what was agreed and accepted unanimously. Each people has what belongs to it or characterizes it or “we meet on what we have agreed upon and excuse one another on what we disagree”.

We understand Islam as a great liberational message descended by God to get out peoples from darkness to light. We understand that its core and essence is the faithfulness in the individual and justice in the society and peace with the universes. For this reason the Qur'an symbolized it with the Book and the Balance. It laid down directives, and controls which realize this. We notice that worships although form an integral part of Islam they do not constitute the whole of Islam. Worships are means for approach and not purposes and ends, and that good work, noble character and what Islam laid down in systems for the welfare of society, are added to them. Islam laid down reactions or mechanisms for correcting what error may be committed by the individual or make him fall in them due to his weakness. These are based on asking pardon and repentance and the deletion of bad deeds by good deeds. These means are considered by Islam sufficient to treat weaknesses and defects (particularly in worships) but as regards evil or treating the people in equity, Islam imposed severe punishments in order to mitigate the impacts of bad deeds to the minimum level. It is the wisdom in punishments. We reject imitation and undertaking to follow by necessity what our ancestors have designed.

We should first of all understand that such comprehension may lead us to admiring what they decided. It may lead us as well to reject whatever they imposed without taking any blame, because commitment as a necessity, emanates from understanding the clear and express text of the Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions (Sunna). May be we are more capable than our ancestors in comprehending the Qu'ran and the Sunna. The Qur'anic guidance is clear in this through ordering looking over, understanding and warning from following fathers and forefathers.

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- (1) One of the greater aspects of misunderstanding Islam is the neglect of its liberating stamp and its main objective which is realization of trust in individuals, justice in the society and peace with the universes, neglect of the Qur'anic symbol of Islam's message "By the Book and the Balance", directives and controls which realize this message and create the Islamic Society which applies Islam's concepts concerning economy, society and politics.
 - (2) Concentration appeared in the face of this neglect, or even confinement on worship and its rites. Worship in Islam is an integral part of Islam but is not definitely the whole of Islam. Confining one's attention on worships harm other components of Islam. In addition worships are means and offerings and are not purposes and ends. They surrounded morals which consequently stopped being noticed. The message of Islam for the individual was in the past crystallized in the sound heart or straight mind. It became

crystallized in rites, rituals, formalities and moulds. And after considering good deeds and noble character components of Islam not less in importance than worship, it was considered that worships suffice or are substitutes to these components. Islam prescribed treatments for human default and weakness (particularly in the field of worships) which resemble in their totality a mechanism having a nature of its own based on asking forgiveness and repentance, doing good deeds to wipe off bad deeds which are means from the same source of worship, because no default could be treated by corrective means or by an intervention from outside the human soul in view that such action spoils worship and invalidates intention beside permitting forms of intervention and intrusiveness on privacies and opens the door to exploit all this against these self-means for the treatment of weaknesses. Islam imposed severe punishments on every one who commits an evil action or harm people. These are the punishments inflicted in order to lessen the consequences of evil actions to their minimum level of harm.

- (3) We believe that among the greatest causes for the retardation of Muslims is their misunderstanding of their religion. Such misunderstanding reverts in its turn to the fact that they have neglected to refer themselves to God's Book and to His Prophet's Sunna and preferred to rely upon sayings of ancestors, scholars and imams then they obligated themselves to follow the thinking of the owners of the schools of jurisprudence after closing the door to jurisprudence. Thus Muslims deprived themselves from the source of their power and the ebullient spirit flowing from the Qur'an. They allowed many weak sayings to be followed which the circumstances for their issue are uncertain-and thus should not be taken as bases for judgments. This high accumulation of explanations, margins, interpretations, translations and proofs hid the spirit of Islam, its essence and imposed its fragments on Islam's origins and permitted the infiltration of the invalid, ill and the imposed. This state of affairs, imposed the return to the two great sources. The Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunna without taking heed of whatever was written before. As regards the Qur'an this does not require except reading it in a sound heart and a conscious mind. As regards the Sunna, this requires review of the arts of speech and criteria laid down by narrators as regards jurisprudence. This requires reviewing the basic elements of jurisprudence and basing them on the higher objectives of Islam.

We see that a standstill on what men laid down since ten centuries, whatever their capabilities may have been, they are not infallible. This standstill contradicts totally the precepts of Islam and is a stark proof to the extent of failure feebleness, and loss of confidence of contemporary Muslims in

themselves, in their spirit and mind, while they are today more capable than their ancestors of thinking and investigating by virtue of the existence of the printing press, the arts of sorting and indexing which were not available before*.

* This study was written as one of the cultural booklets published by the International Islamic Work Federation in the Eighties of the last century and were not put for sale but distributed to the branches of the Federation's members.