

FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIO-POLITICAL CONCEPTS
IN THE SOURCES OF ISLAM

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research undertaken in this thesis is the result of my own investigation and that it has been composed by myself. No part of it has been previously published in any other work.

ABSTRACT

This thesis purports to elucidate whether or not there is a framework of political implications in the document of the Qur'ān. The investigation is prompted by a controversy existing among some Muslim, as well as orientalist, scholars. One group of scholars holds the view that the Qur'ān has political connotations and can be considered as the source of political theory. Another group asserts that the Qur'ān is a religious document and has no political implications.

The author of this thesis assumes that by returning to the document of the Qur'ān itself and examining its terminology against the exegesis of Muslim scholars and the background of the circumstances of revelation, a clearer view of the controversy can be attained.

The introductory chapter outlines the controversy. The view of both groups is briefly discussed. The methodology of research is explained. The author introduces seven controversial terms which it is proposed to examine in the thesis.

These terms are: ummah, walā', ikhwah, khalīfah, imām, ulū al-amr, and shūrā.

The first chapter deals with the concept of ummah as it is encountered in the Qur'ān and its development. The term is examined in the light of the interpretations of the major Muslim exegetes. Here the lexical meaning, as well as the possible political dimensions, are the focus of the discussion. The term is then examined in the light of the writings of Muslim political theorists, classical and modern.

The concepts of walā' and ukhūwah are discussed in Chapter 2. The focus of attention is directed to the possible implications the terms might have in relation to political phenomena. These terms are then examined in the context of their pragmatic and practical application in the historical setting of Madīnah at the time of the Prophet.

In the third chapter the concepts of khalīfah, imām and ulū al-amr are examined in the manner of Chapter 1. The terms here are examined against the background of their usage at the time of the

Qur'ānic revelation. Their different shades of meaning are then examined in the light of the interpretations of the main writings of Muslim exegetes. The terms are also examined in terms of their modern concepts. The concepts of these terms are again examined with reference to their possible interpretations, first against the lexical meaning then against the writings of Muslim scholars.

In Chapter 4 the concept of shūrā is examined with reference to its nature and relevance to authority in the Islamic ummah.

In Chapter 5 two practices within the ummah, namely al-zakāt and al-jihād are discussed.

Finally, an attempt is made to assess the political nature of the terms proposed in this study.

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TRANSLITERATION

Arabic Letter	Transliteration	Short Vowels
ا	'	اَ a
ب	b	بَ u
ت	t	تَ i
ث	th	
ج	j	
ح	h	حَ ā
خ	kh	خَ ū
د	d	دَ ī
ذ	dh	
ر	r	
ز	z	زَ aw
س	s	سَ ay
ش	sh	شَ iyy
ص	s	
ض	d	
ط	t	
ظ	z	
ع	'	
غ	gh	
ف	f	
ق	q	
ك	k	
ل	l	
م	m	
ن	n	
ه	h	
و	w	
ي	y	
آ	t	

Long Vowels

Diphthongs

ABBREVIATIONS

- Jawād [°]Alī: Al-Mufaṣṣal fī Ta'rīkh al-Arab qabl
al-Islam.
- al-Bayḍāwī: Anwār al-Tanzīl wa-Asrār al-Ta'wīl.
- al-Fīrūzābādī: Tanwīr al-Miqiās min Tafsīr Ibn
[°]Abbas.
- al-Jalālayn Tafsīr al-Jalālayn.
- Ibn Jazzī: Kitāb al-Tashīl li [°]Ulūm al-Tanzīl.
- Ibn Kathīr: Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-[°]Azīm.
- Ibn Manzūr: Lisān al-[°]Arab.
- al-Qurtubī: al-Jāmi[°] li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān.
- al-Ṭabarī: Jāmi[°] al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-
Qur'ān.
- al-Zamakhsharī: Al-Kashshāf [°]an Haqā'iq Ghawāmiḍ
al-Tanzīl wa-[°]Uyūn al-Aqāwīl fī
Wujūh al-Ta'wīl.

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis it is proposed to show whether or not in the sources of Islam and particularly the document of the Qur'ān, there is a framework of political implications. For this purpose certain basic assumptions are put forward in the introductory chapter.

Muslims consider the Qur'ān to be the revealed word of God. This attitude is reflected in the writings of Helmut Gatje,

The collection of divine revelations in the Qur'ān serves Muslims as the primary source of their doctrine.¹

In this study the document of the Qur'ān is considered as a document issued by Muḥammad, and claimed by him to be the word of God. It is treated here as an integrated whole. This attitude is expressed by some Western writers on Islam, e.g. John Burton and Weitbrecht Stanton.² George

1. Helmut Gätje, The Qur'an and its Exegesis,
Tr. Alford T. Welch, Routledge & Kegan Paul,

Sale says

Mohammad was really the author and chief contriver of the Koran is beyond dispute; though it be highly probable that he had no small assistance from others, as his countrymen failed in their conjectures as to the particular persons who gave him such assistance.¹

Concerning the development of the Qur'ān during the eventful life of Muhammad, Canon Sell

Cont'd: third edition, London, 1976, p.16.

2. John Burton, The Collection of the Qur'an, Glasgow University Society, Glasgow, 1969-70, Chapter 1; also H.U. Weitbrecht Stanton, The Teaching of the Qur'an, S.P.C.K. Holy Trinity Church, London, 2nd Impression, 1969, pp.3-29.
1. George Sale, The Preliminary Discourse to the Koran, Frederick Warne and Co. Ltd., London, (n.d.), pp.68-9; a similar view is also offered by Arthur N. Wollaston, The Religion of the Koran, The Orient Press, London, 1904, p.11.

writes,

we are enabled to see how admirably this 'piecemeal' revelation was fitted to meet the requirements of Islam as they arose.¹

The view advocated by John Wansbrough that the Qur'ān is a composite work is not, however, considered as a working basis for this thesis.²

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1. Canon Sell, The Historical Development of the Qur'ān, Society for promoting Christian knowledge, London, 1909. Introduction IX.
 2. John Wansbrough, Qur'ānic Studies, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1977.

Wansbrough attempts in his work to establish two main points. The first point suggests that the Qur'ān was not compiled in its final shape under ^cUthmān but that the Muslim canon came to its final shape towards the end of the second century A.H. The second point Wansbrough tries to establish, and this may be related to the first point, is that the Muslim canon is nothing but a diluted form of

Cont'd:...

The factor which prompted the writing of this thesis is the controversy between two schools of thought as to whether or not the document of the Qur'ān has any political implications.¹ It is assumed that by returning to the document of the Qur'ān the validity of one view or another can be established.²

Cont'd: Judaism; and that Islam took a long time before it came to its present shape as it gradually developed from Judaism. This view, which suggests, in effect, that there has been a great conspiracy by Muslims of the 2nd and 3rd centuries, has yet to demonstrate its validity in terms of proving such a conspiracy. It is rejected by most scholars and can be regarded as at best a hypothesis based on a rather tenuous interpretation of the Qur'ānic text.

1. Thomas Arnold alludes to such a controversy in his treatise, The Caliphate, Oxford, 1924, p.45.
2. The Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din considers the Qur'ān as a reference that appeals to reason and understanding and reflects the truth and is

Cont'd:...

The view regarding the Qur'ān as a source of political teachings is represented by the classical writings of Muslim scholars, including such writers as al-Māwardī, Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Khaldūn. The political writings of these scholars represent in themselves the development of fully fledged theories in Islamic political thought.¹ These theories express the standard Sunnī Muslim view. Such writings have been influenced by earlier works which have been concerned to present tendencies within Islam as divergent as those of the Khawārij from A.D. 656, the Qadariyyah towards the end of the seventh century, and other schools such as the Murji'ah, the Ash^cariyyah, the Mu^ctazilah and the Hanbaliyyah.² Although the

Cont'd: a proof of the nature of things, The Ideal Prophet, The Basheer Muslim Library, Woking, 1925, p.158.

1. William Montgomery Watt, Islamic Political Thought, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1968, pp.106-7.
2. W. Montgomery Watt, The Formative Period of Islamic Thought, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1973, Chapters 1, 4, 5; Elie Salem,

Cont'd:...

political ideas propounded by these schools began to emerge as a developed and coherent political theory, it would be fair to say that nearly all Islamic political writings are basically theological in orientation.

Another trend advocating the view that in the text of the Qur'ān there is a political framework is the Muslim Shī^cah. The underlying view of the political doctrine of the Shī^cah is that the Prophet, before his death, designated ^cAlī to succeed him as the leader (imam) of the Muslims.¹ All three groups of the Shī^cah, namely the

Cont'd: Political Theory and Institutions of the Khawarij, Baltimore, 1965, Chapters 1, 2; W. Montgomery Watt, Islamic Philosophy and Theology, Islamic Surveys, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 4th edition, 1972, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4; and von Ritter Hasan al-Basrī, Der Islam, Berlin, 1933, pp.1-83; also al-Māturīdī, Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar, al-Qāhirah, 1935.

1. W. Montgomery Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., Chapter 10.

Ithnā^c ashariyyah (the Twelvers), the Ismā^cīliyyah and the Zaydiyyah believe in the doctrine of the imāmah.¹

The opposite position is held by some more modern Muslim scholars. One of these scholars, ^cAbd al-Rāziq advocates the view that the Qur'ān is just a religious message with little or nothing of a political nature in it.² This closely argued

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1. Ibn Babawayh, Shi'ite Creed, tr. A.A.A. Fyzee, London, 1942, Chapters 1-3; Dwight D. Donaldson, The Shi'ite Religion, Luzac Company, London, 1933, Chapter 1; also Bernard Lewis, The Origins of Isma'ilism, W. Heffer and Sons, Cambridge, 1940, Chapters 1-3.
 2. ^cAlī ^cAbd al-Rāziq, al-Islām wa Uṣūl al-Hukm, Dār Maktabat al-Hayāt, Bayrūt, 1966. This attitude is also reflected in the writings of Qamruddin Khan, Political Concepts in the Qur'an, Institute of Islamic Studies, Karachi, 1973; also Kausar Niazi, Towards Understanding the Qur'ān, M. Ashraf, Lahore, 1975, p.9.

work is in fact more concerned with rebutting the political interpretations of earlier Muslim theorists than with a real analysis of the religio-political concepts in the Qur'ān.¹

It would seem appropriate before deciding

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1. ^CAbd al-Rāziq questions the validity of the arguments offered by the advocates of the institutions of khilāfah. He demands the source on which the arguments are founded. He adds that there is no concensus among the advocates of khilāfah whether or not it is required by shar^C or ^Caql. He considers that in the Qur'ān or the Sunnah there is no evidence that the institution of khilāfah is required whether by shar^C or ^Caql. ^CAbd al-Rāziq concludes that the institution of the khilāfah advocated by Muslim scholars evolved out of political justifications and that it was in the interests of the rulers in Islamic history to spread and propagate this misconception among the people and use religion as an armour to protect their thrones (^CAbd al-Rāziq, op. cit., Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4).

which of these strands of thought is valid, that we examine the fundamental concepts on the basis of the Qur'ān and the Prophet's practice. However, before we can turn to these concepts, it is advisable to assess the nature of the religion of Islam, itself.

The believer in Islam is called a Muslim. The term mu'min is frequently used for muslim in the Qur'ān. However, the use of different terminology and the statements in the Qur'ān that seems to imply that the profession of Islam is somehow lesser than the profession of īmān (that is the verbal noun of āman, 'to believe', from which mu'min is the active participle).'

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1. R.B. Serjeant relates the term mu'min to 'feeling secure' and being given security and giving security, while he considers the term muslim to 'mean basically one who devotes himself exclusively to Allāh'. (Article, 'The Sunnah Jāmi^cah', in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Hertford, vol.41, 1978, article pp.1-42, pp.12-14; also Toshihiko Izutsu, The

Cont'd:...

This is reflected in later politico-theological disputes in Islam about the nature of faith. For the Qur'ān says that

no mu'min should kill a mu'min (4:92),

and thus the Khawārij rebels against ^cUthmān justifying his murder by claiming that he had committed a grave sin and grave sin removed īmān, so that his death at their hands was legitimate.¹ However, Islamic theologians in varying degrees have tended to follow the Murji'ah view attributed to Abū Hanīfah which implies that faith remains with a man unless he actually rejects it.²

Cont'd: Concept of Belief in Islamic Theory,
Yurindo Publishing Co. Ltd., Yokohama, 1965,
Chapter 4.

1. Montgomery Watt, Formative Period of Islamic Thought, op. cit., chapters 1, 4, 5; Izutsu, op. cit., Chapter 3; also Montgomery Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., Chapter 5. I have consulted Yūsuf ^cAlī, The Holy Qur'ān, Beirut, 1968, and ^cAbd al-Bāqī, al-Mi^cjam al-Mufahras li Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm,

Cont'd:...

Reference is made in the Qur'ān to the laws (al-shar^c) with regards to the behaviour of all muslims¹ or mu'minūn.² The Qur'ān refers to the

Cont'd: Bayrūt, (n.d.) for my translations from the Qur'ān.

Cont' d: 2. The Mu^c tazilah and Murji'ah views represent the variation of emphasis with regards to Islam and iman. Izutsu, op. cit., Chapter 2; also Montgomery Watt, Islamic Philosophy and Theology, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4; also Abū Hanīfah, Sharḥ al-Fiqh al-Akbar, Maktabat al-Ghazālī, Hamāh, (n.d.), pp.36-9.

1. The term 'muslim' is derived from Islām. It means submission, resignation, committing one's self (to the will of God). William Lane, An Arabic-English Lexicon, Williams and Norgate, London, 1863-93, Book 1, part 4, pp.1412-6. Islam is derived from the verb aslam-yuslim, which means to surrender, to deliver up, to commit one's self to resign one's self to the will of God. Hans Wehr, Arabic-English Dictionary, Spoken Languages Service Inc., New York, 1976, pp.424-6.

2. The term mu'min refers to the believers and

Cont'd:...

believers, directly and indirectly, as either al-mu'minūn or al-muslimūn.¹

Cont'd: is derived from the Arabic verb āman-yu'min, meaning to believe, to have faith, to trust, to have confidence. Lane, Book 1, part 1, pp.102-3; also Wehr, pp.28-9.

1. Abū-Hanīfah writes: "al-īmān huwa al-iqrār wa al-tasdīq". "Belief is admission and sincere consent. The belief of people of heaven and earth does not increase or decrease with regard to the believer. But it increases and decreases with regards to certainty al-yaqīn and sincere consent al-tasdīq. All believers are equal in belief and monotheism tawhīd, but they are rivals in deeds. Islam means submission, taslīm, and complying with (inqyād) the commands of God Most-High.

A linguistic distinction can be made between the terms al-īmān and al-Islām. Al-Islām means al-taslīm (submission, resignation), belief, sincere consent and acceptance (al-tasdīq). The place of belief, the heart and the tongue, is its interpreter. But al-taslīm

Cont'd:...

The plural form refers to the collectivity of muslims. In the singular form it denotes all muslims.

Cont'd: (submission) lies generally in the heart, the tongue and the limbs. Evidence that the term is more general in meaning than is found in the example of the hypocrites, al-munafiqūn, who are identified as Muslims, but who cannot be believers either in language or in shar^c. God Most-High said: "The desert Arabs say, 'We believe'. Say, "You have no belief; but say 'We have submitted our wills to God', for belief has not entered your hearts." Sūrah 49:14. But there is no belief without Islam nor is there Islam without belief īmān. They are like the back and front of one object. Religion, al-dīn, is a title denoting both belief and Islam and all the laws sharā'i^c (denoting Islamic sharī^cah)." .

My reason for considering Islam and īmān as synonymous is based on the various references found in the Qur'ān. In Sūrah 10:84, for example, we read: "Mūsā said: 'O my people! If you do really believe in God, then in Him

Cont'd:...

However it seems clear from the Qur'ān that, while there may be some subtle difference between mu'min and muslim, the general usage is that the terms are more or less synonymous. Thus when the Qur'ān says, 'O you who believe' (2:153), it is addressing all the people who profess the faith of Islam. These people, Muslims and Mu'mins, make up the community of Islam.¹ And it is this religio-political organization that is the subject of this thesis.

The purpose of God's creation of man is clearly an important aspect of the function of the

Cont'd: put your trust if you submit your will in Islam (in kuntum muslimin)".

1. Also in Sūrah 43:68-69 we read: "My devotees! ... Those who have believed in Our Signs and bowed their wills in Islam (aslamū)". Abū Hanīfah, Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar, op. cit., pp.36-9. Ibn Taymiyyah writes 'Islam is basically a kind of 'work'. It is both the work of the heart and the work of the body. Islam, is that you worship God, and God alone'. Kitāb al-Īmān, Dimashq, 1961, pp.223-228.

religio-political entity of Muslims. The Qur'ān (51:56) says:

I have only created jinns and men to worship' Me.

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1. Ya^c budū-nī is derived from the Arabic verb ^cabad-ya^cbud and means to deify, serve, adore, worship, venerate, subjugate, devote (Ibn Manzūr, vol.3-4, pp.259-268; Lane, Book 1, part 5, pp.1434-6; also Wehr, op. cit.). The verbal noun of ^cabad is ^cibādah (worship) and the one performing the action is ^cābid (worshipper) (Ibn Manzūr, vol.3-4, pp.259-268; also Lane, Book 1, part 5, pp.1434-6). In the context of āyah 5 of Sūrah 1, al-Ṭabarī explains the meaning of the term ^cabad in na^cbud as khāshī^ca (to humble one's self, debase, degrade, humiliate); as wahhada (to declare God to be one, believe in God as having no associates or partners, profess belief in the unity of God); as istakāna (to yield, submit, resign, humiliate); as khāfa (to be afraid of, fear, be frightened of, hold as sacred, be alarmed) and rajā (to hope,

Cont'd:...

Al-Ṭabarī explains this āyah as a reference to the purpose of creating men, as well as jinn, solely so that they may worship God and humble or abase themselves to God.¹ Al-Qurtubī explains the term here as a reference to the sole function of man's creating as that of worshipping God. He

Cont'd: expect, anticipate, ask, request, plead, implore) (Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.53). Al-Qurtubī interprets ^cibādah as obedience and abasement (al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 1, p.145). Ibn Kathīr explains ^cibādah as denoting love, submission, fear and obedience. Obedience is expressed by putting one's trust in God (Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.25). He quotes Ibn ^cAbbās who considers ^cibādah in terms of unification of God, fearing Him and having hope in Him (ibid., vol.1, p.26). Al-Jalālayn explains ^cibādah as unifying God (al-Jalālayn, p.1). Abū al-Ā^cla al-Mawdūdī explains the term al-^cibādah as used in the Qur'ānic text as servitude, obedience and submission and deification (Abū Ā^cla al-Mawdūdī, al-Mustalahāt al-Arba^cah fī al-Qur'ān, Dār al-Qalam, Kuwait, 1977, pp.95-115).

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.24-27, part 27, p.8.

considers worship as meaning to know God, to acknowledge His unity, to obey Him, to submit unto Him and to humble oneself in abasement to Him.' The same interpretation is given to the āyah by Ibn Kathīr.² Ibn Jazzī, similarly, considers that this āyah refers to the creating of men so that God would command them to worship Him.³

The way to worship God is through dīn, i.e. religion. The ideal religion in the view of the Qur'ān is Islam, which it regards as having been revealed through a chain of prophets beginning with Ādam and culminating in Muḥammad.⁴

In the Qur'ān (3:19) we read:

The religion before God is Islam.

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 17, pp.55-6.
 2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, p.238.
 3. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.70.
 4. For particular Qur'ānic references to this chain of prophecy and to Islam as the religion they brought from God cf. Chapter 1, pp.17-18.

In this āyah the term dīn refers to religion.

Al-Tabarī explains that the term dīn, as used in the above āyah, denotes submission and obedience to God. It denotes acceptance with the heart as well as the tongue, and compliance with the commands of God.¹ Al-Qurtubī explains the term in this āyah as a reference to obedience and faith.²

The term dīn is derived from dāna-yadīnu and the term daiyyān means arbiter or referee and judge. It refers to God, the Subduer and Almighty. Dāna means to subdue someone and to make someone obey. It also means to manage and conduct public affairs. It also denotes abasement and enslavement, and the adoption of a religion. The term dāyana means to deal with someone. The term al-dain refers to reward and punishment, and yawm al-dīn refers to the Day of Reward. The term al-dīn means reckoning and obedience. It also refers to Islam and its adoption as a religion. The term al-dain

1. Al-Tabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, pp.141-2; also Lane, Book 1, Part 3, pp.942-5.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.43.

with respect to God means to obey Him and worship Him. The term dīn also means way, habit and limits.¹

Cantwell-Smith suggests that the Persian word daēnā, in the course of its development, can be generically interpreted to refer to both an earthly and a heavenly figure, the latter personifying 'Faith' as a divine being (god), the earthly typifying the community of the faithful.² Smith asserts that the term dēn (modern Persian dīn), designated a religious community, and/or its characteristic system, as well as continuing to express the notion of inner faith.³ He writes that in the seventh century Arabia the term dīn had many meanings but these could be classed in three principal groups:

there was the new concept which referred to systematic religion. Second the term denoted

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1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.13, pp.166-170.
 2. Wilfred Cantwell-Smith, The Meaning and End of Religion, Mentor Book, The New English Library Ltd., London, 1964, pp.91-2.
 3. Ibid., p.92.

'judging, passing judgment, passing sentence and judgment and verdict'. The third meaning referred to 'conduct oneself, to behave, to observe certain practices, to follow traditional usage, to conform and subsequently it referred to an abstract noun, 'conformity, propriety, obedience, also usages, customs, standard behaviour'.¹

It is the last group of meanings that is of most use in the understanding of the development of the term religion in relation to the ummah, and particularly the meanings of 'to conduct oneself, to behave and a system of conduct', in relation to the linking between the conduct of Muslims within the body of the Islamic ummah and its religious basis.

Abū al-A^clā al-Mawdūdī explains the Qur'ānic usage of the term dīn in the following manner,

The term al-dīn consists of four parts namely i. governorship and the high

1. W. Cantwell-Smith, The Meaning and End of Religion, op. cit., p.94.

authority, ii. obedience and submission to this governorship and authority, iii. the intellectual and practical system formed under the power of this governorship and iv. the reward given by the high authority for following this system and being sincere to it, or (punishment) for rebelling against it and disobeying it.¹

Al-Mawdūdī gives examples from the Qur'ān for his theoretical structure of the concept of dīn. He quotes Sūrah 39: āyah 11:

Say: "I am commanded to worship God with sincere devotion",

and āyah 2-3 of the same Sūrah:

Worship God offering Him sincere devotion. Is it not to God that sincere devotion is due?

1. Al-Mawdūdī, op. cit., p.120.

and also āyah 17 of this Sūrah:

those who eschew evil and do not fail in its worship, and they turn to God.

Al-Mawdūdī explains that in these āyāt the term dīn means high authority, and the submission to this authority, obedience to and serving it. To be sincere in dīn means not to submit to others beside God and not to obey others beside Him.¹ He quotes some other āyāt as an example of the third part of his scheme, namely:

Say: O you men! If you are in doubt as to my religion, then I do not worship what you worship, other than God,

and,

set your face towards Religion with truth and never be of the unbelievers (Sūrah 10:104-105).

1. Al-Mawdūdī, op. cit., pp.121-2.

He also quotes Sūrah 12:40:

He has commanded that you worship none but Him: that is the right religion, but most men do not understand.

Al-Mawdūdī explains the term dīn in these āyāt as meaning the Law, or limits, shar^c, intellectual and practical system. In this way if the authority that man depends upon is the authority of God, then this man follows dīn Allāh, and if the authority is the authority of a king then he follows the dīn of the king.¹ Al-Mawdūdī quotes Sūrah 51:5-6 interpreting the term dīn as judgement, reckoning and reward.²

Verily that which you promised is true;
and verily judgement is happening.

He also quotes Sūrah 82:17-19:

And what will explain to you what the Day of Judgement is? Again what will explain

1. Al-Mawdūdī, op. cit., pp.122-5.

2. Ibid., pp.125-6.

to you what the Day of Judgement is? The Day when no soul shall have power to do anything for another: the command that Day will be with God.

The al-Mawdūdī quotes Sūrah 3:19:

The Religion before God is Islam.

and Sūrah 3:85:

If anyone seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him.

He explains the meaning of the term religion (dīn) in these āyāt as a reference to the complete order of life that is exclusive in all its aspects: Belief, intellectual, moral and practical.¹ He interprets the reference in these two āyāt as being that the true and acceptable order or system in life in the sight of God is the order founded on obedience to God and servitude. Every other order or system founded on obedience to any authority other than God is rejected by

1. Al-Mawdūdī, op. cit., pp.128-9.

Him, for this order is unnatural and hence is not acceptable to Him. This is because Man is nothing but His creation, he belongs to Him and he is His servant.¹

Al-Mawdūdī quotes Sūrah 9:33:

It is He who has sent His Messenger with Guidance, and the Religion of Truth, to proclaim it over all religion.

He explains the meaning of true religion (dīn al-ḥaqq) as the true and right order for human life, i.e., al-Islām, and the purpose of His Message is to proclaim it over all orders of life.²

1. Al-Mawdūdī, op. cit., p.129.

2. Ibid., p.129. Ibn Taymiyyah writes that 'Islam is nothing other than dīn. And dīn is the nominal form of the verb dāna meaning 'humble submission'. And the dīn of Islam in which God found satisfaction and with which 'total surrender (istislām) to God alone'. Ibn Taymiyyah, Kitāb al-Īmān, op. cit., pp.221-3.

The dīn of Islam can be seen to involve Muslims in a relationship with God and with their fellow Muslims. This relationship was expressed in the time of the Prophet within a religio-political entity. In order to understand the nature of this entity, it is necessary to examine what the Qur'ān and the Prophet have had to say about it. We may then get a clearer idea of whether or not the dīn of Islam also involves a religio-political structure. The early Islamic political theorists, as well as the modernists, referred to earlier have discussed key terms in the Qur'an as evidence for their varying views.

The fundamental religio-political concepts of the Qur'ān are ummah, khilāfah, imāmah, ulū al-amr, shūrā, ukhūwah and walā'. Usually political theorists, whether medieval or modern, have been more concerned with the concept of wilāyah rather than walā'. As will be seen from the treatment of that term later in the thesis, this has been largely due to the idea of authority involved in wilāyah as it was used in later Arabic sources. The relationship which the Qur'ān describes is somewhat different and more appropriately termed walā'.

Methodology of Research

The methodology used in this study stems from the study itself. This method is known as the Construction Method.¹ It is applied by the Construction Jurisprudence School which considers legislation as incomplete but maintains that the law is complete. This school considers the duty of the jurist to be threefold, namely, to interpret, to construct and to classify. Hence the Construction method comprises three stages:

- a. Interpretation of data;
- b. Construction of data;
- c. Classification of data.

The juristic approach to the study of the law involves, at the first stage, an interpretation of the articles and contents of the rule. Then, a second stage begins in which the articles, or components of the rule are related to each other so that a classification of various principles, and concepts, is obtained. This construction is

1. Gustav Radbruch, Rechtsphilosophie, 3rd edition, 1932, Chapter 1.

actually a classification of principles. When the various constructions are collected together they constitute a collection of constructions which form a whole.¹ This method is adopted by the Construction School for the purposes of systematic examination of the Qur'ānic terms which are considered in the context of the legalistic and juristic nature of the document.

It ought, however, to be mentioned here that certain difficulties arise in this method of research. The shortcomings of the Method of Construction can be ascribed to two aspects: a. the question of language; b. the question of interpretation. Watt writes that

the Arabic language is such that there are often several different ways of 'taking' a sentence, and these ways yield at least slight different meanings.²

1. S. H. Mintaredja, Islam and Politics, Islam and State in Indonesia, Siliwangi, Jakarta, 1972, pp.108-9.

2. William Montgomery Watt, Companion to the

Cont'd:...

Once the precise meaning of the term is determined, there remains the problem of interpretation. The reference of the term within the context of a sentence can be very dubious. Watt considers that some of the interpretations of the reference of the āyāt can be exactly interpreted, but many others remain nothing more than the conjectures of scholars who lived a century or two after Muhammad.¹

a. Interpretation of data:

The data of research, at this first stage, is analysed, explained and interpreted according to jurisprudential methods of interpretation in all possible directions, and with reference to all possible meanings. Exegesis of the Qur'ān and Ḥadith (Tradition) is thus considered at three levels:²

Cont'd: Qur'ān, George Allen and Unwin Ltd.,
London, 1967, p.10.

1. Ibid., p.12.

2. This three level classification of

Cont'd:...

- i. Atomistic Exegesis;
- ii. Contextual Exegesis;
- iii. Global Exegesis.

i. Atomistic interpretation: at this level each verse is considered and examined on its own merit. The unit of verse, or āyah, is reduced to the smallest meaningful grammatical units of which it is made up. This unit is known as the 'atom' and may comprise a few words forming a complete meaning, i.e. subject and predicate. Examples of such atomistic units are:

- "He is One God",
- "God is eternal",
- "He begets not",
- "Nor is He begotten".¹

Cont'd: interpretation is adopted, with modification, from a classification worked out by William Montgomery Watt in his work: Islamic Revelation in the Modern World, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1969, pp.76-79.

1. 112:1-3. 'The denotation of the reference specifies the meaning of the term. This can

Cont'd:...

ii. Contextual interpretation: at this level the context of event, incident or lesson to be drawn is considered and interpreted. The context may comprise more than one 'atom'. It may comprise a cluster of 'atoms'. Contextual exegesis can be considered chronologically, where the context may cover a past, present or future event, or a phenomenon. Contexts can be classified in terms of exemplifications describing what was and what is, and prescribing what ought to be.' Contexts can also be classified in terms of behavioural schemes, i.e. the behaviour of men; the behaviour of all other living creatures and the action of God vis-a-vis the behaviour of the living

Cont'd: either be direct, explicit and precise or indirect, implicit and general.' Fathī al-Durainī, al-Manāhiḥ al-Uṣūliyyah, vol.1, Dār al-Rashīd, Dimashq, 1975, pp.275-305; this view is also advocated by another Islamic jurist, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Zuhaylī, Usul al-Fiqh al-Islāmī, Maṭābi' Mu'assasat al-Wahdah, Dimashq, 1982, pp.132-3.

1. Al-Zuhaylī, op. cit., pp.132-3; also F. al-Durainī, op. cit., pp.163-226.

creatures.

Examples of the contexts are:

1. Ādam's Fall.
2. The Test of Ibrāhīm.
3. Pharaoh's rejection of Faith.
4. Israelites breaking the Covenant with God.
5. Punishment of Unbelievers in the Hereafter.

iii. Global interpretation: at this level of interpretation a universal or a global dimension is sought. Both the 'atom' and the 'context' are explained in terms of the universal, i.e. not restricted to a specific time, place, event, object or person. At this level the general which is embodied in the specific is extracted, retaining the essence of the specific and carrying the framework of the universal.¹

Islam has been considered by Muslim exegetes as a universal Message addressed to all mankind. In the Qur'ān we are informed,

1. Montgomery Watt, Islamic Revelation, op. cit., p.78.

Say: "O men! I am sent to you all, as the Messenger of God".¹

Al-Ṭabarī explains the reference here to all mankind and not to one particular group of people;² al-Zamakhsharī writes that the Message of Muḥammad is to all mankind;³ Ibn Kathīr writes that Muḥammad was sent to all men, the red and the black, the Arab and non-Arab;⁴ also al-Qurtubī denotes the same meaning in the āyah.⁵ The historical interpretation when atomistic (reference in the particular to one or more persons at the time of the revelation), or contextual (situation reference where the context of revelation is an event or happenings or the behaviour of one person or a group of persons that prompted the revelation), these can be traced in the writings of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Nīsābūrī, Asbāb al-Nuzūl.⁶ Al-Nīsābūrī writes

1. Sūrah 7:158.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 9, p.59.

3. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.2, p.123.

4. Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.254.

5. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 7, p.302.

6. Al-Nīsābūrī, Asbāb al-Nuzūl, Bayrut, (n.d.).

that the Qur'ān has been revealed as a guidance to the ummah and as an argument against the advocates of falsehood and a refutation to the atheists.' The attempt in this thesis, within the framework of the methodology above, is to study the revealed āyah in its historical revelation whether in terms of a particular reference or a contextual reference and then see the particular and the contextual in terms of the global. Thus a reference to Abū Jahl, for example, can be seen in terms of all those who behave and act as he did. The particular here is generalised into the global to cover a type of men and a type of behaviour. Pharaoh is another example of rejection, haughtiness and despotism. The people of Lūt are another example of the contextual interpretation that can be made global to cover any people who behave like the people of Lūt at any other given time and place. Watt writes,

a global interpretation in this sense would seem to imply that the interpretations

1. Al-Nīsābūrī, op. cit., p.3.

of later generations have been potentially present in the revelation from the first.¹

In this sense I propose to accept the methodology suggested by Watt, namely that the three types of interpretations overlap one another, and that the atomistic and contextual can become global.

b. Construction of data:

The second stage of the Method of Construction consists of the expression of the interpreted data in a meaningful way. This is done by relating the various meanings of every term to each other. In this way, the term is examined to show whether or not it has developed, and finally whether or not it has a trend. Thus, for example, the term ummah is examined in terms of whether or not it has developed within the document of the Qur'ān, and secondly, whether

1. W. Montgomery Watt, Islamic Revelation, op. cit., p.79.

its connotations have a systematic framework. This stage simply comprises another step towards establishing a definition of the term. It prepares the material under examination for the last stage where the terms, and their trends, if any, are compared with one another for the purpose of establishing whether or not they are related to a meaningful framework of political implications.

c. Classification of the data:

The third stage in the Method of Construction is to classify the research data. At this stage, after the data has been interpreted, it is formed into groups of similarities. On the basis of the findings a classification of themes of interpretations is made.

This thesis will examine first the term ummah as the collective entity of the Muslims and will then deal with the relationships between the Muslims embodied in the terms walā' and ukhūwah. Next there will be an examination of the nature of authority as indicated in the Qur'ān by the

terms khalīfah, imām and ulū al-amr. Finally, the limitations of such authority as defined by the shūrā will be discussed.

CHAPTER 1

THE UMMAH

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The term "umma" has been used by Muslims since the time of the Prophet and the Qur'ān itself to designate that community which is the totality of Muslims. Some scholars¹ maintain that this term umma, as it is used in Islamic literature with particular reference to the Qur'ān, is derived from Hebrew and Aramaic equivalent terms. Therefore, it would seem appropriate to examine in detail a term which has such importance for Islamic political theory and trace it to the ancient languages, non-semitic as well as semitic, to observe whether there are similarities in these languages.

Difficulties arise in attempting to draw comparisons between the forms of the term itself, i.e.

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1. For example M. Th. Moutsma, A.J. Wensinck, H.A.R. Gibb, W. Heffening, and E. Levi, Editors: The Encyclopedia of Islam - Z.S. Brill (Leiden, 1934), vol.4, pp.1015-6; H.A.R. Gibb and Kramer Editors, Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, E.J. Brill (Leiden 1961), pp.603-604). J.H. Horovitz, Koranische Untersuchungen (Berlin 1926), pp.51-53. Also J.H. Horovitz, article Jewish proper names and Derivatives in the Koran, Hebrew Cenion College Annael vol.ii (Cincinnati 1925), pp.190-1.

the spoken and the corresponding written forms as they appear in different languages. Consequently there is difficulty in determining the etymological linkage with precision.

Another level of difficulty becomes apparent when an attempt is made to establish relations of influence among languages said to have employed the same or similar terms, i.e. loanwords. For example, Aramaic was a contemporary language to Hebrew (around B.C. 1200), and both languages belong to the old semitic stock. But there seems to have been little contact between these languages, and hence they have had little influence on each other. Such difficulties have a considerable bearing on the argument that the term ummah in Arabic is a loanword from Hebrew or Aramaic. This is the case even though the three equivalent terms occurring in each language have, more or less, the same reference.

When examining the corresponding forms of the Islamic usage of the term ummah in the Arabic language, it is possible to demonstrate similarities in the spoken (oral) form of the term in Akkadian, Assyrian, Aramaic, Hebrew and pre-Islamic usage. By applying a phonetic system used for the English language¹ we can observe

1. The phonetic system developed by Daniel Jones is

similarities, in the transcribed forms, of the term ummah in each of these languages.

Sumerian, as a separate language from the semitic stock, has the word "umman" transcribed as umman. The Akkadian corresponding term is ummatu transcribed as ummaetu; the Aramaic is ummetha; the Hebrew transcribes as umma:h while the Arabic version of the term "أمة" is transcribed as ummah. In these languages the similar spoken forms are represented by different written symbols. But in all these cases the term refers to 'a group of men' or 'people'.

Let us now examine the semantic reference of the term in the various languages. In the Sumerian language (4th millenium and early 3rd millenium) the term umman meant people, host.' In Akkadian (third millenium) the word 'ummatu' referred to 'a group of men', 'a troop of

Cont'd: adopted here to transcribe the similarity or dissimilarity of the characters under investigation. An English Pronouncing Dictionary, 11th edn., London 1956.

1. Longdon Stephen, Sumerian Grammar and Chrestomathy, Librairie Paul Geathner, Paris, 1911, p.252.

soldiers'. Assyrian being a dialect of Akkadian, the Assyrian word 'ummatu'¹ referred to 'people', 'army'², and the term umm referred to animals or creatures.³ The Assyrians in North Iraq were contemporaries of the Babylonians in the South during the second millenium. Both languages were dialects of the Akkadian parent. The Aramaic term, at about B.C. 1200, had the written form "𐤎𐤏" referring to people.⁴ Hebrew, traced back as far as B.C. 1200 had the equivalent word " אָמָּה " denoting 'people' or 'tribe'.⁵ The term " אָמָּה " or " אָמָּה " means collection of men, a people, a nation, a multitude,

1. Wolfram von Soden, Akkadisches Handwörterbuch. Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1965, vol.3, pp.1414-1415.
2. Muss-Arnolt, Concise Dictionary of the Assyrian Language, Reuther and Reichard, Berlin, 1905, vol.3, p.1669.
3. Edwin Norris, Assyrian Dictionary, Williams and Norgate, London, 1868-72, Part I, p.290.
4. Muss-Arnolt, op. cit., vol.3, p.1669.
5. Friedrich Gesenius, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, Tr. E. Robinson, ed. F. Brown, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1906, pp.51-2.

collection of animals.¹

In Arabic the term ummah has been ascribed to the root amm which means 'to aim at' or 'to intend to'. The writer who uses this term infers that these people intend to follow a leader or a religion.² The Arabic usage can be sub-categorized chronologically into pre-Islamic and Islamic usage. It ought to be made clear at this stage that the Arabic usage of the term ummah should not be confused, in terms of its origin and root of derivation, with the root umm referring to 'mother' in Arabic, even though one of the secondary meanings of ummah is 'mother'.³

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1. Selig. Newman, A Hebrew and English Lexicon, London, 1934, p.487.
 2. Muhammad Nazeer Ka-ka Khel, Article, "The Rise of Muslim Umma at Mecca and its Integration", Hamdard Islamicus, vol.5, No.3, Autumn 1982, pp.59-74.
 3. Ibn Manzūr, vol. 12, p.29; also William Montgomery Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., p.10. Watt identifies the ummah with its purpose, 'the attainment of Paradise is

Cont'd:...

The use of this term in the Arabic language,

Cont'd: therefore the proper end of the society of Muslims'. (Watt, Islam and the Integration of Society, op. cit., pp.144-5). Gardet identifies the ummah with a spiritual and temporal existence that abides by the revealed laws and had to defend itself against internal and external enemies. The welfare of this entity is looked after by the khalīfah. (Louis Gardet, La Cite Musulmane, Paris, 1954, p.155). Laoust regarded the Islamic community, the ummah, as an aspiring to community, to make the world a place where God would be worshipped and served by all men. (Henri Laoust, Essai sur les Doctrines Sociales et Politique de Taki-d-Din Ahmad b. Taimiya, Cairo, 1939, p.297). Elkholy considers the ummah as 'an open-end community under one universal God. The significance of this lies in the absence of any racial, territorial, political or any other exclusivism. He suggests that the Arabic Islamic term of community is Ummah, derived from Umm, meaning mother. But he adds that

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whether pre-Islamic or Islamic, is to denote 'people'.¹ In pre-Islamic literature the term ummah does not occur frequently. Two instances can be quoted here:

Cont'd: Ummah in Islam means more than the motherland in its geographical-territorial limitation: it means 'Faith and Creed'. Ummat al-Islām, writes Elkholy, encloses the entire collectivity of the Muslims living anywhere regardless of their geographical boundaries. (Abdo A. Elkholy, "The Concept of Community in Islam", Islamic Perspectives, article, pp.171-8, The Islamic Foundation, Herts., 1979, pp.172-3).

1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.23; Montgomery Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., pp.9-14; also Jawād ^cAlī, al-Mufaṣṣal fī Ta'rīkh al-^cArab qabl al-Islām, Dār al-^cIlm li al-Malāyyin, Bayrūt, 1970, v.4, p.198.

A^Cshā Qays, a poet of Banū^C Adnān, late fifth century A.D., said:

And King Nu^Cmān when I met him with his ummah
gives presents generously.¹

The term ummah here refers to 'the people' of King Nu^Cmān (i.e., the community which followed Nu^Cmān). The term's use in Al-Najd, Hijāz and^C Irāq can be deduced from its appearance in a line from the poet^C Adī bin Zaid, A.D. 587:

It was a day with everlasting memory
an ummah with established standing had
perished.²

The term ummah here refers to 'people' (i.e., a community of people).

Although Islamic usage retains pre-Islamic meaning, it generates secondary meanings specified

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1. Luwis Shaykho al-Yasū^C ī, Al-Shu^C arā' al-asrāniyah qabl al-Islām, Dār al-Shurūq, Bayrūt, 1967, p.383.
 2. Ibid., p.458.

by the Qur'ānic usage. Qur'ānic connotations can be exemplified as follows.

The term ummah occurs in the Qur'ān in 63 places. It refers to 'people' or 'a group of people' in the majority of these cases.² Particular reference is made to the community of believers as an ummah.³ In other particular cases the term is applied either to the Christians or the Jews.⁴

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1. Al-ummah: al-jamā^cah, al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, pp.433, 439, 448. Al-ummah: al-jamā^cah, al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7. Al-ummah: al-jamā^cah, Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, pp.183, 186, 188, 190, 191. Al-ummah:al-jamā^cah, Ibn Jazzī, pp.15, 60. Lane, vol.1, i 60. (people, race).
 2. In Sūrah, 4:41; 6:42, 108; 7:34, 38, 181; 10:47, 49; 11:8, 48; 13:30; 15:5, 16, 36, 63, 84, 89, 92; 22:34, 67; 23-43, 44; 27:83; 28:75; 29:18; 35:24; 40:5; 41:25; 45:28; 46:18.
 3. In Sūrah, 2:128; 3:110; 7:181; 16:89; 21:92; al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.5; Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.24.
 4. In Surah, 2:134, 141, 143; 13:30; 21:92; 23:52; 35:42; Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.448.

Reference to a specific group of people or to a party of a people is also found in some āyāt.¹ Reference to mankind provides yet another general meaning in terms of the absolute.² Its use to refer to all living creatures provides us with the comprehensive absolute usage of the term ummah.³

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1. In Sūrah, 3:103, 113; 5:66; 7:113, 159, 160, 164, 168; 16:92; 28-22. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3, pp.29-30.
 2. In Sūrah, 2:213; 5:48; 10:19; 11:119; 16:93; 42:8; 43:33.
 3. In Sūrah 6:38. Particular reference to certain categories of living creatures is made for example, in talking of the jinn (in Sūrah 7:38, 41:25; 46:18). Reference to birds is also made, to draw a parallel between man and other creatures, in terms of having one creator and sharing existence with each other (in Sūrah 6:38; 11:48). Animals are also referred to as umam (in Sūrah 11:48). In all these instances the number precises the reference of the term, whether it is men or other creatures.

In Sūrah 16:120 the term ummah refers to Abraham (Ibrāhīm) as one ummah. But although reference is made in the singular the meaning in the plural retains its connotation. In other words, the name Ibrāhīm is used as a symbol representing a people: namely the true believers,¹ and as an example of True Faith.² Ibrāhīm, in this context, stands as a symbol of the right path.³ In this context he also represents the concept of a leader and guide to be followed, an example for the Muslim.⁴

A second level of meanings is also denoted by the term ummah in the Qur'ānic text.⁵

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.12-14, part 14, pp.190-1.
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7.
 3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 14, p.128.
 4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 14, p.129; also al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7.
 5. At this level the term denotes concepts, as distinguished from 'way', 'conduct' or 'religion' (al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7). Such a use of the term is found in Sūrah 43:22 and also in Sūrah 43:23. In

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The term ummah, then, can be seen to refer mainly to a community of people and particularly to the community of the Muslims. As such the primary function of the community will be reflected in the purpose for which God created man. In the Introduction we have shown how the Qur'ān suggests that man was created in order to worship God. Since, therefore, the purpose of creating man is to worship the Creator, then the

Cont'd: the second case the term denotes yet another concept, namely that of time or a period of time (in Sūrah 11:8; 12:45; al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7). Another set of meanings in the Arabic language centres around the concept of 'mother' (al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7); stature of figure (qamah) (al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7). Finally the term can denote shajjah which is a skull fracture or head wound reaching the brain (al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.126-7). Other meanings include: generation, obedience, adroitness, condition, face, learned, good living, appearance, purpose and flag (Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.24).

purpose of the totality of the ummah is to worship God.

In the beginning mankind formed one ummah. In Sūrah 2:213 we read:

Mankind were one single ummah.

Prominent exegetes of the Qur'ān contend that the term ummah in this context is used to refer to all the 'ten generations from Ādam to Nūh' as forming one single ummah.¹ These generations are viewed as a single entity which followed one religion, the religion of truth (sharī^cat al-haqq)² and as all being properly guided.³ These ten generations are considered to be the early community of man comprising the early Islamic ummah. Al-Ṭabarī explains the meaning of the term ummah as 'a people agreeing unanimously on one religion'.⁴ The term in

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, pp.334-7; also al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 1, p.145.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.334.

3. Ibid., vol.2, p.334.

4. Ibid., vol.2, p.335.

this context denotes obedience to God and calling to the unity of God, as well as compliance with his command.¹

The ummah in this āyah refers to all the generations between Ādam and Nūh as being as being exclusively Muslims.² They submitted themselves to God and were resolved to worship.³

At this stage of Qur'ānic history, at the time of Nūh, the single Muslim ummah, comprising the ten generations from Ādam to Nūh, became divided into multiple smaller entities of disbelievers.⁴ It is for this reason that prophets and messengers were sent.⁵

Then God sent the prophets.⁶

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.335.

2. Ibid., vol.2, p.335.

3. Ibid., vol.2, p.335.

4. Ibid., vol.2, p.337; also al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 3, p.31.

5. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.337; also al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 3, p.31.

6. Sūrah, 2:127.

In the Qur'ān we are told that all the prophets and messengers sent to mankind had the same message and that all were Muslims. Every single ummah was sent a messenger:

Indeed We have sent a messenger to every ummah.¹

The Qur'ān presents Nūḥ as the first of the prophets and messengers of God.² We are told that Nūḥ, like all the succeeding messengers,³ was a Muslim.⁴

All the prophets were sent with the same message. Nūḥ was sent to his people with the message to worship God and not to associate Him with anything else.⁵ Hūd was sent to ^cĀd with

1. Sūrah 16:36.

2. Sūrah 57:26. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, pp.335-6; also al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 3, p.32.

3. Ibrāhīm, Sūrah 3:37; Mūsā, Sūrah 10:84; al-Masīḥ Yasū^c, Sūrah 2:53; Muḥammad, Sūrah 6:14.

4. Sūrah 10:72.

5. Sūrah 7:59.

a similar message;¹ Ṣālīḥ was sent to Thamūd;² Shu^cayb to Madyan;³ Ibrāhīm;⁴ Lūt;⁵ Mūsā to the Pharoahs;⁶ al-Masīḥ Yasū^c to the Israelites⁷ and Muḥammad to mankind.⁸ The gist of the message can be read in Sūrah 16:36:

Assuredly, We sent a messenger to every ummah, (with the message) Worship God!

We also read in Sūrah 12:25:

Not a messenger did we send before you without inspiring to him: that there is no god but I; therefore worship Me!

It was the function and purpose of the prophets and the messengers to bring men back to

1. Sūrah 7:65.
2. Surah 7:63.
3. Sūrah 7:85.
4. Sūrah 29:16.
5. Sūrah 37:133.
6. Sūrah 43:16.
7. Sūrah 5:72.
8. Sūrah 34:28.

the true religion.¹ Ibrāhīm is presented in the Qur'ān as the messenger of God, in Sūrah 57:26. He is described as a Muslim in Sūrah 3:67:

Ibrāhīm was not a Jew nor a Christian but hanīf-an Muslim-an.

The term hanīf means, in the language, swaying from the crooked way to the straight path.² It refers to Ibrāhīm as following the command of God and being obedient to Him.³

It refers to him as standing straight on the road of guidance.⁴ The term muslim, being derived from Islam, has connotations of compliance, obedience, and sincerity in worshipping God.⁵

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.337.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.9, p.57. Lane, Book 1, part 2, p. 658; also al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, p.139.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, p.307; also vol.1, p.553.

4. Ibid., vol.3-4, part 3, p.307.

5. Watt explains the term hanīf in relation to

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In the context of the āyah under examination, the term 'muslim' means submissive with his heart to God, humble with all his strength, obedient

Cont'd: the Qur'ānic reference to Ibrāhīm:

"The religion of Abraham is simply the pure religion of God, since all prophets have received in essentials the same revelations". First hanīf and later also Muslim are used in the Qur'ān for the adherent of the true religion; hanīf had apparently been used previously by Jews and Christians, either for 'pagan' or for 'follower of the Hellenized Syro-Arabian religion, and is thus given a completely new turn of meaning by the Qur'ān' (William Montgomery Watt, Muhammad at Medina, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 7th impression, Oxford, 1977, p.205). Watt writes further "In early times Islam appears to have been also called 'the hanīfite religion' and the individual Muslim a hanīf, usually taken to mean a pure monotheist who is neither Jew nor Christian" (Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., p.60).

to what is incumbent on him, obedient to what God has decreed for him.¹

In Sūrah 2:128 we are told that Ibrāhīm and his son Ismā^cīl invoked the divine by praying to God to grant their progeny an 'ummah muslimah':

Our Lord, make of us Muslims and of our dhurriyyah (progeny) ummat-an Musilmat-an (a Muslim people).

The word dhurriyyah (progeny) refers to all the succeeding generations of Ibrāhīm and Ismā^cīl (whether Arabs or non-Arabs).² In this way al-Ṭabarī explains that the term Muslim is not restricted to a specific race or group of people, but that it refers to whoever complies with the command of God and submits unto God by way of obedience with regards to either party, i.e. Arabs or non-Arabs.³ According to the

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, pp.306-7.

2. Ibid., vol.1, p.553. Al-Qurtubī writes that 'the people of Ibrāhīm were one single ummah of unbelievers (kuffār)', vol.1, part 3, p.31.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.553.

Qur'ān, Nūh came before Ibrāhīm and was a Muslim:

And I have been commanded to be among those who are Muslims.¹

Hūd, Sālih and Shu^cayb were also Muslims. Malikat Saba^c in Sūrah 27:44 entered Islam when she met with Sulaimān:²

And I submit in Islam, with Sulaimān, to the Lord of mankind.

The terms ummah and umam are also used in the Qur'ān to denote the twelve Jewish tribes (Sūrah 7:160):

We divided them into twelve tribes of umam.

This specific reference to the Israelites³ as a umam differentiated from the Muslim ummah,

1. Sūrah 10:72.

2. Al-Tabarī, vol.18-21, part 19, p.148.

3. Ibid., vol.9-11, part 9, p.104; also al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 7, p.303.

is mentioned in Sūrah 7:168:

We divided them into umam on earth. Some of them are righteous and some are the opposite. We have tried them with prosperity and adversity, perchance they might turn (to Us).

Not only were the Muslims referred to as an ummah but also the Israelites, as we have seen in the last paragraph. The term ummah is also used to denote those who have rejected faith. In Sūrah 29:18 we read:

And if you reject, so did (other) umam (peoples) before you.

Reference to these is also made in Sūrah 11:48; Sūrah 16:63; Sūrah 23:44; Sūrah 41:35; and Sūrah 46:18.

In this way the ummah muslimah stands in contrast to the ummah of those who have rejected the faith. It is clear that the Islamic ummah is meant to extend to the whole of mankind. The message of Muhammad is defined in the Qur'ān,

in terms of the universal call to all mankind: In Sūrah 7:158 we read:

Say, 'O men! I am the messenger of God sent to you all'.¹

We could imply that, at the time of Muḥammad, the Islamic ummah was more clearly crystallized in definition and features, in terms of its members, course and objective. The Qur'ān becomes the final message which advocates the framework of the Islamic ummah, extending beyond the progeny of Ibrāhīm and Ismā^cīl to encompass all men who have submitted themselves unto one God.

In Sūrah 3:110 we have a summary of the definition of the Islamic ummah and the nature and form of its constituent members, namely the Muslims addressing the Muslims in the age of Muḥammad:

You are the best (khair) ummah evolved for

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-11, part 9, p.89; also al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 7, pp.301-2.

mankind; enjoying what is right, forbidding what is wrong and believing in God.

The adjective khair qualifies ummah in terms of belief and righteousness. The term al-ma^crūf' (what is right) denotes the positive aspect of good, while the use of al-munkar² (what is wrong), as what is forbidden, denotes the negative aspect of good. In this āyah, reference is made atomistically as well as contextually to 'those who have emigrated from Makkah to Madīnah and

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1. Al-ma^crūf in the language means fairness, good, equity, friendliness. Ibn Manzūr, vol.11, p.144. Lane, Book 1, part 5, p.2014. Wehr, p.602. In this context it denotes al-Tawhīd (unity of God) and al-Ihsān (performance of righteous deeds), Ibn ^cAbbās in al-Fīrūzābādī, p.50.
 2. Al-munkar means in the language, the denied, the disavowed, disagreeable. Ibn Manzūr, vol.7, p.91. Lane, Book 1, part 8, p.2850. In this context it refers to al-kufr (rejection and denial) and al-isā'ah (doing wrong and doing evil), Ibn ^cAbbās in al-Fīrūzābādī, p.50.

were at Badr and Hudaibiyah.¹ Global interpretation is exemplified in the reference ascribed to 'ummat' when Muhammad uses it to refer to the good ones and the virtuous.²

The idea of khair (good) is enhanced further in Sūrah 2:141 which reads as follows:

And thus We made of you ummat-an wasaṭ-an (middle).

In the Arabic language, wasat comes from the root wasṭ and denotes middle, moderate, average, good, best, intermediate, between two extremes.³

In this context, the term wasat-an, as found in the āyah, should be interpreted as just and justice, al-^cadl and al-^cudūl respectively.⁴

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.170.

2. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.171.

3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.7, pp.426-32; Lane, Book 1, part 8, pp.2941-2; also Wehr, p.1060.

4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.7; Ibn Manzūr, vol.7, pp.426-32; Lane, Book 1, part 8, p.2942.

The term al-khair, 'the best', infers that what is just is best of people.¹

Al-Qurtubī explains this āyah in the following terms:

al-wasat: al-^cadl (justice). The origin of this is that the best of things is its middle. In the revelation: 'the middle one said'. (Sūrah 68:28), it refers to the one who is more just than others and the best among them.²

According to al-Ṭabarī, reference is made here to the position of the Islamic ummah between two extremes denoting excess of proper bounds:³

(Muslims) do not exaggerate in their religion as Christians do with regards to their

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1. Al-wasat means the middle, the best position, the middle between two extremes (al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, pp.5-8; Lane, Book 1, part 8, p.2942; also Ibn Manzūr, vol.7, p.430).
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, pp.153-4.
 3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, part 1, p.6.

monasticism and saying of al-Masīh what they have said. Nor are they negligent as the negligence of the Jews who have changed the Book of God, killed their prophets, lied to their Lord and rejected Him. But they (Muslims) are the people of the middle way and of moderation in their religion. So God has described them as such, for the most agreeable affairs to God in its middle.¹

The duties of a Muslim are defined within the framework of the above āyah and are also emphasized in Sūrah 3:104:

Let their be amongst you an ummah inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong, and these are the ones who will prosper.²

Reference of the word, as it appears in this āyah, can be interpreted on two levels. First, it may be deduced that reference is to one group of

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, part 1, p.6.

2. Good meaning khair is a reference to "Islam and sharī^cah" (al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.38).

Muslims from amongst the whole ummah. This group is charged with the duty and responsibility to invite other Muslims to comply with Sharī^Cah, and stand as guide, judge and arbiter among Muslims.¹ According to the second interpretation, the totality of Muslims is denoted, and hence every Muslim in the ummah has the duty and responsibility of inviting other Muslims to comply with Sharī^Cah.² In this way each Muslim has the responsibility of giving guidance to other Muslims, as well as the task of arbitration.

Ibn Taymiyyah explains the term 'ummah wasat' as reference to the totality of Muslims: al-ummah al-wasat are the people of the religion of Muḥammad and all his successors, who are charged with the public till the Day of Judgement.³ Ibn Khaldūn uses the term ummah to refer to the entity of all

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, p.38; also al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, pp.165-6.
 2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, p.38; al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.165; also Muṣṭafā al-Bughā, Nizām al-Islām, pp.345-8.
 3. Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Siyāsah al-Shar^Cīyyah, p.60.

Muslims.¹

Problems of Dating:

It has been suggested by Noldeke that the term ummah is only used in the Makkah Sūrahs of the Qur'ān.² Such an exclusively Makkan usage would seem to suggest that in Madīnah, when the ummah actually acquired a political connotation as well as its basic religious one, the term was no longer used. However Bell, in contrast, only regards three instances as certainly Makkan.³ Montgomery Watt suggests that by the year A.D. 625 the term was no more used in the Qur'ān⁴ and that the term ḥizb Allāh "the party of God" was used instead in the Qur'ān.⁵ If this is the case, the expression

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1. Ibn Khaldūn, al-Muqaddimah, pp.171-80.
 2. Theodor Noldeke, Geschichte des Qorans, Leipzig, 1909, Chapter 2.
 3. Richard Bell, Introduction to the Qur'ān, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1953, pp.100-14.
 4. Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit.,

Cont'd:...

hizb Allāh has the same religio-political connotations that we have seen to be involved in ummah. However Watt does admit that the word ummah was introduced following the foundation of a new type of community in Madīnah.¹ Watt's claim that the term ummah was not used in the Qur'ān after A.D. 625 depends very much on the dating of the various documents. Such a view cannot therefore be categorically adopted. In fact, the earliest surviving Islamic texts frequently refer to the community of the Muslims as the ummah.

The Islamic Ummah in Makkah

The first nucleus of the Islamic ummah at the time of the Prophet was created when the Prophet spoke to Khadījah his wife, about what was revealed to him and she accepted his message. Ibn Hishām writes that Khadījah was the first to believe in what he brought from God, and was the

Cont'd: pp.10, 12.

5. Ibid., pp.10, 12; also Watt, Muhammad at Medina, op. cit., p.247.

1. Watt, Muhammad at Medina, op. cit., p.240.

first to believe in God and His Messenger.' Then, and during the period of twelve years, from 610 to 622, some of the Makkans accepted Islam and became automatically part of the Islamic ummah. The first teachings of the Qur'ān were practised at this time, and the two prayers were established as the first duty of the Muslims.² This small aggregate of Muslims the ummah, underwent persecution and alienation by the Makkans who were idolators at the time.³ Here we are able to observe the Islamic ummah in terms of a group of persons having one outlook and one belief-system and one practice. This belief-system is metaphysical in nature and hence the membership of this group depended totally on accepting Islam as a belief system. The confession of shahādah was the only means by which a person became a full member of the Islamic ummah. The confession of shahādah, namely that there is no deity but God and Muhammad is His Messenger, is the only means of accepting Islam and belonging

1. Ibn Hishām, Sīrat al-Nabī, vol.1, p.259.

2. Ibid., vol.1, p.262.

3. Ibid., vol.1, p.276.

to the Islamic ummah with fully-fledged rights and duties. Only the breach of the shahādah would cancel the Islamic belief-system and hence would cancel the membership of the Islamic ummah. Ibn Taymiyyah writes that whoever professes al-shahādah has entered Islam.¹ Watt writes that the shahādah is politically

the expression of a general acceptance of the values of Islam and its worldview or intellectual outlook.²

Another writer considers that the Muslims in Makkah constituted the first Islamic ummah, fully integrated and politically and socially existing.³

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1. Ibn Taymiyyah, Kitāb al-Īmān, pp.223-8.
 2. W. Montgomery Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., p.63.
 3. Muḥammad Ka-ka Khel, "The Rise of Muslim Umma at Mecca and Its Integration", article pp.59-74, Hamdard Islamicus, vol.5, no.3, Autumn, Karachi, 1982, pp.59-63.

The Islamic Ummah in Madīnah:

During the pilgrimage months in Makkah, Muḥammad invited the Arab tribes to accept Islam in the latter period of the Makkan epoch.¹ On one such occasion, the Prophet invited a group of six men of the tribe of Khazraj of Madīnah to come to hear him. They accepted his invitation and believed in him, accepting what he proposed of Islam.² Upon returning to their people in Madīnah, those six told their people about the Messenger of God and invited them to Islam. Ibn Hishām recounts:

The Messenger of God was mentioned in every house of al-Ansār.³

During the following pilgrimage, twelve men of al-Ansār came to Makkah and met with the Prophet at a place nearby called al-^caqabah. In

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1. Ibn Hishām, Sīrat Sayyid al-Anām Muḥammad, al-Khayāt, Bayrūt, 1967, pp.63-4.
 2. Ibid., p.65.
 3. Ibid., p.66.

this place they swore allegiance (al-bai^cah) to the Prophet.¹ Ibn Hishām quotes ^cUqbah Ibn al-Sāmit describing this bai^cah as follows:

We were twelve men. We swore allegiance not to associate anything with God, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to slaughter our children and not to disobey God.²

It is interesting to note that this was a contract between the Prophet and those who accepted Islam. The contract was ratified by the proposition of the Prophet and the acceptance of those who agreed to it. The contract was made with the mutual agreement and the free will of both parties. It was put into effect by both parties after they had agreed to its conditions. The conditions of the contract were, as can be observed, transcendental in nature, reflecting the moral and ethical behaviour of those who ratified the contract.

1. Ibn Hisham, op. cit., p.66.

2. Ibid., p.66.

In the following pilgrimage the Prophet met seventy three men and two women of al-Anṣār in ḤAqabah.¹ He invited them to accept Islam. They accepted and swore allegiance. One of them, Abū al-Haitham ibn al-Tayyhān objected, saying:

We have fastened ropes between ourselves and other men, referring to the Jews, and we will cut off these ropes, then will you desert us, if you gain victory and return to your people?

The Prophet said:

No, I belong to you and you belong to me, I fight whom you fight and make peace with whom you make peace with.

He added:

Bring me from amongst you twelve headmen to stand for their people.

Then they brought out twelve headmen, nine from al-Khazraj and three men from al-Aws.²

1. Ibn Hishām, op. cit., p.67.

2. Ibid., p.67.

This event is known as the second bay^cah of al-^cAqabah. In this incident, the same contract was ratified between the seventy five persons and the Prophet. But the pact was extended to the condition that they stand by each other, covering the two parties concerned. Both parties should make friends with those whom the Ansār made friends with and should make enemies with those whom the Ansār are enemies with. The pact also specified that the Ansār would break other pacts, when they ratified their pact with the Prophet. The practice of the Prophet in this event indicates that he chose certain of the men themselves to be their representatives and headmen.

When these Ansār accepted Islam, swearing allegiance to the apostle, to assist him and assist whoever followed him and to provide him with refuge, the apostle commanded his companions in Makkah to emigrate to Madīnah.¹

When the Prophet reached Madīnah he made an agreement with al-Ansār of Madīnah.² This

1. Ibn Hishām, op. cit., p.68.

Cont'd:...

document is particularly important for understanding the ummah. It reads:

"In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

This is a writing from Muhammad, the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) between al-Mu'minin and al-Muslimin of Quraysh and Yathrib, and those who followed them and joined them, and strove with them (jāhada ma^ca-hum). They are a single ummah distinct from other people. The Muhājirīn of Quraysh are in charge of the management of their affairs, paying jointly among themselves their blood-money, and they will ransom a prisoner of them in

Cont'd: 2. Ibn Ishāq mentions the document at the beginning of the Madīnan period. Watt writes that this was called for by logic, for Ibn Ishāq tells nothing about its origin (Muhammad at Medina, p.220). Serjeant considers the document to have been 'issued on various occasions over the first seven years or so of Muhammad's Madīnan period (al-Sunnah Jāmi^cah, p.1). During the latter part

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accordance with uprightness and fairness among the Mu'minīn. Banū [°]Awf are in charge of the management of their affairs, paying jointly their previous blood-monies, and each group (or sub-clan) will ransom a prisoner of them in accordance with uprightness and fairness (or fair sharing) among al-Mu'minīn (the same conditions are laid for Banū Sa [°]īdah, Banū al-Harīth, Banū Jusham, Banū al-Najjār, Banū [°]Amr ibn [°]Awf, Banū al-Nabīṭ and Banū al-Aws). Al-Mu'minūn will not leave a mufraj (one turned Muslim among a people to whom he does not belong) among them without giving him (help), in fairness, for ransom or blood-money. A Believer does not take as confederate (yuḥālif - take as ḥālif) the client/ally (mawlā) or (another) believer without his consent (of the latter). The God-fearing believers are against whoever of them acts wrongfully or seeks an act that is unjust or treacherous or hostile or corrupt among the believers, their hands are all against him, even if he is the son of one of them. A believer

Cont'd: of the first year of Hijrah, the Prophet wrote a writing between al-Muhajirīn and al-Anṣār and made a covenant with the Jews (Ibn Hishām, op. cit., pp.118-9).

does not kill a believer because of an unbeliever, and does not help an unbeliever against a believer. The security (dhimmah) of God (for life and property) is one; the granting of 'neighbourly protection' (yujīr) by the least of them (the believers) is binding on them. The believers are awliyā' (clients, patrons, allies, friends and assistants) to one another, to the exclusion of (all other) people."

Note that here the relationship of walā' between the believers is clearly stated in the 'Constitution of Madīnah'. The Believers are in a relationship of muwālāt among each other, and in this they are set apart from all other people. The concept of the ummah, mentioned at the beginning of the document also emphasizes the same point namely that the believers as an ummah are distinct from all other peoples. The concept of walā' is introduced in the document but the concept of ukhūwah is not mentioned in the document, but is left till after the document of Madīnah was ratified, but not for so long. In fact Ibn Ishāq mentions the institution of mu'ākhāt immediately after laying out the

conditions of the document of Madīnah.'

The term ummah appears for the first time in a document written between the believers of Makkah and Madīnah. It denotes a community of people having the same features and agreeing to the same conditions. These features define the membership in the ummah in terms of belief and attitude vis-a-vis God, and this attitude regulates their attitude towards one another. The metaphysical aspect of Islam, as exemplified in belief in the divine will, is actualised through the actions of men in their earthly life. The term ummah comprises the entity of those who believe and unite in their relations against evil and the doers of evil. The entity of believers constitute, in this way, a solid unity among themselves and against the rejecters. The pact also defines the believers as a separate and completely different entity from the rejecters. The two entities are distinctively identified according to the criterion of Islam. And lastly,

1. Ibn Hishām, vol.2, pp.119-23; Watt, Muhammad at Medina, pp.221-3; also R.B. Serjeant, "al-Sunnah Jāmi^cah", pp.16-19.

the pact, or indeed the social contract, makes God and His Prophet the last reference and judge should there be conflict among themselves. This last article of the compact acknowledges the possibility of differences of opinion and even conflict among the believers. It also denotes the rule of God, as revealed in the Qur'ān and explained by the Prophet, is the final reference.

In the final analysis we can consider the ummah as a structure which gives rise to a community of believers' and extends geographically. The view exists that this community should have political dimensions, so that it can deal with other umam that are non-Islamic entities.

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1. This definition roughly accords with Serjeant's analysis in his discussion of the document of Madīnah. He considers the term ummah as used in the document is 'basically a political confederation' and to refer to 'a theocratic federation' (op. cit., p.4).

CHAPTER 2

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF THE UMMAH

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A: THE RELATIONSHIP OF WALĀ'

In the pre-Islamic era the terms mawlā-mawālī and walā'-muwālāt are used by the Arabs tribesmen to denote the connotations of wilāyah. Al-mawlā is a slave, or a freed slave who becomes a mawlā to his master.¹ Al-mawālī means a group, or band. Cousins were called al-mawlā.² Al-mawlā also refers to a prisoner who is set free.³ The compound term mawālī al-mukātabah refers to contract-ownership in which the slave specifies the conditions of freeing himself. The idea of this walā' was that when a slave was freed he became related to his master, and when he died the master would have the right to inherit from him.⁴ The compound term mawlā al-^caqd refers to a pact between two tribes according to which one

1. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.4, p.366.

2. Ibid., vol.4, p.366.

3. Ibid., vol.4, p.366.

4. Ibid., vol.4, p.367.

side gives support and protection to the other side on the understanding that, in return, they have to fulfil certain conditions. For example, the Jews of Yathrib were mawālī of al-Aws and al-Khazraj tribes.¹ The term mawālī al-hilf referred to a league between some of the Jews, the Christians and the Magus.² The term mawlā al-rahim referred to allegiance and ties through marriage where a freed slave became a mawlā to the tribe through marriage.³ The term walī also referred to person in charge of someone else, i.e. his legal guardian.⁴ The father was the walī of the affairs of his children. The grandfather became the walī of his grandchildren in case of the absence or death of his son. Uncles became awliyā' to their nephews. The eldest brother became the walī for his under-age brothers. The wilāyah of the father gave him absolute right over his children. He could sacrifice his son's life as an offering to the gods. He could bury alive his new born daughter. He could choose a husband for his

1. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.4, pp.367-8.

2. Ibid., vol.4, p.368.

3. Ibid., vol.4, p.368.

4. Ibid., vol.5, p.491.

daughter and receive dowry, he could disinherit his children or pawn his child as guarantee for security.¹

In the pre-Islamic practice of Arabia there was a god for each tribe, he was worshipped and the walā' was due to him as well as to the chief of the tribe. Walā' in this respect referred to obedience and allegiance. The walā' was expressed through the chief to the god of the tribe.²

Walī in the Qur'ān

Turning to the Qur'ānic usage, the term, and its multiple derivations, are used to denote a host of meanings in the various passages of the Qur'ān.³

1. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.5, p.491.

2. Ibid., vol.6, p.44.

3. In Sūrah al-Tawbah, āyah 123 we are told:
"Oh you who believe! fight against yalūna-kum
(those who are near you) of the unbelievers".
The word yalūna-kum is derived from wala

Cont'd:...

In our discussion of the Qur'ānic references

Cont'd: (near, close, next, adjacent) (Ibn Manzūr, vol.15, p.412). It is also derived from the verb waliya-yalī meaning to be near, to be close, to be adjacent (ibid., vol.15, p.412). In this āyah the term is used in the form of an address to the believers to fight the holy war, referring to those who are nearest to the unbelievers, then to those who come next in nearness (al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-11, part 11, p.71). Particular reference, as explained by al-Ṭabarī, is made here to al-Rūm in al-Shā'm or al-Dailam, but, he writes, reference can be generalized to denote the duty of each body of believers to fight in battle against those who are nearer to them of their enemies (ibid. vol.9-11, part 11, p.71). Another denotation of the term wallā in the Qur'ān is that of wallā meaning to turn away. In Sūrah 27:10 the term wallā is used in the following context: "When he saw it moving like a snake wallā (he turned away) and did not return". The term wallā in this passage means to flee and turn away with reference to Mūsā and the

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to walī with its plural awliyā', and mawlā with

Cont'd: rod (Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 19, p.135).

An example of twalla can be seen in Sūrah 3: 82: "If anyone turns back (tawallā) after this, they are the sinful". Tawallā here refers to those who have turned away from belief to unbelief and broke their covenant with God. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, p.335. The term tawallā qualifies the term sinful (fāsiqūn). Fisq is the noun of fāsiq meaning the dissolute, trespasser, sinner, or a person not meeting the legal requirements of righteousness (Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.183; Lane, Book 1, part 6, p.398; also Wehr, p.713). In this way, the term tawallā denotes those who have 'walked out of God's religion and of his obedience'. (Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, p.335). The term wallā and its derivations in the singular are further used in the Qur'an in 28 other passages with the meaning of turning away from someone or something. (Wallā or tawallā: Sūrah 2:205; 3:20; 3:32; 4:80, 115; 7:79, 93; 12:84; 20:48, 60; 24:11; 28:24, 131; 51:39; 53:29, 33;

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its plural mawālin, it is necessary to keep in

Cont'd: 70:17; 75:32; 80:1; 88:23; 92:16; 96:12.

Wallait, Sūrah 18:18; Yuwallī, Sūrah 8:16;
yatawallā, Sūrah 48:17, 37:24 and 60:6;
yatawallā, Sūrah 3:23 and 24:47). The plural
form of the term wallā with the connotation
of turning away occurs in 49 other passages
in the Qur'ānic text. For example: Wallāhum,
Sūrah 2:142; Wallain, Sūrah 9:57, 17:46, 27:
80, 30:52, 46:29, 48:22. Wallaitum, Sūrah
9:25. Tuwallū, Sūrah 21:27. Tawallain, Sūrah
4:33. Tuwallūhum, Sūrah 8:15. Yuwallunn,
Sūrah 59:12. Yuwallūkum, Sūrah 3:111.
Yuwallūn, Sūrah 33:15, 54:45. Tawallaū, Sūrah
2:137, 246; 3:63, 64, 155; 4:89; 3:49; 8:20,
23, 40; 9:76, 92, 129; 11:3, 57; 16:82; 21:
109; 24:54; 37:90; 44:4; 64:6. Tawallaitum,
Sūrah 2:64, 83; 3:92; 9:3; 10:72; 48:16; 64:
12. Tatawllān, Sūrah 11:52; 47:38; 48:16.
Tawallauhun, Sūrah 60:9. Yatawllān, Sūrah
9:50, 74. Yatawallūn, Sūrah 5:43. Another

Qur'ānic usage of the term wallā is that
opposite to the last denotation, namely to
turn to. (Ibn Manzūr, vol.15, p.414). For

Cont'd:...

mind the pre-Islamic understanding of the terms

Cont'd: example in Sūrah 2:144 the term wallā is used three times: "We see the turning of your face in the sky, so now We shall direct you (nuwalliann-ak) to a Qiblah that shall please you, so turn your face (walli) towards the sacred Mosque, and wherever you are turn your face (wallū) towards it". The first occurrence in this āyah is nuwalliyannak, it means literally 'we shall direct you'. (Al-Tabarī, vol.2, pp.19-24). The context of this āyah is that of the Prophet looking for a direction qiblah towards which to turn his face in prayer. Al-Tabarī, vol.2, p.19; also vol.2, pp.2-6. He is told to turn his face to the Holy Mosque in Makkah when praying 'Walli wajjhak'. Ibid., vol.2, p.19. The third reference of the term in this passage is the address made to the believers to turn their faces in the direction of Makkah when praying, wallū. Ibid., vol.2, p.19. This meaning occurs in the Qur'ān in five other passages. Tuwallan, Sūrah 2:115, 177. Walli, Sūrah 2:149, 150. Wallū, Sūrah 2:150. Another

Cont'd:...

as those were the meanings immediately apparent

Cont'd: denotation of the term within its Qur'ānic usage is awlā, 'more entitled, more worthy and more deserving' (Ibn Manzūr, vol.15, p.407. In Sūrah 3:68 we have an example of this denotation: "Verily the more worthy (awlā) of Ibrāhīm are those who follow him, as are the prophet and those who believe".) The term awlā refers in this āyah to 'those who are more entitled to and more worthy of' Ibrāhīm, those who have followed his way and those who have believed in Muḥammad. (Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, pp.307-8). The term awlā with this connotation occurs in five other passages; Sūrah 4:135; 8:75; 19:70; 33:6. Awliyān, Sūrah 5:107. Awlā is also used in the Qur'ān to denote a threat. (Ibn Manzūr, vol.15, pp.411-2). In Sūrah 47:20 we read: "But when a Sūrah of basic meaning is revealed, and fighting is mentioned therein, you will see those in whose hearts there is a disease looking at you with a look of one who swoons from the agony of death. But more fitting for them (awlā)". The term awlā in

Cont'd:...

to those who heard the Qur'ān at the time or its revelation. However, as will be seen later, these terms develop a specifically Islamic connotation.

We find the term mawālī is used for "kin who will inherit" and walī for an heir in Sūrah 9:5:

And I fear al-mawālī (kins) after me and my wife is barren. Therefore, will You grant me a walī (heir).

Walī in this passage refers to a son as an heir and helper.¹ Another particular reference to heirs is observed in Sūrah 4:33:

Cont'd: this āyah can be interpreted in two ways.

The first meaning is that of being more worthy and more fitting. The second sphere of reference is a threat being levelled against people, as in the phrase 'evil being close to them'. (Ibn Manzūr, vol.15, pp.411-412). Similar usage occurs in Sūrah 75:34, 35.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 16, pp.46-7.

And to every man We made mawālī (heirs) of whatever is left behind by parents and kins.

Mawālī refers to those who inherit.¹ Reference to heirs and inheritors is also made in Sūrah 8:73 with reference to kin.²

The term mawlā has yet another meaning, namely 'the master of a slave', as is observed in Sūrah 16:76:³

God gave an example of two men. One who is dumb and a burden to his mawlā.

Here the term mawlā refers to the master who owns a slave.⁴

From this we can see that the Qur'ānic usage preserves the pre-Islamic idea of inheritance involved in the walā' relationship within the

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 16, p.47.

2. Ibid., vol.15-17, part 16, p.47.

3. Ibid., vol.12-14, part 14, pp.150-1.

4. Ibid., vol.12-14, part 14, p.150.

tribe, whether referring to a freed slave and master or to individuals in a kinship group. Again we notice the reciprocal nature of both terms walī and mawlā. Both can designate the inheritor and the legatee, the master and the slave. This also underlines the two-way nature of the activity inferred by the terms.

Also in Sūrah 3:68, God is referred to as walī:

God is walī of the believers,¹

and in āyah 19 of Sūrah 45 we are told:

And God is the walī of the righteous.²

In Sūrah 2:107:

Do you not know that to God belongs the

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.109; al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, p.218; also Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.372.
 2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.24-27, part 25, p.89; also al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, p.164.

dominion of the heavens and the earth",
and besides Him you have no walī 'patron'
nor nāṣir 'supporter'.

The members of an Islamic ummah become so by virtue of a walā' relationship between God, the Messenger and those who believe on the one hand, and themselves on the other. While it is easy to understand the authoritative nature of God and His Messenger's role in this relationship, it is more difficult to assess the role of those who believe. The Shī^cah evade this problem by arguing that the plural form for those who believe, refers to 'Alī.' It may perhaps indicate a special group of believers but this is highly speculative. However, the Qur'ān does refer frequently to the walā' relationship of the believers with one another.

The term walī, when used of God, is always the initiator, while men, or more correctly in this connection, the Muslims, are the receivers. It should be noted that God is the walī of the believers. Thus God is the walī of the Islamic ummah. This can be seen as an extension of the pre-Islamic tribal concept of walī within the

1. ^cAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, pp.134-5.

tribe, to refer to the supra-tribal, supra-national relationship of God with the community of believers.

The authority involved in the term walī is seen in such āyāt as 5:55:

Verily God, His Messenger and those who believe are your walī.

Within the Islamic community of believers, the only kind of pre-Islamic walī relationship, i.e. relationship of authority and protection, that Muslims can enjoy, is firstly, the relationship with God, secondly, that with His Messenger, and thirdly, that with other believers. This relationship within the Islamic community is reinforced by the following āyah 5:56:

Whoever takes as walī God, His Messenger and the believers, is of the party of God (ḥizb Allāh), who will triumph.²

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 6, p.186; al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 6, p.222; also Ibn

Cont'd:...

As noted in the discussion of the ummah, hizb

Cont'd: Kathīr, vol.2, p.71.

2. Hizb in the āyah here refers to ansār (supporters and helpers); it denotes the entity of believers as hizb Allāh in contrast to hizb al-shaytān. (Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 6, p.187). Al-Qurtubī explains this āyah as follows: 'whoever entrusts his affair (fawwada amra-hu) to God, complies with the command of his messenger, and takes Muslims as his friends and assistants'. (Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 6, p.222). The man who does all these is a member, al-Qurtubī states, of the party of God. (Ibid., vol.3, part 6, p.222). He adds, 'whoever undertakes to obey God and supports His messenger and the believers'. (Ibid., vol.3, part 6, p.222). Al-Qurtubī extends the term hizb to 'soldiers' or 'assistants'. (Ibid., vol.3, part 6, p.223). Ibn Kathīr quotes Ibn ^cAbbās in his explanation of this āyah: 'Whoever becomes a Muslim, he already takes God, His messenger and the believers as walī'. (Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.71).

Allāh (party of God) is a term used by the Qur'ān for the Islamic ummah.

Relationships between believers within the context of walā' relationships:

When the Muhājirūn arrived at Makkah, the Qur'an considered them as awliyā' with the Ansār of Madīnah.¹ Al-Ṭabarī identifies the nature of the relationship between the two parties by the term awliyā' each party supporting the other, helping and co-operating against idolators. Both parties were also united against the rejectors. They were as brothers, but at the same time free from their disbelieving kindred.² This explanation is offered in the context of Sūrah 8:72 the āyah reads:

Those who believed and emigrated and strove with their wealth and their persons in the cause of God, and those who provided with refuge and aid, those

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, p.36.

2. Ibid., vol.9-10, part 10, p.36.

are awliyā' one of another.

Al-Ṭabarī explains the early use of this term in Madīnah with regard to the relationship between the Muḥājirīn and the Anṣār in a way which suggests some of its pre-Islamic tribal meaning but now is Islamicised and used for that group - i.e. the Muslims - exclusively to describe their relationship one with another. Thus he says the term awliyā' included the right of reciprocal inheritance between the Anṣār and the Muḥājirīn, but he adds that this was abrogated by the āyah 75 of Sūrah 8:

But kindred in blood have prior rights
(awlā) over each other.¹

The term muwālāt is sometimes used to describe the relation between the emigrants and Anṣār.² Al-Qurtubī describes this relation with reference to the āyah above, saying that each party would know his walī from whom he sought

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, p.37.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.56.

help, namely the believing Muhājirīn and the Ansār. The Ansār are the Madīnans who became Muslims before the arrival of the Muhājirīn in Madīnah.¹ Like al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurtubī interprets the āyah as an indication of the right of inheritance between the two parties, and goes on to say that the āyah has been abrogated by āyah 75 of Sūrah 8.²

This type of relationship, without the legal implications of inheritance is extended in Sūrah 9:71 to the whole Islamic ummah:

The believers, men and women, are awliyā' of one another, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, establishing prayer, giving al-zakāt and obeying God and His messenger. Those shall gain the mercy of God.

The term awliyā', explains al-Ṭabarī, defines the features of the believers in God, His

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.56.

2. Ibid., vol.4, part 8, p.56.

messenger and His Book.¹ Their characteristic feature is that they are anṣār (assistants) and a^cwān (helpers to each other).² Three duties vis-a-vis each other and vis-a-vis God are stated in this āyah as well as their consequence in terms of reward.³ It is worth observing here the interdependence of the duties of believers in relation to God and among themselves. It is in such āyāt that we begin to notice the other aspect of the walā' relationship being emphasised, i.e. from the tribal connotations of adherence we begin to see the Islamic relationship of mutual love. Al-Qurtubī describes the term awliyā' as

that their hearts are united in friendly relations (al-tawādd), and in loving one another (al-ta^cātuf).⁴

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, p.123.

2. Ibid., vol.9-10, part 10, p.123.

3. The reward of believers is stated in the following āyah 72 of Sūrah 9: "God has promised the believers, men and women, ... Paradise".

4. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.203.

Al-Qurtubī explains the duties of believers towards God and one another, on the basis of their being inseparable. He writes that the concept of:

'enjoining what is right' denotes the worship of God almighty and acknowledging His unity and all that is related to that; it also infers 'forbidding what is wrong' concerning idolatry and all that is related to that; it denotes also 'establishing prayers' (the five prayers), the obligation of giving zakāt; 'that they obey God' in religious matters; 'and His Prophet' in what he has prescribed for them.'

In medieval political literature we observe that no theorist seems to have taken proper account of the concept of walā' in terms of its development with regard to the interrelations among the believers.

The term that such theorists concern themselves with is wilāyah, which they regard as

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 8, p.203.

essentially a term about authority, i.e. the status of the ruler. Although it might be possible to justify this usage from the verses already discussed where God and His Messenger are referred to as walī of the believers, it in no way explains the vast majority of the examples of the use of the term walī and its plural awliyā' in the Qur'ān.

Ibn Khaldūn refers to wilāyat al-^cAhd (heir apparent or successor to the khalīfah) as one of the lawful rights of the khalīfah to make such an appointment before his death. He goes on to say that such a procedure is necessitated by al-Shar^c and al-Ijma^c (consensus).¹ Al-Māwardī, like Ibn Khaldūn, does not explain the concept of wilāyah in terms of mutual relations among the believers, but limits himself to explaining that wilāyat al-^cAhd, as a means to the succession of khilāfah, is an obligation necessitated by al-Shar^c and was the practice after the Prophet.²

1. Ibn Khaldūn, al-Muqaddimah, pp.187-95.

2. Abū Ḥasan al-Māwardī, al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyyah, Matba^cat al-Ḥalabī, al-Qāhirah, 1973, pp.11-15.

But al-Māwardī considers the concept of wilāyah in terms of authority and the holder of authority represented by al-imāmah, and the imām who deputizes certain functions to certain persons. In this way he deals with the concept of wilāyah in the context of war against apostates, dissidents and highway robbers.¹ He deals with wilāyah of judges in judicial matters.² He also deals with the prescription and necessity of wilāyah of Court to deal with acts of injustice (mazālim), to be dealt with by appointed wulāt (rulers and governors) such as ministers, or regional commanders.³ In chapter eight of 'al-Ahkam', al-Māwardī deals with the necessity of wilāyat al-ansāb, for keeping records of lineage performed by the khalīfah himself, or whoever he appoints to deputize for him in this matter, e.g. a minister, regional governor or 'a headman of general wilāyah'.⁴ Al-Māwardī then

1. Al-Māwardī, op. cit., pp.55-64.

2. Ibid., pp.65-76.

3. Ibid., pp.77-95; it should be noted that this is the plural form of wālin and not walī.

4. Ibid., pp.96-99.

discusses the necessity of wilāyah in matters of prayer,¹ pilgrimage,² charity,³ and war booty. In this way al-Māwardī's concept of wilāyah can be defined in terms of governing and government, and the wulāt are the governors who decide the affairs of Muslims.

Ibn Taymiyyah considers al-wilāyah as an obligation denoted by al-shar^c and refers to the position of governing.⁴ Walī al-amr is the governor or judge appointed by Muslims. The term walī covers, according to Ibn Taymiyyah, the imām of Muslims and all those appointed by him in order to conduct the affairs of Muslims.⁵ He asserts that walī al-amr - al-imām - has the task of appointing the best man he can find to supervise every affair of the Muslims.⁶ This

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1. Al-Māwardī, op. cit., Chapter 9.
 2. Ibid., Chapter 10.
 3. Ibid., Chapter 11.
 4. Ibid., Chapter 12.
 5. Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Siyāsah al-Shar^cīyyah, pp.4-5.
 6. Ibid., p.6.
 7. Ibid., p.6.

procedure will establish a body of wulāt comprising the deputies of the imām over the regions, judges, commanders of the army, ministers, clerks and tax men.¹ These wulāt ought in their turn to appoint the best deputies they can find. These comprise the leaders in prayers, teachers, pilgrimage leaders, superintendents of communication (ummāl al-barīd), treasurers, guards, commanders of the army, heads of the tribes and markets and chiefs of villages.²

Both al-Māwardī and Ibn Taymiyyah view the wilāyah as an institution of authority and government interpreting the Qur'ānic references as being to an established institution of government and deputization of rule for the purpose of managing the Muslims' affairs. They necessitate this system of managing the affairs of Muslims within the framework of the government and both oblige them to obey al-wulāt in every aspect of the life of the community.³ Although Ibn

1. Ibn Taymiyyah, op. cit., p.7.

2. Ibid., p.7.

3. Al-Māwardī, al-Ahkām, op. cit., pp.5-7; also Ibn Taymiyyah, op. cit., p.5.

Khaldūn does not use the concept of wilāyah in the same way as al-Māwardī and Ibn Taymiyyah, he depicts a framework of government run by khalīfah or imām through an elaborate system of deputies and assistants in matters of protection and war, finance and taxation, judicial and other clerical issues.¹ Ibn Khaldūn considers that the term wilāyah denotes the general and comprehensive authority of the person in charge, in respect both of religions and temporal matters, whether the khalīfah or his deputies, e.g. judges, ministers and commanders of war.²

What these writers are concerned to do, though in varying degrees, is to build up a picture of an administration, ideal or actual, and relate that to the term wilāyah. This is a reasonable position to take in terms of the concept of wilāyah as it had developed in Islamic thought. However, it would seem that, in fact, what the Qur'ān really addresses itself to is the Islamic dimension of the concept of walā', which,

1. Ibn Khaldūn, al-Muqaddimah, Chapters 3 and 4.

3. Ibid., Chapter 31. The Shī^cah view of wilāyah is similar to the Sunnah view in that it considers the term to refer to general authority of the imām as a mawlā. But it defines the relationships between the Muslims

in turn, springs out of the pre-Islamic use of that term. They address themselves only to the verses where walī has some definite meaning of "one who has authority" and ignore the other verses where walī has a much more interdependent meaning. As we have already shown, the concept of walā' can involve both meanings but the relationship is always closer.

Shaltūt appears to be nearer to the concept of awliyā' when he refers to Sūrah 9:71 as co-operation. In this he is merely following exegetes like Qurtubī.¹

In another modern interpretation of the term walīyah, the āyah

and the believers, men and women, are considered to be awliyā' of one another.

This is a reference to the responsibility incumbent on all Muslims to care for each other

1. Mahmūd Shaltūt, Min Tawjihāt al-Islām, Dār al-Shurūq, al-Qāhirah, 1969, p.274.

Cont'd: in terms of wilāyah, i.e. support and help in religion (al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, pp.144-58).

and to co-operate.¹ Al-Bughā, an Islamic political theorist adds,

this moral solidarity is incumbent as a duty on every Muslim.²

The term solidarity here is a translation of the term takāful. This term is derived from the verb kafal-yakful which means to be responsible for, to sponsor, to guarantee, to support, to provide for and to be a guardian of someone.³ The term takāful is explained by an Islamic jurist as meaning

an individual living within the responsible guardianship of the whole group, and the whole group lives by the support of the individual where everybody cooperates and consolidates to form a perfect community.⁴

1. Mustafā al-Bughā, Nizām al-Islām, Jāmi^c at Dimashq, Dimashq, 1982, p.348.

2. Ibid., p.348.

3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.11, pp.588-90; also Wehr,

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Al-Bughā explains that the āyah here denotes the principle of responsibility of all Muslims towards each other expressed in giving advice and guidance,

the one who has the knowledge advises the one who is ignorant, the old guide the young, even the young used to advise the old, and the employer advises the employee as well as the employee advising the employer and the subject advising the ruler. All accept advice with gratitude and contented hearts.¹

Al-Durainī interprets the reference of the term awliyā' in the āyah here as

mutual help and assistance (al-tanāsur) and consolidation of mutual reciprocity

Cont'd: p.833.

4. ^cAbd Allāh ^cIlwān, al-Takāful al-Ijtimā^cī fī al-Islām, 3rd. edition, Ḥalab, 1963, p.12.

1. Al-Bughā, Nizām al-Islām, op. cit., p.349.

(al-taḍāmun) in all matters of life within the context of faith (īmān).¹

This Islamic jurist considers the meaning denoted by the āyah as one of the bases of social solidarity (al-takāful al-ijtimā^cī), next to mercy, brotherhood, love and co-operation as denoted in the āyah 3, Sūrah 5,

and help you one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression.²

Another Islamic jurist, Ṣubḥī Tabbārah, considers the term awliyā' in this āyah as a reference to the duty of the Muslim to enjoin what is good and right and to forbid what is wrong and evil.³

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1. Fathī al-Durainī, al-Haqq wa madā Sultan al-Dawlah fī Taqīyyidih, Mu'ssasat al-Risālah, 2nd edition, Bayrūt, 1977, p.227.
 2. Ibid., pp.224-30.
 3. ^cAfīf Tabbārah, Rūḥ al-Dīn al-Islāmī, Dār al-^cIlm li al-Malāyyin, 16th imprint, Bayrūt, 1977, p.305.

While these modern interpretations of the term walīyah and the meaning of walī come closer to the analysis in this thesis of the terms walā' and walī, the interpretation adopted here of its pre-Islamic significance is emphasised by the Qur'ān where Muslims are told that they must not have a non-Muslim as a walī in Sūrah 3:28:

Let not the believers take the unbelievers for awliyā' rather than believers: if any do that, in nothing will there be help from God: except by way of precaution, that you may guard yourselves from them.

Al-Ṭabarī explains this passage here as a command from God forbidding believers from taking unbelievers as assistants, helpers or supporters and that the believers ought not to assist and support the unbelievers in their religion against the believers nor should they support them in their disbelief.¹ He quotes Ibn ^cAbbās' explanation of the attitude of the believers

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, p.152.

that they ought not to be friendly to the disbelievers nor take them as intimate friends, unless the rejecters overpower the believers, when the believers can be friendly to them but disagree in their hearts with them.¹

Al-Qurtubī explains the āyah, mentioning that the believers ought not to be friendly to the unbelievers.² He also considers the term walī to denote trust and dependence upon someone (rakana), and as implying that believers should not rely upon or trust the unbelievers.³ The second reference in the āyah above is explained by al-Qurtubī as referring to the rejecters, the Jews and those who follow their inclinations. Believers ought not to take these as friends and as intimates discussing with them their ideas and charging them with their affairs.⁴

The attitude of believers towards the

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, p.152.
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.57.
 3. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.178.
 4. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.178.

unbelievers is expressed further in terms of wilāyah in Sūrah 60:1:

O you who believe! Do not take My enemies and yours as awliyā', sending them mawaddah, even though they have rejected the truth that has come to you, and have driven out the Messenger and yourselves (from your homes) because you believe in God your Lord.

The general connotation of the term mawaddah is love, but according to Ibn Manzūr who quotes Ibn ^CArabī, the term mawaddah in this āyah refers to kitāb (letter),¹ but as mentioned above al-Ṭabarī considers the reference in this āyah is to the believers sending the unbelievers letters concerning the secrets of the believers.

In explaining the term awliyā' here al-Ṭabarī mentions the opinion of Abū Ja^Cfar:

God is saying to the believers in Him that they ought not to take the

1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.4, p.464 .

unbelievers as Anṣār (helpers and assistants, nor should the believers give away their secrets to the unbelievers.¹

Reference in the atomistic sense can be observed in the explanation given by al-Qurtubī that the term implies that the Companions of the Prophet should not take idolaters as helpers or protectors.² He considers the reference here to forbid the believers of muwālāt, the unbelievers of the idolaters, the blasphemers of the people of the Book and all the rejecters in general.³ Specific reference to the people of the book of the Jews and the Christians and the attitude of the believers towards them is observed in the Qur'ān in Sūrah 5:57:

O you who believe! Do not take those who take your religion for mockery among those who received the Book before you or the rejecters as awliyā'.

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 28, pp.37-8.
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 18, pp.50-1.
 3. Ibid., vol.9, part 18, p.52.

Al-Ṭabarī explains the āyah as a command to the believers in God and His Messenger Muḥammad not to take those Jews and Christians who took their religion for mockery, as supporters and assistants (anṣār), as brothers (ikhwān) and as allies (ḥulafā').¹ Al-Ṭabarī adds that these used to mock the religion of the believers by professing their faith by tongue and denying it in their hearts. When they come together with their peers they say they are of the same religion as their peers and that they were only mocking the believers. Al-Ṭabarī quotes Ibn ^cAbbās who interprets the term awliyā' as a reference to the believers commanding them not to take those who mock the religion of God from amongst the Jews as friends nor as allies, nor should they keep their league with them nor trust them.² The

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 6, p.187.

2. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 6, p.187. In early Islamic practice a non-Arab, on becoming a Muslim, was attached to a tribe as a client mawlā, and gained, thus, the protection of the tribe. This type of walā' put the non-Arab in an inferior position to the tribe.

Cont'd:...

term kuffār in the āyah refers to the idolaters.¹ Ibn ^cAbbās considers the āyah as a general reference to the people of the Book, the idolaters and to all rejecters and that the believers ought not to take them as awliyā'.² Al-Ṭabarī also quotes Ibn Mas^cūd's explanation of the āyah as a general reference to all adolaters and all the people of the Book, considering reference to the particular as reference to the general.³

Al-Qurtubī considers this āyah as a reference to the believers to break off their league of friendship and protection (al-muwālāt) with the Jews and Christians. He explains further that

Cont'd: A group of non-Arabs when entering a relationship of walā' with a Muslim tribe had the same status but was called halīf (confederate). Later the Qur'ān forbade the relation of walā' and muwālāt between Muslims and non-Muslims but allowed a relation of ḥilf or mithāq between them (5:57 - 8:72).

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 6, p.187.
2. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 6, p.187.
3. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 6, p.188.

Muslims who assist these two parties against the believers should be considered in the same light as the enemies.¹

This attitude of the Qur'ān can be traced with reference to the Jews and Christians only in Sūrah 5:51.

O you who believe! Do not take the Jews and Christians as awliyā' (friends and protectors): they are awliyā' of each other. And he amongst you who takes them as such (yatawallā-hum) is but of them.

In this āyah the reference, according to al-Ṭabarī, is to the general command of God to all believers not to take Jews or Christians as Anṣār (assistants and defenders and protectors) nor as hulafā' (allies).²

If we remember the reciprocal nature of the pre-Islamic walā' relationship that still existed in Arabia at the time of the revelation of the

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 6, pp.216-7.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 6, pp.177-8.

Qur'ān, these āyat will become clearer. The walā' relationship between a Muslim and a non-Muslim was significant in two respects. If the non-Muslim was the person with authority in the relationship, he would be able to exercise a hostile attitude towards the practice of the Muslim. This was particularly the case in early Islam and explains why such men as Abū Bakr spent so much money freeing Muslim slaves by purchasing them. As a result of the purchase the Muslim freed slave came into a walā' relationship with the Muslim. This walā' relationship could work the other way, i.e. non-Muslims could be in a subservient walā' relationship with Muslims. An example of this is the subservient relationship between the Jewish tribes in Madīnah and the Arab tribes. When the Arab tribes became Muslims, that walā' relationship still necessitated them to give protection to the Jews. Since they would thereby be protecting opponents of Islam against their fellow Muslims, it was necessary that this time of relationship be removed from the Islamic ummah.

The Qur'ān prohibits relationships of walā' between believers and their kin, should the latter be among the unbelievers. In Sūrah 9:23 we are

told:

O you who believe! Do not take your fathers and your brothers as awliyā' if they love rejection above faith, and if any of you do so (yatawallā-hum), they are the transgressors.

Al-Ṭabarī considers the term awliyā' to mean friends and protectors. Fathers and brothers ought not to be taken by the believers as such if these prefer to remain as rejecters. Believers should not take their kin as awliyā' if they prefer to stay back in Makkah and not to emigrate to Madīnah and disobey the command of God for emigration.¹ Al-Qurtubī mentions that

this āyah is clearly addressed to all believers without exception.²

He refers to the view that this āyah is revealed to encourage the emigration of the believers to Madīnah, so that they would not

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, p.69.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.93.

remain in the land of the unbelievers. The address was made to all believers who were in Makkah or other places in the Arab lands. They are told not to take (yua'llū) as awliyā' their parents and brothers, and not to follow their example by remaining in their homes in the land of disbelief.¹ Al-Qurtubī defines the relationship of muwālāt in this āyah in terms of obedience and affiliation, and says that God has denied this muwālāt between intimate kin to show that true nearness is the nearness of religion and not of blood.² He interprets the term yatawallā-hum in this āyah as a recommendation to the believers not to take the idolaters as awliyā' otherwise they would be disbelievers like them, satisfied with disbelief.³ But he adds that being good to one's parents and giving donations to them are actions exempted from the command.⁴ In this last remark al-Qurtubī refers to Sūrah 31:14-15, which reads:

And We have enjoined on man (to be good)

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.94.
 2. Ibid., vol.4, part 8, p.94.
 3. Ibid., vol.4, part 8, p.94.
 4. Ibid., vol.4, part 8, p.94.

to his parents... But if they strive to make you join in worship with Me things of which you have no knowledge, then do not obey them but bear them company with what is right and with consideration, and follow the way of those who turn to Me.

Ibn Kathīr mentions that this āyah means that believers should not take their parents nor their children in terms of al-muwālāt if they choose disbelief to faith.¹

In this way we can observe that the entities of both believers and disbelievers are defined and that the two are clearly separated from each other, their attitude towards each other also being well defined in terms of belief or disbelief in the Islamic Message. The attitude of the believers towards the disbelievers is further qualified in Sūrah 60:7-8:

God does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you for (your) faith, nor drive you out of your homes,

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.342.

from dealing kindly and justly with them: For God loves those who are just. But God forbids you, with regard to those who fight for you for (your) faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, for turning to them for tawallī. It is such as turn to them for tawallī that do wrong.

Al-Tabarī explains this passage in the following manner:

God does not forbid you to be kind to those who follow all creeds and all religions but who did not fight you for your faith, to establish relations with them and be good and charitable to them. God Almighty made a general reference in this āyah to all who did not fight you nor have driven you out of your homes without any exception.¹

Al-Tabarī explains the āyah here as a command to the believers not to take the rejecters as

1. Al-Tabarī, vol.28-30, part 28, p.43.

awliyā' for they have fought against them and driven them out of their homes.' Al-Qurtubī considers the first part of this passage as permission for the believers to establish relations with those of the disbelievers who do not make enemies with them and do not fight against them.² He mentions that this āyah refers particularly to the tribe of Khuzā^cah who made a pact of non-aggression with the Prophet not to fight against him nor assist others against him. God has decreed kindness to them, fulfilling the promises with them and being charitable to them by way of establishing relations with them.³ Al-Qurtubī explains the second part of the passage as a reference to the idolaters of Makkah, and those who take them as awliyā'.⁴ Ibn Kathīr mentions that God does not forbid the believers to be good to those disbelievers who do not take up arms against them for their faith nor help to drive them out of their homes. God, he adds, forbids the believers to take those who have

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 28, p.44.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 18, p.59.

3. Ibid., vol.9, part 18, p.59.

4. Ibid., vol.9, part 18, p.60.

fought against them or driven them out of their homes or helped in this, as friends and protectors, but exhorts them rather to make enemies with them.¹

In this way the attitude of the disbelievers vis-a-vis the believers defines the latter's attitude towards them in terms of hostility or peace. Al-Māwardī, asserts in this respect

that one of the rights of God with regards to the believers is that they ought not be inclined favourably to disbelievers even though they may be close relatives, for the right of God is more binding and also defending His religion is more important.²

A more contemporary Islamic jurist concludes from this attitude that God forbids the believers to take the unbelievers as awliyā', and that al-muwālāt or walā' is confined exclusively to

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, pp.349-50.

2. Al-Māwardī, al-Ahkam, op. cit., p.47.

Muslims.¹ In this way he defines the relationship as being permissible only among Muslims and considers relations with the unbelievers as impermissible, considering that unity of religion should determine the attitude of the believers towards the unbelievers.

Abū Fakhr al-Rāzī explains al-muwālāt between the Muslims and the unbelievers as a threefold model:

- (i) If al-muwālāt obliges the condition to accept the rejection of the rejecter and this is unlawful, for accepting rejection is rejection;
- (ii) that the believers should be on good terms with the unbelievers in this worldly life, this not being forbidden; and
- (iii) there is a middle way between the first two categories, which means to rely on the unbelievers, support them and assist them, believing that one's own religion is unauthentic.

1. ^cAbd al-Wahāb Khallāf, al-Siyāsah al-Shar^c iyyah, Dār al-Ansār, al-Qahīrah, 1977, p.64.

This latter attitude is forbidden, for al-muwālāt in this case leads to the approval of their way and to the acceptance of their religion. This leads to dissension from Islam.¹

The word walī is frequently rendered by translators of the Qur'ān as "friend". In many ways this translation is harmless enough, but it fails to convey the implications of interdependence. It fails to take account of the pre-Islamic understanding of the term that would have been apparent to those who heard the Qur'ān at the time of its revelation. The Qur'ānic concept of walā' extends this term from tribe, clan or family to the Islamic ummah. It is only within the ummah that the walā' relationship can exist with God, in a relation of subservience by man and with individual Muslims. This concept of Islamic walā' is developed into a more general concept of interdependence between the individual members of the ummah that is exclusively Islamic. As has been noted, this idea of walā' does not stop Muslims

1. Muḥammad Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Tafsīr Fakhr al-Rāzī, al-Matba^cah al-^cArabiyyah, 1324 H., al-Qahīrah, vol.8, pp.130-2.

from being "friends" with non-Muslims, but not in any sense can Muslims be awliyā' of non-Muslims! The relationship between Muslims is taken a step further by the concept of ukhūwah to be discussed next.

B: THE RELATIONSHIP OF UKHŪWAH

Ukhūwah or brotherhood has a very important role to play in the relationship of the members of the Islamic ummah with each other. Before examining this relationship, as it is portrayed in the Qur'ān, it is necessary to examine the meaning of the word and its derivatives in Arabic.

The term akh or akhū refers to 'brother' in the language, in terms of nasab, which means lineage, descent, kinship, relation.² The plural

1. ^cAbd al-Jabbār asserts that the relationship of walā' is exclusively restricted to Muslims, and that a mu'min cannot be a walī to a kāfir, nor can a kāfir be a mawlā to a mu'min. (Al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, p.148).

Cont'd:...

form of akh is ukhūwah, ikhwah or ikhwān.¹ The term akh in the singular can also be used in reference to sāhib (companion and adherent, 'mulāzim').² The term akh denotes friendship, especially in the plural form, ikhwān.³ Ikhwān refers to brothers by birth.⁴ Ibn Manzūr makes a lexical distinction between the plural forms ikhwah and ikhwān. The term ikhwān, according to him, refers to brothers in relation to the father, i.e. blood relation, while ikhwah refers to brothers not born to the same and one father, i.e., no blood relations between them, e.g. friends.⁵ For this explanation he quotes the Qur'ān,

Cont'd: 2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.20; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.32; Wehr, p.960.

1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.19; Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Rāzī, Mukhtār al-Ṣihāh, Dār al-Kitāb al-^CArabī, Bayrūt, 1967, p.8.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, pp.20, 22; Lane, Book 1, part 1, pp.32-3; Wehr, p.865.

3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.20; al-Rāzī, op. cit., p.8; Lane, Book 1, part 1, pp.32-3.

4. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.20; al-Rāzī, p.8.

5. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.21.

The believers are but brethren (ikhwah)

referring to the absence of blood relation, while,

Or the houses of your brothers (ikhwān-
i-kum),

refers to blood relationship.¹ In this way Ibn Manzūr explains that the terms ikhwah and ikhwān refer to friends and non-friends.² The verb of the noun akh is ākhā and the verbal noun is mu'ākhāt and ta'ākhī, both meaning 'to take as a brother'.³

The term ākhā can mean allafa (to unite, to join, to make intimate).⁴ When the term ukhūwah does not relate to birth, it means conformity or similarity, combination, agreement and unison in action.⁵

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1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.21.
 2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.21.
 3. Ibid., vol.14, p.22; al-Rāzī, p.8; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.32; Wehr, p.9.
 4. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.22; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.32; Wehr, p.23.
 5. Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.34.

As we have seen the term can imply in Arabic some form of relationship which involves the mutual caring implied in the word "brother", without that relationship being a blood relationship. The term mu'ākhāt was used in the pre-Islamic age to denote mukhālahah, or support and assistance between individuals and tribes.¹ Arab society was traditionally a society of sharing and mixing (mujtama^c khalīt). The term khalīt refers to people who share affairs among themselves.² During the Jāhiliyyah period there existed a relationship between tribesmen by which neighbours helped and assisted one another, and the poor were helped by the rich sharing their wealth.³ This custom of sharing of wealth by the rich with the poor was called khalīt, from khalat (to mix). Such sharing by means of helping and assisting does not demand reward in return, but should stem from true generosity.⁴ In this way, it can be seen that pre-Islamic society had used

1. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.4, p.365; also vol.5, p.86.

2. Ibid., vol.4, p.365.

3. Ibid., vol.5, p.85.

4. Ibid., vol.5, p.86.

mu'ākhāt as a term which denoted the treating of a fellow Arab in much the same way as a brother should be treated. However, there had not developed any institutional form for this relationship in pre-Islamic Arabia.

We learn of an Islamic mu'ākhāt or an Islamic institution of brotherhood from historians and biographers of the Prophet. There is some dispute as to whether this institution was first introduced in Makkah or Madīnah. It is claimed by some writers that Muhammad introduced this "brothering" of Muslims in Makkah.¹ If this is so, this was more concerned with religious brotherhood, though even at this stage the political implications should not be discounted. The arrangement seems to have been that one individual Muslim was made the brother of another individual Muslim. We are given lists of names of those who were brothered with each other.

However, it is possible that the alleged "brothering" in Makkah, may not have in fact taken

1. Muhammad Ibn Ḥabīb al-Baghdādī, Kitāb al-Muḥabbar, Hyderabad,

place. It may have been invented to detract from ^cAlī's position in Madīnah as portrayed by the Shī^cah. Whether the Makkan "brothering" did or did not take place, it is the Madīnah "brothering" that has enormous implications for the Islamic ummah.

When Muhammad came to Madīnah, his own position was clear and strong. He was in no way in an inferior status to anybody in Madīnah. This was true for him but the position of the Muhājirīn who had come to escape Makkan persecution was somewhat different. To gain protection - something very necessary in the Arab environment of the time - would have ordinarily meant them entering into some form of relationship with a Madīnan or the Madīnans which would have put them in an inferior position. We have already seen the possibility of inferiority in the pre-Islamic walā' system. A similar kind of inferiority would also have been involved in the kind ḥilf and jiwār relationship that the Muhājirīn might have entered.

It is probable that Muhammad introduced the mu'ākhāt system of brothering individual mahājir

with a Muslim member of the Ansār in order to overcome this problem. In this way a Makkan Muslim became the brother of a Madīnan Muslim on the basis of equality.¹ Their Islamic faith and this institution made them not only brothers in religion but also provided them with a relationship that was equivalent to the ordinary blood relationship. Each was responsible for and to the other. In times of hardship they were to look after each other and importantly each other's dependents. At this stage, they even had rights of inheritance normally associated with blood relationship.

Eventually this close relationship was to give way to normal family ties. However, this modification of the mu'ākhāt system took place when it was clear that Islam and the Islamic ummah were about to take control of the Arabian peninsula. Although the Qur'ānic usage of "brother" seems to be more religious and also to

1. Ibn Hishām, pp.80-1; Muḥammad Ibn Saad, Biographien, Band 1, Theil 1, E.S. Brill, Leiden, 1905, p.1; al-Balādhurī, op. cit., vol.1, pp.270-1; al-Baghdādī, op. cit.

extend the relationship to all Muslims, it should always be borne in mind when examining the term that for the early Islamic ummah the mu'ākhāt relationship was very political.

Ikhwah in the Qur'ān:

As the concept of brotherhood is expressed in the Qur'ān, it seems that men are in a state of enmity when they are not Muslims. When they enter Islam they become brothers. This move from one state to the other, and the contrast between the two states, is expressed in the Qur'ānic text. In Sūrah 3:103 we read:

And remember God's favour on you; for you were enemies, and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became brethren (ikhwān).

Al-Ṭabarī explains the section of the āyah 'you were enemies', as reminding the believers of their state before entering Islam, i.e. human beings killing each other and not obeying God or

His Messenger.¹ He quotes al-Rabi^c's explanation:

you were enemies killing one another, your strongest suppressing your weakest, and that the enmity here is an enmity of wars which were waged between the al-Aws and al-Khazraj tribes in the times of the Jahiliyyah (the state of Ignorance) before Islam. The war had lasted for one hundred and twenty years. The two contesting parties were brothers by birth belonging to the same father and mother.²

Al-Qurtubi gives the following explanation of the reference, 'you were enemies':

the believers were enemies before the advent of Islam and men were in a state of dissension.³

He adds that particular reference is made to

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1. Al-Tabari, vol.3-4, part 4, p.22.
 2. Ibid., vol.3-4, part 4, pp.22-3.
 3. Al-Qurtubi, vol.2, part 4, p.164.

al-Aws and al-Khazraj, but that this particular reference should be generalised.¹ Ibn Kathīr offers a similar interpretation to al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurtubī in that the reference in this āyah is made to al-Aws and al-Khazraj between which tribes there were many wars and constant hostility in the Jahīliyyah.²

The Islamic ummah, too, had its political contractual basis. As we noted in the discussion on the ummah, Muḥammad made a treaty which provided the Islamic ummah in Madīnah with a political being. That, of course, was a contract agreed by Muslims on the one hand and non-Muslims on the other. There was too the Islamic contract between Muslim Makkan and Muslim Madīnan already discussed in the institution of mu^cākḥāt. This brotherhood is extended to a religio-political brotherhood of all Muslims.

It is interesting comparing this state of war to the state of belligerence advocated by Thomas Hobbes in his treatise of the Leviathan. Hobbes

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.164.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.389.

considers that men in a pre-civil state are naturally in a state of war.¹ The Leviathan, however, envisages men coming together in a state of peace as the result of a social contract affected under their free will. The ummah is, by contrast, God oriented and the socio-political gathering of Muslims is metaphysical in its origin and orientation. This concept of conciliation of the hearts of Muslims and their brotherly feelings is expressed in the second section of the passage above,

and He joined your hearts in love so that by His grace you became brethren.

The Arabic term allaf means

to join, unite, to make intimate, combine, to put together, to harmonize with, to be on familiar terms.²

Al-Tabarī explains this term in this passage

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1. Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, Everyman's Library, London, 1914, Chapter 1.
 2. Lane, Book 1, part 1, pp.79-80; Wehr, p.23.

as

reaching an agreement and being in unison through Islam.¹

He considers that feelings of enmity should be transformed among those who have become believers through Islam, by the favour of God to attitudes of conciliation and harmony.² Al-Qurtubī takes a similar stand, explaining that God has commanded the believers to be mindful of God's favour and its greatest expression, namely Islam and to follow the Prophet Muḥammad. It is because of Islam, al-Qurtubī elaborates, that enmity and dissension should have disappeared, and that these have been replaced by love and reconciliation.³

Ibn Kathīr explains the term allaf as a reference to the relation of unity and love brought upon the believers by Islam.⁴ He explains

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.22.
 2. Ibid., vol.3-4, part 4, p.22.
 3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.164.
 4. Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.389.

further that this is also a reference to dissension and disunity among al-Anṣār before entering Islam, for the Prophet had said to them:

O you al-Anṣār! did I not find you straying away before - then God guided you through me; you were disunited and God united you through me, and you were poor and God made you rich through me.¹

A state of ilfah, reconciliation in love between believers, is brought about, in this way, by entering Islam. Thus we can perhaps assume that man moves from a state of enmity to a state of love and unity upon entering Islam. While the former state of man is one of material enmity and belligerence, as implied by the writings of the three major exegetes, the latter state, or that of Islam in its ideal form, is a state of conciliation and unity. The second part of āyah 103, Sūrah 3 reveals the nature of the relationship among believers in terms of 'brethren in Islam':

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.389.

And you became brethren (ikhwān).

The term ikhwān, in this instance, defines the relationship between men in a state of Islam. Particular reference is made to those believers who were enemies before entering Islam. Al-Ṭabarī explains the origin, cause and nature of the establishment of brotherly relations among believers,

and God has united and reconciled your hearts through Islam, and made you (ikhwān) brothers to each other, and related you to one another by the intimate reconciliation of Islam, and your collective agreement concerning it.¹

Al-Ṭabarī quotes Qutādah's explanation of the āyah as meaning that

God has brought Islam and made you brothers, and has united you by it.²

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.22.

2. Ibid., vol.3-4, part 4, p.22.

Al-Nīsābūrī explains that, before Islam, the believers were enemies, hating and fighting each other in prolonged wars, but then God reconciled their hearts with the blessing of Islam, so they became brothers in God, merciful among themselves and giving council to one another. For whoever is interested in the earthly life is not void of enmity, as for him who looks at others through what is good, he would not make enemies with anyone for he is aware of the secret of God in His Plan.¹

Al-Nīsābūrī speaks further of the unifying factor among the believers:

this man is more firm through the love of the fellowship of God, his companions in religion, and his friends in seeking certainty, than the love of a father for his own son. In this way the believers

1. Al-Nīsābūrī (in Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī), vol.3-4, part 4, p.29.

became as close relatives and brothers, even more, they became one body and one soul.¹

Al-Qurtubī explains the term ikhwān in this expression as meaning

the plural of akh, which is used to refer to one who follows the religion of his brother, i.e. who strives for it.²

He adds,

and the meaning of the āyah 'and you became by His favour brethren (ikhwān)' is that you became by the blessing of Islam brothers in religion.³

The term ikhwān in this āyah is considered by Ibn Kathīr to imply

the enmity and wars of al-Aws and al-

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1. Al-Nīsābūrī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.29.
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.164.
 3. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.164.

Khazraj. When God sent Islam those from these two tribes who entered Islam became brothers, loving each other by the grace of God, consistently bound in God, and co-operating to do righteous deeds and be pious.¹

Tafsīr al-Jalālayn interprets the term ikhwān here as

brothers in religion and in wilāyah (friendship and patronage).²

The features of this Islamic brotherhood can be summed up as belief in one God, unity of goal and path, as well as unity and harmony of the hearts of its members. Another feature of this brotherhood is love and co-operation between its members 'the Muslims in religion'. These characteristics lead to the community of Muslims striving against enmical feelings towards one another and to their having no hostile attitude

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.389.

2. Al-Jalālayn, p.84. ^cAbd al-Jabbār gives a similar interpretation (al-Mughnī, pp.130-40).

towards each other.

The concept of brotherhood among believers can be further observed in the various passages of the Qur'ān. For example in Sūrah 9:11 we are told:

But if they repent and establish prayers and pay al-Zakāt then they are your brethren in religion (ikhwāna-kum fī al-dīn).

In this āyah the idolaters (al-mushrikīn) are referred to.¹ Al-Ṭabarī explains the term ikhwān as implying

those who were idolaters whom God had commanded the believers to fight against. If they choose to cease rejecting the faith, from associating objects with God, and turn to belief in God and His Messenger, obey God, establish the prescribed prayers and perform them in a proper way, paying the prescribed Zakāt to whoever it is due, then they

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, p.61.

become your brethren in religion. The religion that God has commanded you to take is Islam.¹

Al-Ṭabarī quotes Qutādah's opinion that this āyah calls polytheists or idolaters to leave the worship of al-Lāt and al-^CUzzah as idols and to testify that there is no God but God, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

Both al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurtubī give a similar explanation of the usage of the term ikhwān in this āyah. Al-Qurtubī writes,

(if they repent) that is from al-shirk (idolatry) and abide by al-shar^C, then they are your brothers, meaning they are your brothers in religion.²

Ibn Kathīr offers a similar interpretation;
if they give up the idols and their

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, pp.61-2.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.81.

worship, establish regular prayers and pay al-Zakāt then they are your brothers.¹

Ibn Jazzī explains that those who repent of their rejection (al-kufr) and become believers, become brothers to the believers.² Whether the reference in this āyah denotes the rejecters or the idolaters, the idea of becoming brothers upon entering Islam is one and the same in the opinions of the exegetes.³

Further evidence of this attitude in the Qur'ānic text can be observed in Sūrah 33:5. The idea of brotherhood in religion with reference to orphans also appears in Sūrah 2:220:

They ask you concerning orphans. Say:
"The best thing to do is what is for
their good; if you mix (their affairs)
with yours, they are your brothers
(ikhwān-akum).

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.338.

2. Ibn Jazzī, part 2, p.71.

The believers are exhorted in this āyah to consider orphans as their brothers, for the practice was, at the time of the Prophet, not to mix their food with the believers' food.¹ Al-Qurtubī interprets the reference in this āyah as being to the practice of the guardians of orphans not to eat the same food as the orphans for fear of mixing unjustly with the wealth of the orphans. Command here is given to do away with this practice and to take orphans as brothers, inviting them to share the food of the guardians.² One might add that this gesture implies both permission for the guardian to share in the orphans' food and also permission for the orphans to mix with the guardians as equal brothers. Ibn Jazzī gives a similar interpretation.³

Cont'd: 3. Similar interpretation is also given by al-Jalālayn, p.348; also by Ibn ^cAbbās, quoted by Abū Tahir al-Shāfi^cī al-Fīrūzābādī in Tanwīr al-Miqiās min Tafsīr Ibn ^cAbbās, op. cit., p.145.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, pp.216-19.
2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 3, pp.62-6.
3. Ibn Jazzī, part 1, p.79.

In Sūrah 49:10 the Muslims are defined within the context of brotherhood:

The believers are but brethren (ikhwah).

In other words, the relationships among believers renders them as one single entity. Qur'ānic exegetes attribute various shades of socio-political connotations to this āyah, but all retain the original meaning of the term. Al-Qurtubī, for example, writes:

'The believers are but brethren' referring to brothers in religion (al-dīn) and sanctity (al-ḥurmah) not in lineage (nasab). For it is said that the brotherhood of religion is firmer than the brotherhood of lineage or kinship, for the brotherhood of lineage (nasab) is disrupted by violation of religion, and the brotherhood of religion is not disrupted by violation of lineage.'

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, pp.322-3. Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabāṭabāī refers to this ukhūwah as 'brotherhood in religion', al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān, Mu'assasat al-A^Clamī, Bayrūt 1973, vol.18, pp.316-17.

Al-Tabarī explains the term ikhwah in this āyah as a reference to the relationship between the believers as brothers in religion.¹

Ibn Jazzī explains ikhwah as a general term that encompasses all believers. He writes,

all believers are brothers in religion.²

Similar meaning is offered by Ibn ^cAbbās, quoted by al-Fīrūzābādī.³ More recent Islamic jurists consider the term ikhwah in this āyah as a reference to a more comprehensive connotation comprising all Muslims at every time and every place.⁴ It creates 'a universal unity firm in its foundations'.⁵ Mahmūd Shaltūt writes:

1. Al-Tabarī, vol.24-27, part 26, p.82.

2. Ibn Jazzī, vol.4, p.211.

3. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.409.

4. Muhammad al-Ghazālī, Khuluq al-Muslim,
op. cit., pp.165-73.

5. Ibid., p.166.

The religious brotherhood is the basic thing, and brotherhood is the label of the virtuous human relationship since it is the means to the prominent personality of the believers.¹

Al-Bughā sees the brotherhood of Muslims as the source of unity among all Muslims. This universal unity is not limited to past, present or future, nor is it limited to race, colour, class or regionalism; this is 'the brotherhood of faith'.² He defines the brotherhood of faith as the sharing of an unshakeable belief, pure feelings, belief in one system of life and as co-operation for mutual interests. This to be compared and contrasted with a blood relationship which is a physical relationship only.³ The writer explains further,

and social solidarity is but one of the prerequisites of brotherhood, but it is

1. Shaltūt, p.241.

2. Al-Bughā, p.425.

3. Ibid., p.427.

the most prominent of them, and that is the feeling of responsibility shared by all, and every one of the believers is a bearer of responsibility for his brother; he cares for himself as well as caring for the others. This principle is one of the progressive laws of human society.¹

Another Islamic political theorist, Khallāf, considers the term ikhwah in this passage to be synonymous with 'equality'.² Another Islamic writer, however, rejects the view that the term ikhwah in this passage denotes any arbitrary obligation on Muslims. He views the reference rather as a moral invitation dependent on sound understanding and reasonable judgement.³ Another opinion is that this term refers to 'a fixed time reality', and that this type of relationship ought

1. Al-Bughā, p.347.

2. A.W. Khallāf, op. cit., p.20.

3. ^cAdnān Zarzūr, al-Akhlāq wa al-Nizām al-Ijtimā^cī fī al-Qur'ān, op. cit., p.66.

to be implemented in all actions of the Muslims.¹ Another more recent interpreter of the Qur'ān explains the term ikhwah in this āyah as

the enforcement of the Muslim brotherhood is the greatest ideal of Islam.²

The idea of ukhūwah in Sūrah 49:10 refers to the

consensus of the ummah to co-operate, to support one another, to social care and solidarity (al-takāful al-ijtimā'ī). It is expressed as the rendering of help and assistance to those who are in need, to protect the weak, and help those who are wronged. It implies the abolition of poverty and need. It reflects and necessitates love and organic solidarity. This brotherhood means close relations and interactions

1. al-Durainī, op. cit., p.226.

2. Yūsuf 'Alī, The Holy Qur'ān, op. cit., p.1405.

between the believers based on love and altruism. It refers to the bond that defines the relations between the Muslims within the family and within the ummah as a whole.¹

These interpretations of the Islamic brotherhood of ummah are clearly ideal. The Qur'ān is well aware that Muslims will not always live up to these ideals and lays down methods of bringing about reconciliation when the ideal is not adhered to.

The second part of the āyah 10 of Sūrah 49 reads:

So make peace and reconciliation between your two brothers.

This āyah is related to the preceding āyah,

1. ^cAbd Allāh ^cIlwān, al-Takāful al-Ijtimā^ci fī al-Islām, op. cit., pp.11-12.

namely Sūrah 49:9, which reads:

If two parties among the believers fall into dispute, then make peace and reconciliation between them, but if one of them transgresses against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the command of God. If it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair, for God loves those who are fair and just.

Al-Qurtubī explains that here particular reference is made to the tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj and that, although the term akhawaikum is in the dual form, it nevertheless denotes the plural-general.¹ Al-Qurtubī comments that injustice and transgression do not extinguish belief, explaining:

In this āyah and the one before it there is evidence that injustice or

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, p.323.

transgression does not extinguish belief or faith, for God has named them 'brother believers' even though they were unjust, or transgressors.¹

He quotes al-Hārith al-A^Cwar's comment:

^CAlī Ibn Abī Tālib, may God be pleased with him, was asked, for he was the example of the leader, about fighting against the transgressors of the people of the battle of al-Jamal and the battle of Siffīn: "Are they idolaters?" He said: "No, they were scared away from idolatry". It was said: "Are they hypocrites?" He said: "No, for hypocrites seldom mention God". He was asked: "Then what are they?" He said: "Our brothers transgressed against us".²

This kind of reasoning by al-Qurtubī can perhaps be compared with the view of al-Khawārij

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, p.323.

2. Ibid., vol.8, part 16, pp.323-4.

who went to the extent of advocating ex-communication of any believers who committed sins against the community.¹ The attitude of the Qur'ān towards transgression, although a punitive one, does not allow ex-communication from the ummah and advocates that the state of brotherhood be maintained. The grounds for ex-communication from the ummah is encountered where there is a splitting up of religion, as is evident in Sūrah 6:159:

As for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you have no part in them in the least: their affair is with God: He will tell them (on the Day of Judgement) of all that they did.

Al-Qurtubī explains this āyah as a reference to those who leave their religion and break away from it. He adds that it refers to those who have strayed away from the ummah so that God has ordained that the Prophet and the believers are free of them.² Al-Tabarī explains that this āyah

1. Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., Ch.5.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 7, pp.149-50.

refers to whoever strays away from the people of the ummah; such a person is a mufāriq (leaver, departer). He adds that the āyah refers, in particular, to whoever has become a Jew, a Christian, a Magus, a polytheist, an idolater or an innovator of religion: the Prophet is free from all these.¹

Al-Ṭabarī elaborates on the meaning of Sūrah 49:10:

make peace and reconciliation between your two brothers.

He explains further,

God Almighty says to those who believe in Him that the believers are brothers in religion, so they must reconcile any two brothers who happen to enter into a fight, and should make them comply with the rule of God and the rule of the

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.7-8, part 8, pp.78-9.

Prophet (ḥukm). Al-akhawain in this passage refers to any two contesters among the believers, and in the Arabic language the dual may denote the plural.¹

The opinion of Ibn Kathīr is similar to that of al-Qurtubī and al-Ṭabarī:

That he who sins does not secede (yakhruj) from belief (īmān), even though the sin might be great, as was claimed by al-Khawārij, and however many (of the Mu^ctazilah) have followed their example.²

He explains that this āyah means that the brothers-believers should make reconciliation between any of their contesting parties.³

Reconciliation between two contesting parties is enforced by the arbitration of the

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.24-27, part 26, p.82.
 2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, p.211.
 3. Ibid., vol.4, p.212.

Qur'ān.¹ Al-Ghazālī explains this reference:

the rule (al-ḥukm) that makes the believers equals is brotherhood, for brotherhood in God is the element which unites Muslims in the first place, and it is on this that the Prophet has depended in establishing the ummah.²

Another Islamic jurist considers that the unity of Muslims as a brotherhood is maintained and preserved by reconciliation,

reconciliation among the people makes them one close unity.³

The close bond of brotherhood uniting all believers is further strengthened in Sūrah 49:12, where the type and nature of the relationship is further developed:

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1. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.409.
 2. Al-Ghazālī, p.171.
 3. Ṭabbārah, p.219.

O you who believe! avoid suspicion as much as possible, for suspicion in some cases is a sin; and do not spy on each other, and do not backbite against each other. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother (akhīhi)? No, you would hate it.

In this āyah akh refers to both brother by birth and brother in religion. The abhorrent idea of eating the flesh of one's own brother is but an analogy expressing the idea of backbiting. Al-Qurtubī attributes a general reference in this passage to every Muslim who looks for defects in another Muslim, defaming another or indulging in backbiting; in this he would be eating his dead flesh.¹ In this way, explains al-Qurtubī, reference is made to the general concept that every Muslim is the brother of every other Muslim.² Al-Ṭabarī considers that this āyah refers generally to all Muslims as being brethren and

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, pp.334-5.

2. Ibid., vol.8, part 16, p.337.

commands them not to backbite, i.e., speak ill behind each other's back.¹ Ibn Kathīr also explains this āyah as referring to the relations of each Muslim to all others commanding them not to defame one another.² Al-Fīrūzābādī quotes Ibn ʿAbbās's opinion that this āyah refers to any Muslim, being the brother of any other Muslim, and directs him not to find faults with another Muslim.³ Ibn Jazzī considers the āyah as commanding every Muslim not to harm another Muslim, and to reject anything spiteful he hears said of another.⁴ In recent literature the explanation offered of this passage is that such a brotherly attitude between Muslims is practised by avoiding evil-doing to one another, transgression against each other; it is effected by loving each other and having a general agreement to establish religious practice.⁵ Another jurist considers that this āyah commands Muslims

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.24-27, part 26, pp.85-8.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, pp.212-16.

3. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.410.

4. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.60.

5. Al-Ghazālī, pp.170-1.

not to be spiteful against each other and seeks to prevent any form of enmity among them.¹ This idea of brotherhood among Muslims is also reflected in Sūrah 59:10:

And those who came after them say: "Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren (ikhwān-ana) who came before us into faith and do not leave grudge (or rancour) for those who have believed.

In this āyah there is another reference to the religious brotherhood as comprising the Muslim entity. Al-Ṭabarī explains that the term ikhwān in this passage denotes particularly al-Ansār, as the brothers of the second generation of the Emigrants (al-Muhājirīn).² Al-Qurtubī explains the term as a reference to all men who have entered Islam till the Day of Judgement.³ He adds:

1. Ṭabbārah, p.235.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 28, p.30.

3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 18, p.31.

This āyah is an invocation to (the believers) to love the companions of the Prophet.¹

Ibn Kathīr explains the term ikhwān here as a reference to

(Al-Ansār) as the brothers of those who followed their example in believing.²

Ibn Jazzī and Ibn Kathīr give a similar interpretation of the term as denoting the first Muhājir, and the Ansār and the third party of those who entered Islam after them, i.e. those who entered Islam when Makkah was conquered and whoever followed them till the Day of Judgement.³

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 18, p.32. Muḥammad Wajdī considers the term as a reference to the first generation of the believers followed by the second generation of the Emigrants. Al-Muṣḥaf al-Mufassar, Cairo, 1953, p.726.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, p.339.

3. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.110.

Ibn Jazzī thus relies on the interpretation of al-Qurtubī and explains this āyah as having both particular and general reference. Ibn Jazzī compares the term belief (īmān) which occurs in the preceding āyah of the same Sūrah with a 'homeland'.¹ In his view the homeland of belief becomes open to whoever enters Islam, thus automatically becoming a brother of all Muslims.

Al-Ṭabarī explains the āyah:

and do not leave in our hearts rancour
against those who believe,

as a reference to the believers imploring God not to leave rancour in their hearts towards any other believer.²

Al-Qurtubī explains this āyah as imploring the Lord to empty the hearts of the believers from spite and jealousy.³

1. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.110.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 28, p.32.

3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 18, p.33.

The last reference to ukhūwah to be discussed in this section is Sūrah 15:47. This Sūrah gives an open and enriching dimension of the usage of this term. For the sake of clarity of interpretation and understanding, this āyah ought to be cited within the context of the other preceding āyāt. Thus Sūrah 15:45-47 read:

The righteous will be in Gardens and amid fountains: "enter here in peace and security". And We shall remove from their hearts rancour: they will be brothers (ikhwān-an).

The term ikhwān in this passage refers to the righteous (or the pious) who are rewarded with the Garden.¹ It refers to all believers who become brothers in love and in faith.² The term rancour (ghill) means spite, malice and enmity.³ This rancour which has existed between the pious is now

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 14, p.25.

2. Ibn Jazzī, part 2, p.146.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 14, p.25; also al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 10, p.33.

extracted (from them) for ever.¹ It is perhaps not an exaggeration to suggest that, according to this āyah the idea of rancour and enmity has always existed in the hearts of men in their earthly existence, even though they may be believers and pious or righteous.

The two concepts of walā' and ukhūwah, as they effect relations between individuals, are fundamental to any understanding of the relationship of the believers within the Islamic ummah. We saw that the walā' relationship as understood from the Qur'ān, extended the meaning from that of a pre-Islamic relationship of superior and inferior until its meaning, without ever losing the pre-Islamic responsibilities involved in the concept, became closer to friends who were equal in Islam. However, it is the concept of ukhūwah that gives the final interpretation of walā'. Thus the Muslims are members of the Islamic

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 14, p.26; al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 10, pp.33-4; also Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.552.

ummah and the relationship between them should be one of friendship, equality and brotherhood.¹

1. This concept is also reflected in the doctrine of the Shī^cah. ^cAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, pp.135-45.

CHAPTER 3

AUTHORITY IN THE UMMAH

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After the death of the Prophet the political structure of authority within the Islamic umma seems to have developed in an ad hoc manner. The historical sources describe the emergence of Abū Bakr as the leader of the Islamic umma.¹ He designated ^oUmar Ibn al-Khattāb as his successor² and then ^oUmar instituted a council of six (shūrā) to select his successor.³ This was followed by the selection of ^oUthmān by the appointed council of six. The sources go on to describe the revolution against ^oUthmān and his murder. ^oAlī then succeeded in somewhat ambiguous circumstances and was soon engulfed in conflicts with opponents of his authority in the persons of Talḥah al-Zubayr and ^oA'ishah. They were followed by Mu^oāwiyah who eventually succeeded by force and established the Umayyād dynasty.³ The Umayyād

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1. Abū Ja^ofar Muḥammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Ta'riḫ al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1890-1900, Ser.I-4, pp.1815-34.
 2. Ibid., Ser.I-4, pp.2137-47.
 3. Ibid., Ser.I-5, pp.2776-99.

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family then fixed the succession for about ninety years (661-750 A.D.), only to be overthrown by the Abbasids who followed suite fixing the succession until, although still nominal rulers, they were in fact governed by powerful warlords.

At varying points individual rulers, or their followers, have attempted to justify their rule by reference to the religion of Islam: the Qur'ān and statements of the Prophet.

Perhaps the first fully expounded doctrine of authority in the ummah came from the opponents of those who held office. It seems probable that the Shī^cah, supporters of the leadership of ^cAlī and his successors, put forward doctrines about leadership which they termed the imāmah first.¹ The non-Shī^cah response was to elaborate a doctrine that stands on equal grounds with the imāmah. This was the theory of the khilāfah.²

Cont'd: 4. Ibid., Ser.I-6, pp.3066-3134.

5. Ibid., Ser.II-1, pp.5-20.

1. ^cAbd al-Jabbār expounds on the theory of the imāmah in a voluminous manner in al-Mughnī, vol.20, parts 1 and 2.

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At this point it must be noted that the terms imāmah and khilāfah are interchangeable in most of the writings of non-Shī^ci political theory.

Before examining the terms khilāfah and imāmah in the Qur'ānic text and the practice of the Prophet, it seems appropriate to look at the doctrines existing in Islamic political theory and the way the exponents of the doctrine tried to justify these doctrines with reference to the sources of Islam.

The Shī^cah political doctrine is founded on the recognition of some Muslim groups of ^cAlī as the legitimate khalīfah after the death of the Prophet Muhammad.¹ The Shī^cah doctrine is

Cont'd: 2. Ahmad Ibn ^cAbd Allāh al-Qalqashandī deals extensively with the theory of the khilāfah in Ma'āthir al-Anāfah fī Ma^cālim al-Khilāfah, ^cĀlam al-Kutub, 2nd imprint, 1980, volumes 1, 2 and 3.

1. ^cAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, pp.144-97; Shaykh al-Mufīd, Kitāb al-Itshād, Tr. I.K.A. Howard, Balagha Books, London,

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based on the theory of the imāmah which they claim is founded on revelation as well as on reason (‘aql).¹ The Shī‘īs political theorists justify the concept of imāmah by quoting a Hadith ascribed to the Prophet:

Arise ‘Alī, I am content that you should be imām and guide after me.²

The Shī‘ah theory considers ‘Alī Ibn Abī Tālib, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, as an imām and that the term is ascribed also to his progeny.³

Cont'd: 1981, pp.120-27; Sayyid Muḥammad Husayn Tabatabai, Shi‘a, Tr. Sayyid Husayn Nasr, 1971, p.40.

1. Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī, al-Bāb al-Ḥādī ‘Ashar, Tr. W.M. Miller, London, 1928, pp.62-5; also Asaf A.A. Fyze, A Shi'ite Creed, London, 1942, Chapter 1.
2. At Ghadīr Khumm, Mufīd, Kitāb al-Irshād, op. cit., p.125; also Tabatabai, Shi‘a, p.42.
3. ‘Abd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, p.154; Tabatabai, Shi‘a, p.11; al-Mufīd,

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In this way the theory of the imāmah expounded by the Shī^h is kept for the Alids as the family of the Prophet (Ahl al-Bayt). The Shī^h view of the imām gives him a status almost as high as prophethood. He is the leader of religion, the organizer of the Muslims, the righteousness of the earthly world and the glory of the Believers.¹ Some groups of the Shī^h considered ^hAlī as faultless, and this must be seen as the origin of the concept of the infallibility of the imām. ^hAlī al-Ridā² expresses

Cont'd: Kitāb al-Irshād, p.125; also John Alden Williams, Themes of Islamic Civilization, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971, p.322.

1. Al-Imām ^hAlī al-Ridā, Risālah fī Uṣūl al-Dīn wa Furū^hihi ilā al-Khalīfah al-Ma'mūn, M.S. No.1258 (Dār al-Kutub wa-al-Wathā'iq al-Qawmiyyah), quoted in Ahmad Maḥmūd Subḥī, Nazariyyat al-Imāmah, Dār al-Ma^hārif, al-Qāhirah, 1969, p.25.
2. ^hAlī al-Ridā, eighth imām of the Shī^h (765-818) (E.Is., vol.1, p.296).

the view that the imām is guiltless, free of any faults and he alone is endowed with knowledge. The imām, al-Ridā continues, is unique, no-one can be compared to him, no-one can be his equal in knowledge, nor is there any substitute for him; he is endowed especially, by God, with wisdom and is inspired with knowledge.¹ Al-Ridā considers that God has commanded men to obey the imāms, and He has forbidden them to be disobedient to them.² The characteristic feature of the religious bases of the Shī^cah doctrine is founded on three articles of faith. The first is to believe in one God. The second article is to believe in the revelation of the Qur'ān which is uncreated, and thirdly to believe that the imām is especially chosen by God and is the leader to salvation.³

The above views of the Shī^cah correspond to those held by the Ithnā^cashariyyah and

1. ^cAlī al-Ridā, op. cit., p.25.

2. Ibid., p.25.

3. E.Is., op. cit., vol.4, p.351; also Syed Husain Jafri, Origins and Development of Shi'a Islam, Longmans, 2nd. edition, London, 1981, p.290.

Ismā^cīliyyah branches of the Shī^cah. In fact, from the very beginnings of Shī^cism, different groups supported different candidates for the Imāmate from ^cAlī's descendants. One of the earliest groups, the Kaysāniyyah, held that Muḥammad b. al-Hanafīyyah was the Imām and on his death put forward the doctrine of ghaybah, i.e. he was for the time absent from the world and would return as the Mahdī to restore justice to the world. The Zaydiyyah emerged some time later. These supported a revolutionary imām from the house of ^cAlī, who would claim his imāmah by the sword. The split between the Ismā^cīliyyah and the Ithnā^cashariyyah concerned which person should be the imām. Later their doctrines further diverged with the Ismā^cīliyyah advocating a continuous chain of imāms up to the present time, whereas for the Ithnā^cashariyyah, their twelfth imām is in ghaybah, i.e. he is absent from the world and will return to restore justice to the world as al-Mahdī.¹

1. Ibn Khaldūn, al-Muqaddimah, pp.125-7; al-Hillī, al-Bāb al-Hādī ^cAshar, op. cit., Chapter 1; Dwight Donaldson, The Shi^cite Religion, Luzac Company, London, 1933,

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The Zaydiyyah developed a somewhat different political theory. They considered that the texts quoted in support of the assignment of the position of imām to [°]Alī did not refer directly to him. They consider that a mistake could be made in regard to the individual described and that the ummah can legally choose either Abū Bakr or [°]Umar, but assert that [°]Alī had a greater right to the position. This is the doctrine of the imāmah of the less excellent (al-mafdūl). According to the Zaydī doctrine the imām has no right to designate a successor.¹ In this way the Zaydīs are nearest to the Sunnīs' belief. They deny the divine element in [°]Alī and the imāms as was proposed by some Shī[°]ah known as al-ghulāt.²

Cont'd: Chapters 1, 2; Bernard Lewis, The Origins of Ismā[°]īlism, Heffer and Sons, Cambridge, 1940, Chapter 1; also V. Iwonow, A Creed of the Fatimids, Bombay, 1936, pp.41-4.

1. E.Is., op. cit., vol.2, p.474.
2. Ibid., vol.4, p.352; also Ibn Khaldūn discusses this point in al-Muqaddimah, op. cit., p.175.

According to these Shī^cah doctrines, the imāmah is demonstrated through both revelation shar^c and reason caql. They argue that man is in need of leadership and therefore God provided man with this leadership.¹

In most of the writings of Islamic political theorists the term khalīfah is understood to refer to the

title of the supreme head of the muslim community as successor or vice-general of the Prophet.²

The khalīfah is thought by ahl al-sunnah to be a social task and an incumbent duty to have a supreme head of the community.³ The term was used first in Islamic history after the death of the Prophet and Muslims chose Abū Bakr to be the leader.* Abū Bakr refused the title of khalīfah

1. Muḥammad Ibn Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī, Talkhīṣ al-Shāfī, Qumm, 1974, vol.1, p.58.

2. En.Is., op. cit., p.881.

3. Rashīd Ridā, al-Khilāfah aw al-Imāmah al-

Cont'd:...

as a vice-gerent of God and seemed content apparently with the title of khalīfah of the Messenger of God, though he did not actually use it. ^oUmar, upon the death of Abū Bakr, assumed the title amīr al-mu'minīn and this was the practice in the later period until the time of the Umayyads and the Abbasids, when the term was used to denote the supreme head of the ummah. In

Cont'd: ^oUzmā, al-Qāhirah, 1923, p.4.

1. This incident has been mentioned by Alfred von Kremer, The Orient Under the Caliphs, Tr. K. Bukksh, Porcupine Press, Philadelphia, First reprint, 1977, pp. 6-9; William Muir, The Caliphate, Ams Press Inc., New York, 1975, pp. 2-4; Bernard Lewis, Islam, The MacMillan Press Ltd., First reprint, Great Britain, 1979, pp. 2-6; Muhammad ^oAbduh, The Theology of Unity, Tr. I. Musa ^oad and K. Cragg, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, 1966, p. 144; also Henri Laoust, Le Califat dans la Doctrine de Rašīd Riḍā, Beyrouth, 1938, pp. 18-9.

the writings of Ibn Khaldūn, for instance, the term appears to bear this latter meaning.

The anti-Shī^cah elaboration of the political theory of the khilāfah or imāmah takes account of Shī^cah views and seeks to modify or rebut them. Thus nearly all Medieval Islamic political theorists accept the necessity of the imāmah with a few exceptions like the Mu^ctazilah al-Asamm. The tendency, among these writers, is to avoid making it necessary by both reason and revelation. Some of the Mu^ctazilah make it necessary by reason only. However, the general stress on revelation eventually comes to dominate Islamic political thought so that there comes to be a consensus that the imāmah is necessary by revelation.

What is the revelation that these thinkers depend upon in stating that the imāmah is necessary by revelation. In the case of al-Māwardī, he gives no evidence. Later thinkers like Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Khaldūn fail to provide us with evidence of such a revelation. It is the Mu^ctazilah thinker, ^cAbd al-Jabbār (d. 415 H.) who tells us that his two shaykhs - Abū ^cAlī al-Jubbā'ī and Abū Hāshim, the latter's son - give

the evidence of the revelation of the ḥadd punishments which give such evidence.¹ In other words, the evidence is based on Qur'ān 5 : 28:

As for the thief, male and female cut off their hands.

and Qur'ān 24:2:

The fornicatress and the fornicator, flog each of them, a hundred stripes.

Thus, according to ^CAbd al-Jabbār and his teachers, the only revelation that provides a basis for the institution of khilāfah as necessary by revelation are two verses which order that thieves and adulterers should be punished.

Later ^CAbd al-Jabbār finds himself in a somewhat similar predicament over the appointment

1. Abū al-Ḥasan ^CAbd al-Jabbār, Al-Mughnī fī Abwāb al-Tawhīd wa al-^CAdl, op. cit., vol.20, part 1, pp.41, 260.

of Abū Bakr to the khilāfah through the pledge of one and the consent of four. He is concerned to demonstrate that this method of appointment to the institution is based on revelation. He says

... There must be a confirmed revelation (sam^c) with them which requires that he (i.e. Abū Bakr) becomes an imām because it is not possible - and there has already occurred a consensus (ijmā^c) with regard to it - that it could be left to chance. Nor could it be said that it was as a result of the process of ijtihād, because the situation in that respect gave no scope for ijtihād. Therefore there must be a revelation. However, the reporting of that revelation is not necessary because it can be dispensed through consensus (ijmā^c).

1. ^cAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.10, p.260, text corrected according to that reported by Sharif al-Murtada in a Shāfī fī al-Imāmah (Lithograph, Teheran, 1301 H.)

From this we can see the almost impossible situation facing the political commentator who relied on the doctrine of the necessity of institution of the khilāfah by revelation. They have to resort to a "presumed" ijmā^c because they have no report of the revelation and they then declare that this presumed ijmā^c makes the reporting of the revelation unnecessary.

With this tenuous evidence from revelation on ijmā^c, the political theorists then proceed to elaborate a theory of the requirements and duties of the imāmah or khilāfah.

The function of the imāmah is the most important concern of this study. As we have seen from the arguments of necessity for the imāmah through revelation, the office of administering the hadd punishment must come first. This clearly involves knowledge of the sharī^cah and the theorists maintain that the chief role of the Imām is to preserve the sharī^cah. This again involves him in defending the sharī^cah and so overall control of the armed forces is another of his functions. His religious duties also involve leadership of the prayer - a function

which was always coupled with administrative responsibilities in early Islam.¹

The above is, of course, an ideal picture of the function of the imām and it is rarely actually seen to be carried out in practice.

Who was to be the imām? The political theorists laid down a list of ideal qualities for the imām. He had to be just, knowledgeable in the sharī^cah and he had to be from Quraysh. After the early years of the khilāfah, perhaps the only quality that was actually respected was descent from Quraysh.

The duties and qualities of the imām or khalīfah can be seen to reflect an alternative argument to the Shī^cah. In contrast to a Shī^cah infallible imām, we have an ideal Sunnī khalīfah both in terms of duties and qualities.

It is on the question of the actual method of appointment that the theories really part company. The method chosen by the political theorists is the method of ikhtiyar, i.e. choice, and the people that make this choice are what

1. ^cAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, pp.201-43; al-Qalqashandī, al-Khilāfah, vol.1, pp.15-50; al-Māwardī, al-Aḥkām, pp.3-10; Ibn

they call ahl al-ḥall wa-al-^c aqd. They are presumed to be the elite of the Muslim, i.e. the notables, those versed in religious matters and those who are thought to be just. The mechanism of electing the imām is to create groups. The first consists of an elite - a handful of Muslims, maybe five in number (as when Abū Bakr was elected) - endowed with the qualities of justice, the knowledge of who is best for the post, wisdom and right opinion to choose the best. The second group comprises those who are potential imāms. ^cUmar's shūrā, for instance, is a good example of ahl al-ḥall wa-al-^c aqd appointed to choose from among them a member for the imāmah.¹

The second way of appointing the imām is by designation. The future imām, al-Māwardī asserts, can be elected while his predecessor is still in office. This is based on the practice of Abū Bakr's designation of ^cUmar. The imām in office can designate his successor provided that the newly elected imām has the right qualities. Two or more successors can be designated by an imām in office. This represents the practice of later rulers of the Umayyāds and the Abbāsids. Both Rosenthal and Arnold consider that al-

Cont'd: Khaldūn, op. cit., pp.171-2; also Ibn Jama^cah in Tahrīr al-Aḥkām fī Tadbīr Ahl al-Islām, En.Is., vol.4, pp.349-414.

1. ^cAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, Cont'd:..

Māwardī's theory was written to assert the authority of the Abbāsīd khulafā' and to justify the practice of rule at the time.'

The practice of these rulers was in fact a theoretical structure based on a response to a practical situation and is not based in any real way on the Qur'ān; though, of course, references to the Prophet's practice in Madīnah could always be cited. But this would not have involved such a comprehensive framework.

Imām in the Qur'ān:

The term imāmah is derived from the Arabic

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1. Erwin I.J. Rosenthal, Political Thought in Medieval Islam, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1958, p.27; also Thomas Arnold, The Caliphate, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1924, pp.70-2; the power incentive in the writings of the advocates of the khilāfah or imāmah is also discussed by ^cAlī ^cAbd al-Rāziq, al-Islām wa Uṣūl al-Ḥukm, Dar Maktabat al-Hayāt, Bayrūt, 1966.

Cont'd: pp.259-71; al-Māwardī, pp.4-10; also Ibn Khaldūn, p.195.

root a'amm, the hamzah is changed by some to wāw and by others to yā. In this way the root becomes awamm and ayamm.¹ The verb form of the term is amm-ya'imm and can be considered as derived from al-amm meaning purpose, goal, aim.² Thus amm al-qawm means to be the foremost of the people.³ In this way the term imām denotes a person who is followed as a leader.⁴ Imān refers to 'whatever puts things straight'⁵ and denotes also path, way, guide, example, exemplar and leader in prayer.⁶ The plural form of imām is a'immah and ayimmah.⁷

In the Qur'ānic text the term imām, whether in the singular or plural occurs in twelve

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1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.24.
 2. Ibid., vol.12, p.24. Lane, Book 1, part I, p.91. Wehr, 767.
 3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.24. Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.91.
 4. Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, pp.24-5. Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.91.
 5. Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.25.
 6. Ibid., vol.12, p.25.
 7. Ibid., vol.12, pp.24-5.

passages. The Qur'ānic meaning of the term can be studied by examining its references within the context of the passages.

In Sūrah 2:124 we read:

"I will make you an imām for mankind."
He (Ibrāhīm) pleaded: "And also (a'immaḥ)
from my offspring". He said: "But my
promise is not given to evil doers."

In this āyah Ibrāhīm is addressed as an imām in the same way as Dāwūd was addressed in Sūrah 38:25:

"We made you khalīfah".

Al-Ṭabarī explains the meaning of the term imām in Sūrah 2:124 as a reference to Ibrāhīm as a leader to be followed and to be taken as an example. Ibrāhīm is made an exemplar to those who believe - 'he is to follow the way of God

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.529. ^cAbd al-Jabbār considers the term imām in this āyah to refer to the prophethood of Ibrāhīm (al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, p.195).

which God has shown him'.¹ The term imām is confined exclusively in this passage to Ibrāhīm.² He pleads with God to make offspring a'immah and receives the reply:

But My promise (ahd) is not given to evil doers.³

The word ahd means pledge, promise, vow, responsibility, charging, consignment, commitment.⁴ It refers to prophethood.⁵ Al-Qurtubī explains the meaning of imām in this passage with reference to Ibrāhīm as a model, pattern and example to be followed.⁶ Ibrāhīm, al-Qurtubī contends, is an example and a lead for the righteous.⁷ Ibrāhīm is an imām to those who obey God for he was a true

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.529.

2. Ibid., vol.1, p.529.

3. Sūrah 2:124.

4. Ibn Manzūr, vol.3, p.311; al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.259; al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, p.108; Wehr, p.651.

5. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, pp.530, 532.

6. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, p.107.

7. Ibid., vol.1, part 2, p.107.

believer (hanīf-an).¹

In Sūrah 25:74 the term imām is used in the singular to denote the plural:

And make us imām to the pious.

The term imām in this āyah refers to the 'servants of God' mentioned in āyah 63 of the Sūrah 25. Al-Ṭabarī mentions that the interpreters of the Qur'ān are divided in their opinions.² The first group holds the opinion that the term imām in this passage refers to the believers as an example to be followed.³ The second group contends that the believers followed the example of the pious who came before.⁴ In either case the believers are referred to in the plural and as equals in setting good examples for others.⁵ The term imām is used in Sūrah 21:73 to refer to Ibrāhīm, Ishāq and Ya^cqūb, appearing in the plural as a'immah:⁶

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, p.107.
 2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 19, p.53.
 3. Ibid., vol.18-21, part 19,

Cont'd:...

And We bestowed on him, Ishāq and Ya^cqūb, as an additional gift, and We made each of them righteous. We have made them a'immah guiding by our command.

The term a'immah is used in the plural to refer to those who may be taken as a good example, and followed, doing what is good, obeying God and complying with His commands.¹ Al-Ṭabarī explains:

They guide men by the command of God and call men to God and the worship of God.²

In Sūrah 28:5 we read that it was prophesized that some of the Israelites would become a'immah while still suffering at the hands of Pharaoh

Cont'd: 4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 19, p.53.

5. Ibid., vol.18-21, part 19, p.54.

6. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 17, p.49. Al-Qurtubī, vol.6, part 11, p.305.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 17, p.49. Al-Qurtubī, vol.6, part 11, p.305.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 17, p.49. Al-Qurtubī, vol.6, part 11, p.305.

before their Exodus.¹

And We wanted to bestow favour upon those who were depressed in the land and make them a'immah and heirs, and establish them in the earth.

Al-Ṭabarī says the term a'immah in this passage refers to 'ulū al-amr, wulāt (those charged with authority) and kings'.² Reference to some of the children of Israel as a'immah is also made in Sūrah 32:23-24:

And We gave the Book to Mūsā ... and made him guide to the children of Israel. And We made from among them a'immah guiding by Our command.

The term a'immah, in this context, means leaders to what is good. They are to be taken as an example.³ It refers to the leaders of good

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 20, p.29; al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.249.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 20, p.29; al-

among the children of Israel guiding those of the Israelites who accepted (faith)¹ and followed them.

The term imām in the Qur'ān does not only refer to the good example to be followed, but also it means a bad example.²

In Sūrah 28:41 we are told:

And We made them a'immaḥ inviting to the fire, and on the day of judgement they shall not be helped. We made a curse to follow them in this world and on the Day of Judgement they will be among the vile.

A'immaḥ in this passage refers to the bad example of Pharaoh and his soldiers who were guilty of 'rejection and transgression against God'.³ They represent the bad example followed by

Cont'd: Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.249.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 21, p.112; al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 23, p.109.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 21, p.112.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.24.

Cont'd:...

those who reject and are high-handed in the earth.¹
This meaning of the term in the plural is also
observed in Sūrah 9:12:

Therefore fight the a'immah of rejection.

The term a'immah in this āyah refers to the
heads and chiefs of the polytheists of Quraysh in
Makkah.² These are 'the pioneers of disbelief in
God'.³ Al-Ṭabarī quotes Ibn 'Abbās' view that the
term a'immah here refers to all the polytheists
in Makkah (al-Mushrikīn)⁴ who made a pact with the

Cont'd: 3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 20, p.78.

Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.289.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.18-21, part 20, p.78. Al-
Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.289.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-11, part 10, p.87.

3. Ibid., vol.9-11, part 10, p.87.

4. The term mushrikīn is derived from shirk and
ishrāk (the verb is ashrak-yushrik). It means
to associate, to make a partner. Ibn Manzūr,
vol.10, pp.448-50. Lane, Book 1, vol.1,
pp.1541-2. In the Qur'ān it refers to those
who associate something with God, i.e.

Cont'd:...

believers.¹ Specific reference to certain people is also made by al-Ṭabarī quoting the views of some exegetes who consider the term a'immah in this context as a reference to Abū Jahl ibn Hishām, Abū Sufyān ibn Harb.²

The term imām also refers in the Qur'ānic text to a book. In both Sūrah Hūd and Sūrah al-Ahqāf the term imām refers to the Book revealed to Mūsā, i.e. the Tawrāt. In Sūrah 11:17 we read:

And before this was the Book of Mūsā as imām and mercy.

Imām in this āyah refers to the Book of Mūsā as a guide to be followed by the children of Israel.³ In Sūrah 46:12 similar denotations of the term imām as Scriptures occur:

Cont'd: Politheists and idolaters, e.g. idolaters Sūrah 9:3, 7, 17, 36, 113; Jews and Christians Sūrah 3:151.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-11, part 10, p.88.
2. Ibid., vol.9-11, part 10, p.87.
3. Ibid., vol.12-24, part 12, p.18. Al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 9, p.17.

And before it (the Qur'ān) the Book of Mūsā as imām and mercy, and this Book confirms it in the Arabic tongue.

Imām in this context refers to the Tawrāt as a guide (to the children of Israel) to be followed.¹ From this āyah we can infer that the Qur'ān is similarly an imām to be followed.²

A second occurrence of the term imām referring to a book is found in Sūrah 36:12:

And everything We have taken down to account for in a perspicuous book (imām mubīn).

The term imām here refers to the register (al-lawḥ al-maḥfuz) of good and bad deeds done by men in their earthly life, which is preserved as evidence for their reward and punishment on the day of Judgement.³

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.26-28, part 26, p.13. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, p.191.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.25. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.26-28, part 26, p.13; al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 10, p.297;

Cont'd:...

The third such reference is observed in Sūrah
17:71:

The day when We shall call every people
(attended) with their imām.

Al-Ṭabarī points out that the interpreters are of two opinions over this āyah.¹ Mujāhid considers that the term refers to the 'prophet of every people'.² Ibn ʿAbbās considers that it denotes 'whatever (deed) has been done and was taken down'.³ According to a third opinion, imām refers to the revealed Books.⁴ Al-Ṭabarī quotes Yahyā ibn Zaid's interpretation of the term as a reference to 'the Book of every people revealed to them and within it the command of God and according to which they shall have to account':

Cont'd: 3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.22-25, part 22, p. 155 ;

al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 15, p.13.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 15, pp.126-7.

2. Ibid., vol.15-17, part 15, p.126.

3. Ibid., vol.15-17, part 15, p.126.

4. Ibid., vol.15-17, part 15, p.127; also in al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 10, p.297.

Cont'd:...

Al-Ṭabarī's own interpretation of the term as used in this āyah is restricted to whatever men take as a lead to follow in their earthly life.¹

Finally, the term imām also refers to the 'way' or 'path'.² In Sūrah 15:79 we observe this specific denotation:

And they were both on a manifest way
(imām).

According to al-Ṭabarī the term imām here refers to the two cities al-Aikah and Lūt.³ It refers to the people of these two cities who were guided by the messengers into the 'straight and

Cont'd: 5. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 15, p.127;

also in al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 10, p.297.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.15-17, part 15, p.127.

2. Ibid., vol.12-14, part 14, p.43; al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, p.107; Ibn Manzūr, vol.12, p.26; also Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.91.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.12-14, part 14, p.49; also al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 10, p.45.

manifest way', but rejected it.¹ The term here refers to the 'way to be followed when travelling'.²

It is apparent from this examination of the uses of the Qur'ānic term imām that the political theorists have used the term imāmah with substantial Qur'ānic backing. The term imām does have the connotations of a ruler in the Qur'ān.³ Nonetheless, none of the passages cited simply that this kind of rule will be followed after the death of Muhammad. But we ought to observe that there is no injunction in the Qur'ān that the imām concept is the ideal institution that should succeed the Prophet. When both terms khalīfah and imām in the sense of ruler are used in the Qur'ān they are always coupled with Prophethood.⁴ This

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.12-14, part 14, pp.48-49; also al-Qurtubī, vol.5, part 10, p.45.
 2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.12-14, part 14, p.49.
 3. Muhammad Ayubkhan, Friends and Masters, OUP, New York, 1967, p.200; also G.H. Jansen, Militant Islam, Harper and Row, New York, 1979, p.173.

Cont'd:...

makes the Shī^cah interpretation of the imāmah closer to the interpretation of imām.

Khalīfah in the Qur'ān:

The term khalīfah¹ is used in the singular in two passages of the Qur'ān. In the first instance it refers to the creation of men. In Sūrah 2:30 we read:

Your Lord said to the angels: "I will create khalīfah on earth.

Cont'd: 4. Imām and Prophethood' (Ibrāhīm, Sūrah 2:124); khalīfah and Prophethood (Dāwūd, Sūrah 38:25).

1. The term khalīfah is derived from the root khalif. Khalif means 'behind, back, near'. Akhlafa is to make someone stand behind. The term khalafa means to take the place of someone. Istakhlāf refers to appoint someone as one's successor (Ibn Manzūr, vol.9, pp.83-85. Lane, Book 1, part 2, pp.292-7). The Qur'ānic usage of the term and its derivatives refer mainly to this meaning, namely to

Cont'd:...

They said: "Will you place in it one who will act corruptly and shed blood while we celebrate your praise and glorify you.

There is consensus among the leading exegetes that this āyah refers to Ādam, specifically, prior to his creation.¹ I will create jā^cil is derived from the verb ja^cal (to make, to create).²

When interpreting the meaning of khalīfah in this context, al-Ṭabarī claims more than once it refers, in the plural form, to banū Ādam, 'the children of Adam,'³ to Ādam and his children,⁴ or to Ādam by himself.⁵ The term also denotes a

Cont'd: succeed or come after.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, pp.156-8; al-Qurtubī, vol.1, p.263; Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.69; al-Jalalayn, p.8; al-Zamakhsharī, vol. 1 , p. 51 ; al-Baydāwī, vol.1, part 1, p.134.
2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.1, p.111; al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.198; Lane, Book1, part 2, p.430.
3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, pp.156-8.
4. Ibid., vol.1, pp.156-7.
5. Ibid., vol.1, pp.156-7.

succession of generations.' Al-Ṭabarī himself interprets the term khalīfah as 'someone who succeeds another if he takes his place'.² He quotes in support of his view Sūrah 10:14:

Then We made you khalā'if in the earth after them to see how you would behave.

Khalā'if is a plural of khalīfah and so is the term khulafā'.³ The meaning of khalā'if, al-Ṭabarī adds, is:

He has made you their substitute and hence He made you their successors khulafā'.⁴

Al-Ṭabarī cites other opinions. He quotes Ibn Ishāq's interpretation of the term khalīfah as 'settler' and 'dweller' (sākin-^cāmīr), but rejects this view.⁵

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, pp.156-7.
 2. Ibid., vol.1, pp.156-7.
 3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.9, p.84.
 4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 11, p.66.
 5. Ibid., vol.1, pp.156-7.

He also mentions al-^CAbbās' view that the jinns were the first settlers of the earth, then God created Ādam and made him settle in it.¹ He also quotes al-Ḥasan al-Basrī's interpretation of the term khalīfah as meaning

a posterity succeeding one another and these are the children of Ādam who succeeded him.²

In addition, al-Ṭabarī cites the interpretation, attributed to Ibn Mas^Cūd and Ibn ^CAbbās, that the term refers to

the successor who will succeed Me in judgement among my creatures. This khalīfah is Ādam and whoever takes his place in obeying God and judging with justice among His creatures.³

As we can see this interpretation seems to involve an attempt to find a theological

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.156.

2. Ibid., vol.1, p.157.

3. Ibid., vol.1, p.157.

justification for the concept of khilāfah and imāmah. It is certainly not the meaning that has been presented in the earlier interpretations. Though it might be possible to adopt such an interpretation, it seems more likely that the mufassirīn are using this interpretation to justify a political system which has already been adopted in the Islamic ummah.

Thus, in his tafsīr of the Qur'ān, al-Qurtubī expounds his interpretation of the term khalīfah as used in Sūrah 2:30. He considers this āyah (2:30) as

the foundation for the erecting of an imām and khalīfah who is to be heard and obeyed.¹

Giving his reasons for this assumption, he adds:

so that unity can be established and the ruling of the khalīfah can be

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, p.263.

carried out.¹

If we look at some of the other mufassirīn we find varying interpretations. Al-Zamakhsharī suggests the possibility that the āyah refers to Ādam and his progeny as successors of the angels.² This latter suggestion is also mentioned by al-Baydāwī but he does not accept that interpretation.³

The second occurrence of the term khalīfah in the singular is in Sūrah 38:26:

O Dāwūd! We have made you khalīfah in the earth, so judge between men in truth, and do not follow personal inclinations lest they lead you astray from the path of God.

Al-Ṭabarī explains the term khalīfah in this context in the following manner:

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, p.263.
 2. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.1, p.51.
 3. Al-Baydāwī, vol.1-2, part 1, p.134.

We have placed you as a successor (istakhlaf-nāk), O Dāwūd, on earth, after those of our messengers who come before you, as a judge between its people.¹

He interprets khalīfah here as meaning a successor 'to the messengers'. He does not consider it as a reference to God's deputy. Al-Qurtubī, on the other hand, quotes this āyah in support of his argument with regards to Sūrah 2:30.²

Ibn Jazzī offers his own opinion of the term:

God said: 'O Dāwūd' and the khalīfah of Dāwūd is by prophecy and by mulk (temporal kingdom). No one is called the khalīfah of God except a prophet, but as for kings and khulafā', everyone then is a successor of the one before him, and when people call them khalīfah of God it is in disregard of the real meaning.³

1. Al-Tabarī, vol.20-23, part 23, p.97.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, p.264.

3. Ibn Jazzī, vol.3, p.184. But the attitude of Qur'ān towards kings is made clear in Sūrah 27:34 where Balqīs of Saba' says: "Kings, when they enter a country, despoil it, and make the noblest of its people its meanest: thus do they behave".

Al-Zamakhsharī accepts the phrase 'God's khalīfah in this earth' on the grounds that the khalīfah is subject to the authority of God. He writes:

We made you a successor (istakhlafnāk) over the temporal kingdom (al-mulk) in the earth.¹

Al-Baydāwī does not offer any explanation of the term.²

The meaning of succession involved in the root meaning of the word is also found in Sūrah 7:142 and 150. In both instances the reference is to Mūsā asking his brother to deputize for him. In Sūrah 7:142 we read

act for me (ikhluf-nī) among my people.

In Sūrah 7:150 we also read:

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1. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol. 3 , p. 283.
 2. Al-Baydāwī, vol. 3-5, part 5, p.18.
 3. The claim that the Prophet said to ^cAlī: "You are to me as was Hārūn to Mūsā" and use the reference in the above āyah to the term khalīfah as a Qur'ānic evidence for the imāmah by designation, is not accepted by ^cAbd al-Jabbār, al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, pp.158-80.

Evil it is that you have done in my place
(khalaf-tu-mūnī).

In these two instances, according to both al-
Ṭabarī and al-Qurtubī,¹ the reference is to a
'successor'.

The plural form of khalīfah, i.e. khalā'if
and khulafā', is also used in the Qur'ān to denote
'succession'.² In Sūrah 10:73 specific reference
is made to the people of Nūh.³

We saved (Nūh) and those with him in the
ship and made them khalā'if.

Specific reference is further made to certain
people succeeding the people of Nūh in Sūrah
7:69:⁴

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-11, part 9, pp.48 and 64;
al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 1, p.266.
 2. 'Succession' is used in terms of succeeding
generations in the plural form in the Qur'ān.
 3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-11, part 11, p.144; al-
Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.365.

Cont'd:...

And remember He made you khulafā' (after the people of Nūḥ.

Similar reference is made to the people of ^cĀd in Sūrah 7:74:¹

And remember He made you khulafā' (after the people of) ^cĀd.

Specific reference is made to the Makkans in Sūrah 10:14:²

Then We made you khalā'if in the earth after them to see how you would behave.

We cannot deduce from the Qur'ānic usages of the term khalīfah the idea of a ruler when the term khalīfah and its plural forms are used.³ It

Cont'd: 4. al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-8, part 7 , p.59 ; al-

Qurtubī, vol.4, part 7, p.236.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-8, part 7, p. 74 ; al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 7, p.239.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-11, part 11, pp.93-4; al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.318.

3. En.Is., op. cit., vol.2, p.881.

is clear that the term is not always used as ruler. It is evident in some instances, however, that these terms have been used in the sense of ruler. Thus the institution of khilāfah in the terminology of Islamic political theorists seems to have been used with some Qur'ānic justification. That is to say that the term khalīfah can mean ruler in the Qur'ān, which can provide an argument for this institution after the death of the Prophet with regards to the interpretation given to 2:30. But as we have seen, the mufasirīn are not prepared to give this āyah that absolute meaning.

Ulū al-amr in the Qur'ān:

In pre-Islamic usage the term ulū al-amr referred to those chiefs and heads of the tribes and families that decided the public issues of Makkan society. As has been mentioned these were prominent men, of position, status, wealth, influence and sound opinion, who met at dār al-nadwah in Makkah and who, corporatively, were

called al-Mala' (the assembly).¹

In the text of the Qur'ān there are two references to this term ulū al-amr, namely in Sūrah 4:59 and Sūrah 4:83. In Sūrah 4:59 we read:

O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the Messenger, and ulū al-amr (those charged with authority) among you. But if you differ in anything, then refer it to God and the Messenger, if you do believe in God and the Last Day, that is best, and most suitable for final interpretation.

The term ulū al-amr is made up of two words namely ulū and al-amr. The term ulū refers to 'owners, possessors, people of'.² The second term al-amr means the 'matter, affair, concern, business, power and authority'.³ The verb amara-

1. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.5, pp.235-6; see further discussion in the Pre-Islamic background to the shūrā.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.15, pp.436-7; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.84; Wehr, p.35.

Cont'd:...

ya'muru is derived from the noun al-amr and means 'to command, to order, instruct, charge, commission, entrust, invest with authority and to be imperious'.¹ In this way the term ulū al-amr refers to rulers and leaders; Ibn Manzūr mentions that the term refers to chiefs and to the knowledgeable.²

Al-Ṭabarī discusses the views and opinions of the various interpreters of the meaning of the term ulū al-amr as used in the above āyah. He mentions Ibn Zaid's opinion that the term refers to 'al-salāṭīn', plural of sulṭān meaning ruler.³ He quotes Abū Ḥurairah's opinion that the term refers to 'al-umarā''.⁴ Umarā' is the plural of amir and refers to 'commander, tribal chief'.⁵ He

Cont'd: 3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.4, pp.26-31; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.96; also Wehr, p.26.

1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.4, pp.26-31; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.95; also Wehr, p.26.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.4, p.31; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.96; also Wehr, p.35.

3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.92; also Wehr, p.422.

Cont'd:...

also quotes Ibn ^CAbbās, who considers the term to be a reference to the head of a military detachment or those who take charge of a military company or detachment (ṣāhib sariyah, pl. aṣḥāb al-sarāyā).¹ He quotes Mujāhid as considering the term ulū al-amr to refer to the jurists and the knowledgeable (ulū al-fiqh wa al-ilm).² He further attributes this interpretation to Ibn ^CAbbās who says that the term denotes those people who are versed in jurisprudence and religion (ahl al-fiqh wa al-dīn).³ Al-Ṭabarī himself prefers the opinion of those who interpret the term as referring to umarā' (commanders) and wulāt (rulers or governors), for he writes that the Prophet commanded the Muslims to obey al-a'imma (leaders) and al-wulāt wherever obedience was due and whenever the Muslims had interest, for no one, he adds, should obey any command to disobey God.⁴

Cont'd: 4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.93.

5. Ibn Manẓūr, vol.4, p.31; Lane, Book 1, part 1, p.97; also Wehr, p.27.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.94.

2. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 5, p.94.

3. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 5, p.94.

4. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 5, p.95.

Al-Ṭabarī suggests that the āyah here may be taken as a specific reference to ^cUthmān ibn Ṭalhah, as Ibn Juraij says. He claims that it referred in general to every man who is entrusted with a matter, and that the term 'wulāt umūr al-muslimīn' was included since every person entrusted with a religious matter or an earthly matter should render this trust back to whomsoever it is due.¹ Al-Ṭabarī quotes āyah 58 of the same Sūrah in support of this opinion:

God commands you to render back the trusts to those whom they are due.²

Al-Qurtubī considers this āyah as a general reference to every Muslim to render back what he is entrusted with.³ But he quotes Ibn ^cAbbās' opinion that this āyah contains a specific reference to al-wulāt (rulers).⁴ Al-Qurtubī explains the term ulū al-amr in āyah 59 as a reference to al-wulāt and al-umarā' and claims

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.95.
 2. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 5, p.95.
 3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, pp.256-7.
 4. Ibid., vol.3, part 5, pp.256-7.

that obedience is due to them in the performance of duties towards God.¹ Like al-Ṭabarī, he refers to the interpretation of the āyah by Mujāhid, who holds that ulū al-amr here refers to those who are versed in the Qur'ān and to the knowledgeable, or to those who have understanding and knowledge in religion.² He quotes Ibn Kaisān's opinion that the term denotes

those who have the mind and sound opinion to manage the affairs of men.³

Al-Qurtubī's personal opinion is that this āyah refers in fact to two groups of people. The

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, p.259.

2. Ibid., vol.3, part 5, p.259.

3. Ibid., vol.3, p.260. Particular reference of the term denoting Abū Bakr and ^c Umar is mentioned by both al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurtubī but neither considers this interpretation as the authentic interpretation of the term. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.259; al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, p.259.

first comprises al-umarā', for they initiate the command and they are the judges. The second group is al-^culamā' (the knowledgeable) in religion, for

to consult al-^culamā' is a duty and complying with their counsel is an obligation.¹

Al-Qurtubī quotes Sahl ibn ^cAbd Allāh's opinion that

men are in a good state as long as they attach great importance to the Sultān and al-^culamā': if they enhance these two, God will make good their earthly life and their life hereafter; but if they belittle these He would ruin their earthly life and their life hereafter.²

Al-Baydāwī explains the term ulū al-amr as denoting the commanders of the Muslims at the time of the Prophet and thereafter. According to his interpretation, it includes al-khulafā', the

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, p.260.

2. Ibid., vol.3, part 5, p.260.

judges and the commanders of military detachments; it can also refer to Islamic jurists ‘ulamā’ al-shar’.¹ Al-Zamakhsharī mentions that these are

the main companions who had insight in the affairs, or whoever was appointed as a commander from amongst them.²

Ibn Kathīr considers the term to be a reference to the commanders of military detachments al-umarā’ and the knowledgeable in religion.³ Ibn Jazzī considers the term to refer to al-wulāt (rulers and governors) and al-‘ulamā’ and also the commanders of military detachments.⁴ Al-Fīrūzābādī quotes Ibn ‘Abbās’ explanation of the term as denoting the commanders of military detachments and al-‘ulamā’.⁵ Al-Jalālayn considers the term to refer to al-wulāt.⁶

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1. Al-Baydāwī, vol.1-2, part 2, pp.94-5.
 2. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.1, p.212.
 3. Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.518.
 4. Ibn Jazzī, part 1, p.146.
 5. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.68.
 6. Al-Jalālayn, p.115.

The second occurrence of the term ulū al-amr in the Qur'ān provides a clearer insight into various interpretations and connotations, leading to a more succinct comprehension of the concept itself. In Sūrah 4, āyah 84 we read:

When there comes to them some matter touching safety or fear, they divulge it. But if they had referred it to the Messenger, or to those charged with authority (ulū al-amr) among them, the proper investigators would have found out from them.

This passage refers to the hypocrites at the time of the Prophet, and to those who were weak in their faith and would spread about the news of what had befallen the Muslims in the battlefield whether victory or defeat. Those who usually tell tales are exhorted in this āyah to refrain from telling the news till after they have consulted with those who know how to enquire into the matter and reach the right conclusions.¹ Al-Ṭabarī

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.115.

considers that the term ulū al-amr refers in this passage to the commanders (al-umarā').¹ He quotes Qutādah's opinion that the term is a reference to the knowledgeable (al-^culamā').² He also quotes Ibn Juraij's opinion that the term refers to those who have knowledge in religion and reasoning.³ Al-Nīsābūrī explains ulū al-amr as a reference to

the senior companions (of the Prophet) who have insight into matters, also to whoever are appointed as commanders from amongst them, for those would have the knowledge to understand and make inferences, because of their awareness and experience as well as knowledge in matters of war.*

Al-Nīsābūrī explains further that the term

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.115.
 2. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 5, p.115.
 3. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 5, p.115.
 4. Al-Nīsābūrī (al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.114), the same meaning is given by Ibn Jazzī, part 1, p.150.

can refer to ʿulamā' al-sharʿ (the knowledgeable in revealed law), for they are the ones who can find out or infer from (istinbāt) matters.¹ Al-Qurtubī interprets the term ulū al-amr in this āyah as referring to those who have knowledge and are jurisprudents. He quotes al-Suddī's consideration that the term refers to the rulers (al-wulāt), and can also refer to war chieftains.² Al-Fīrūzābādī quotes Ibn ʿAbbās who considers the term to denote those of the believers who are endowed with sound minds, referring in particular to Abū Bakr and his companions.³

Although political theorists, particularly those of Shīʿi persuasion, use these two āyāt in which ulū al-amr are mentioned as a justification and as Qur'ānic evidence for the institution of khilāfah and imāmah,⁴ it is clear from the

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1. Al-Nīsābūrī (al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.115); also Wehr, p.939.
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, p.291.
 3. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.71.
 4. Though ʿAbd al-Jabbār does not consider the āyah (4:59): 'Obey God and obey the Messenger and ulū al-amr among you' as a naṣṣ referring

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interpretations quoted from Qur'ānic exegetes that they were much less sure of such an interpretation. The general consensus seems to be against such an outright interpretation. The interpretations seem to favour the view that ulū al-amr means people with some kind of authority in the Islamic ummah, whether in terms of military leadership or knowledge or religion. In the first years of Islam these people were usually much the same. If we examine the period of Islamic rule after the Prophet, we see that for early Muslims the ulū al-amr would include such men as Abū Bakr, ^cUmar, ^cUthmān, ^cAlī and Ṭalḥah al-Zubayr, Sa^cd Ibn Abī Waqqās and ^cAbd al-Rahmān Ibn ^cAwf.¹ There were, of course, many others. However, particular attention is drawn to these names as they involve persons that the early community looked to as men of authority, that is ulū al-amr.

It is noticeable that the shūrā of six men, appointed by ^cUmar to decide upon the leadership of the Islamic ummah after him, consisted of the

Cont'd: to the imām (al-Mughnī, vol.20, part 1, p.143).

1. Laost, op. cit., p.18.

last six names. We have already noted that the institutions of khilāfah and imāmah are in fact the theoretical edifices of later political thinkers looking back at early history. It seems also to be the case that the ahl al-hall wa al-^caqd mentioned by these thinkers are in fact nothing but a later terminological formulation for the men chosen by ^cUmar to consult and decide on the future leadership of the ummah. They seem to represent some of the ulū al-amr mentioned in the Qur'ān. However if the ulū al-amr are to be a constant phenomenon in the Islamic ummah, new ones will have to emerge in succeeding generations. How they do emerge is a matter of speculation on which the Qur'ān does not give any guidance. For this reason it seems natural that exegetes themselves (al-^culamā') have tended to suggest that the ^culamā' are the later ulū al-amr. It is, of course, arguable that when the Prophet was no longer around to indicate who the ulū al-amr were, they gradually ceased to exist. Nonetheless it would seem more likely that the ulū al-amr in the various aspects of life of the ummah should emerge by the consensus of that ummah.

CHAPTER IV

THE SHŪRĀ IN THE ISLAMIC UMMAH

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Pre-Islamic Background:

The concept and practice of shūrā can be traced to the pre-Islamic era. The term is known to have been used with the meaning 'consultation' (tashāwur) in the house of Qusayy Ibn Kilāb, which was called dār al-nadwah,¹ by the chiefs of Makkah. Dār al-nadwah was the meeting place of the mala' of Makkah. The term mala' referred to the chiefs, notables, prominent personalities and those who were of sound opinion.² It referred to the practice of the heads of the Makkan population taking counsel in the form of the council of Makkah and deciding public issues on behalf of the Makkans³.

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1. Muḥammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Tārīkh (Akhbār al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk), Bayrūt (n.d.), vol.2, p.258; al-Balādhurī, al-Ansāb, Bayrūt (n.d.), vol.1, p.5; also Ibn al-Athīr, al-Kāmil fī al-Ta'rīkh, Dār Sādir, Bayrūt, 1966, vol.2, p.13.
 2. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.4, p.47.
 3. Ibid., vol.5, pp.235-6.

After Qusayy there was no one ruler, or king or chief of a tribe who decided the public affairs by himself.¹ Affairs were decided by this assembly consisting of the rulers of Makkah. These rulers were like the members of the congress in ancient Athens meeting in the Ekklesia.² The dār al-nadwah was not, however, like a modern parliament. The mala' met in the dār al-nadwah when there was an issue important enough to be decided and reached a decision after studying and thinking over the matter. A binding decision could be reached only with the consensus of the mala'. If there was any disagreement of opinion, then the members of the mala' would negotiate among themselves in order to reach a position of unanimity, thus avoiding any division that might endanger the security of Makkah.³ Its members had the freedom and right to express their opinion and agree or disagree with the opinion of the others. It met to deal with public matters only; private family affairs being out of the sphere of its jurisdiction, were resolved by the families concerned. The issues

1. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.5, pp.235-6.

2. Op. cit., Watt, Muhammad at Mecca, p.9.

3. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.4, p.48.

discussed by the mala' were concerned with issues such as peace and war, security, and the future of the Makkans as a whole.¹ This assembly, although having legislative and juridical powers, did not have executive power. The execution and implementation of the decision of the mala' was left to the clans and families themselves, each supervised by its own chief or head of the family. The power and authority of such a political system was shared by the chiefs and heads of the clans and families managing the affairs of the whole by mutual consultation.²

Shūrā in the Qur'ān:

In the text of the Qur'ān the term shūrā occurs in three passages, namely Sūrah 2:233, Sūrah 3:159 and Sūrah 42:38. First, and for the sake of the development of the concept, I propose to deal with the term as it occurs in Sūrah 3:159. In this āyah we are told:

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1. Jawād ^cAlī, op. cit., vol.4, p.48.
 2. Ibid., vol.4, p.48.

Pass over their faults, and ask (God's) forgiveness for them and consult them (shāwir-hum) in the affair. Then, when you have taken a decision, put your trust in God.

The term shāwir is derived from shāwar-yushāwir which is derived from the root and means to consult, to advise, reflect, beckon, suggest, and shūrā refers to consultation.¹ Al-Ṭabarī explains that the use of the term shāwir-hum (the term occurs in the first person in the imperative shāwir in this āyah) refers contextually to Muhammad who is commanded to pass over the faults of his followers and the companions of the believers and whatever harm they have done to him. He is further commanded to ask his Lord forgiveness for them for their unlawful actions that deserved punishment and then to consult with them in the matter.² Qurtubī says:

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1. Ibn Manẓūr, vol.4, p.437; Lane, Book 1, part 4, p.1616; Wehr, pp.492-3; also al-Mu^cjam al-Wasīt, ed. I. Mustafā, A.H. al-Zayyāt, Matba^cat Miṣr, al-Qāhirah, 1960, vol.1, p.501.
 2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.100.

God has commanded His Prophet gradually to pardon the believers of whatever wrong they have done. He commanded the Prophet that, when the believers reached this stage, he should ask God's forgiveness for them. When they arrived at this stage they became worthy of being consulted in the affairs.¹

Al-Qurtubī explains that the term shāwir-hum fī al-amr indicates permissibility in the interpretation of affairs and in considering (human) assumptions in addition to revelation.² He considers that the term is here a command to the Prophet to consult with his Companions.³ He explains the term al-amr, with regard to the subject of consultation, as a reference to various interpretations:

Some said in war strategies when confronting the enemy, and to conciliate and give comfort to his companions, in

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.249.
 2. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.245.
 3. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.250.

order to unite them in their religion even though God has revealed to him what he ought to do.¹

Al-Qurtubī adds that some others said that God had commanded the Prophet to consult with his companions for the benefit derived from consultation.² He also quotes another group who assert that the command for consultation among believers, in their religious as well as worldly affairs, means that God shall, through this practice, guide them to reach the right opinion.³ Al-Qurtubī explains that the characteristic feature of the counsellor in the affairs of earthly life ought to be, 'to have sound reason and experience in the affairs.' But both al-Qurtubī and al-Ṭabarī mention the opinion of some exegetes that 'consultation is due in matters not revealed'.³ In this respect al-Nīsābūrī explains

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.250; also al-Ṭabarī gives similar interpretation, vol.3-4, part 4, p.100.
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.250; also al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.100.
 3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.250.

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that 'when a nass (revealed text) exists, then opinion and analogy becomes void'.¹ Al-Qurtubī mentions that 'Mutual consultation is a bliss', and al-Ṭabarī mentions that 'it is a favour'.² Both exegetes quote al-Ḥasan, 'no people mutually consult in the affairs without being guided to the best of such affairs'.³

Al-Ṭabarī considers the term shāwir-hum fī al-amr specifies that there was to be consultation between the Prophet and the believers in all matters so that the believers would follow this example in conducting their affairs after the death of the Prophet.⁴ He quotes the opinion

Cont'd: 4. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, pp.251-2.

5. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.250; also al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.101.

1. Al-Nīsābūrī, in al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.122.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.251; also al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.100.

3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.251; also al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.100.

4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.101.

of Abū Ja^cfar as support for his preference in choosing this interpretation:

If the ummaḥ of Muhammad mutually consult, following the example of the Prophet, and agree to uphold what is right, and have a unified will to do what is right and without any personal inclination, then God will show them to the right path and help them.¹

Al-Ṭabarī generalizes from the contextual interpretation to the global dimension of the example of the Prophet, to include all believers after the death in the Prophet without any specification of a position, an institution, a person or a group of persons denoted by shūrā. The essence of the interpretation offered by al-Ṭabarī centres around the good of all believers residing in their mutual consultation.²

Al-Qurtubī mentions, in addition to his interpretation of shūrā in terms of worldly context,

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 4, p.101.
 2. Ibid., vol.3-4, part 4, pp.100-1.

that the term has also a religious connotation,

The feature of the consultant in juridical matters is that he ought to be a learned man as well as a religious man, and these qualities do not meet except in a sound minded person.¹

He quotes al-Khattābī who considers that if the one being consulted does his utmost to reach the right conclusion or decision but finally makes the wrong decision, then he is not responsible for his own counselling.² In this way the idea of consultation pertains to men of knowledge whether in worldly matters or in religious matters. Al-Qurtubī mentions further that some interpreters of the Qur'ān have indicated another connotation of the term shūrā with respect to the term shāwirhum fī al-amr. He quotes Ibn ^CAtīyah:

al-shūrā consists one of the principles of Sharī^Cah (Islamic Law) and a

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.251.

2. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, p.251.

resolution of the rules, thus (the imām or khalīfah) or the ruler who does not consult those who have knowledge of religion and those who are well informed ought to be deposed.¹

Here the connotation of shūrā becomes more specific. Al-Qurtubī quotes Ibn Khuwaizimandād in this aspect of the term,

it is incumbent on the wulāt (rulers) to consult the ulamā' (the knowledgeable) in matters where they, the wulāt, are ignorant or where they may be in doubt, such as the army at war, the people and their common welfare, secretarial, ministerial and administrative matters, and finally the affairs of the country and its prosperity.²

He gives a general reference for the term shūrā, defining it in terms of form and objective.

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.249.
 2. Ibid., vol.2, part 4, pp.249-50.

He explains that

al-shūrā is founded on disagreement of opinion and the process by which the consultant looks into such disagreement seeking the opinion closest to the Book and the Sunnah if he can. If God guides him to whatever He wills, the consultant ought to decide in the matter and carry it out putting his trust in Him, for this is the final objective of the required endeavour.¹

Ibn Kathīr explains shūrā in this āyah with reference to the Prophet's obligation to consult with his Companions in order to conciliate their hearts, so they would be more active in the things they do, for the Prophet consulted them in the battles of Badr, Uhud, al-Khandaq and al-Hudaibiyah.² He writes that the Prophet consulted the Companions even in his most private affair, concerning the divorce of his wife ^cĀ'ishah, in

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 4, p.252.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.420.

which case he consulted [°]Alī and Usāmah.¹ Ibn Kathīr quotes Ibn [°]Abbās as saying that specific reference is made here to the Prophet consulting with Abū Bakr and [°]Umar.² But Ibn Kathīr interprets the term in this āyah more generally citing quotations by [°]Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Abī Ṭālib considers the Tradition to be that the Prophet was advised to consult those of sound opinion, and to follow their advice. He quotes Jābir, who ascribes another Tradition to the Prophet, namely that 'if one of you consult with his brother, let him give him advice'.³ In this way Ibn Kathīr moves from the particular to the general connotations of the term. Ibn Kathīr defines shūrā in terms of responsibility, and quotes Ibn Mājah who ascribes to the Prophet the tradition that 'the consulted person is entrusted (with the matter of consultation)'.⁴ Ibn Jazzī explains the term shāwir-hum as a reference to the Prophet commanding him to consult all believers in matters of war as well as in other matters excluding the

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.420.

2. Ibid., vol.2, p.420.

3. Ibid., vol.2, p.420.

4. Ibid., vol.4, p.420.

laws of Sharī^c ah.' He adds 'al-mushāwarah (consultation) is decreed by al-Shar^c.'²

Al-Māwardī explains the term al-mushāwarah in terms of the duties of the amīr. He writes,

the eighth principle of the imārah (rulership and governorship) is that the amīr (ruler or governor) should consult those who are of sound opinion in difficult matters, and that he ought to turn to those who have resolution (ahl al-ḥazm) whenever he is in doubt, in order to avoid making mistakes and to be nearer to victory.³

He adds, with reference to the term shāwir-hum as it occurs in the āyah above, that

the Prophet should consult in matters of war in order to reconcile between those who are consulted to obtain whatever

1. Ibn Jazzī, part 1, p.122.

2. Ibid., part 1, p.122.

3. Al-Māwardī, p.43.

possible benefit from consultation, and so that Muslims should follow his example even though he is not in need of their council.¹

Ibn Taymiyyah explains the term al-mushāwarah with relation to walī al-amr and quotes the āyah discussed here as an example to be followed.² He writes in this respect that

God has commanded His Prophet to consult, in order to reconcile the hearts of his Companions, to be taken as an example after his death, and to bring out of his Companions their opinions in matters where there is no revelation, such as in war and in minor affairs.³

In this way both political theorists adopt some of the views of al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurtubī, but they consider the principle of shūrā to be confined to: a) those who have sound judgement,

1. Al-Māwardī, p.44.

2. Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Siyāṣah al-Shar^c iyyah, p.157.

3. Ibid., p.158.

and b) in war matters and in minor affairs. The second reference to the term shūrā in the Qur'ānic text is made in Sūrah 42:38. In this passage we read:

And they conduct their affairs by mutual consultation (wa amru-hum shūrā baina-hum).

Reference in this āyah is made to the believers and to their attitude and conduct both towards the management of their affairs and towards each other. Al-Ṭabarī considers this āyah to mean that 'Whenever the believers have a matter of concern they consult each other'.¹ He quotes Ibn Zaid's statement that

the believers conduct their affairs by mutual consultation when the Messenger of God is not among them.²

Al-Qurtubī explains this āyah as a reference

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.24-27, part 25, p.23.
 2. Ibid., vol.24-27, part 25, p.23.

to al-Anṣār before the advent of the Prophet to Madīnah, to the conducting of their affairs by mutual consultation, for which God praised them.¹ He quotes al-Ḥasan, who said,

it means that they (the believers) comply with one opinion in agreement towards their affairs and they do not differ.²

He also quotes Ibn ʿArabī's words:

al-shūrā reconciles the group, it explores the minds and is a means to reach what is right; no people have mutually consulted amongst themselves except when they were rightly guided.³

Al-Qurtubī also gives the example of the Prophet consulting his Companions and then the Companions following his example during the khilāfah and in matters of war and punishment.⁴

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, p.36.

2. Ibid., vol.8, part 16, p.36.

3. Ibid., vol.8, part 16, p.37.

4. Ibid., vol.8, part 16, p.37.

He quotes al-Ḍaḥḥak who explains the reference here as follows:

the term shūrā in this āyah denotes agreement (among the Ansār) and that no one of them monopolized any affair.¹

Ibn Kathīr, in explaining the term shūrā in this passage, says that

the believers do not settle or confirm any matter until they have consulted each other, so that they co-operate with their opinions, especially in matters of war and so forth.²

Ibn Jazzī interprets the āyah here as a reference to the election of ^CUthmān by means of the council of the six Companions who were appointed by ^CUmar in order to elect a successor.³

Al-Bayḏāwī explains the āyah as a reference to the fact that the believers

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, p.37.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, p.118.

3. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.22.

consult among themselves and no one decides by himself until they all mutually consult each other and then agree upon the matter. This is so because they are extremely careful and alert towards the matter.¹

Al-Fīrūzābādī quotes Ibn ^cAbbās who considers the term here to be a reference to the fact that 'when the believers want to decide something they consult among themselves and then act accordingly'.² Al-Nīsābūrī also offers the opinion that the term in this āyah refers to the idea of mutual consultation in every single matter without any autocracy or dictating of opinion.³

It is thus apparent that the interpretation of the exegetes is inclined towards the meaning and connotation of shūrā as public participation by the believers in decisions concerning public affairs.

1. Al-Baydāwī, vol.3-5, part 5, p.55.

2. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.384.

3. Al-Nīsābūrī, (al-Ṭabarī), vol.24-27, part 5, p.45.

Turning to the opinion of shūrā offered by the traditional Islamic political thinkers, we observe that neither Ibn Khaldūn nor al-Māwardī deal with the connotations of the term used here. Ibn Taymiyyah, however, explains his view of the term shūrā in this āyah as a recommendation to the Prophet or the ruler (al-amīr) to consult with ulū al-amr, i.e., al-umarā' wa al-^culamā'; furthermore, when the two parties are in conflict, then the opinion of both parties should be sought, and that opinion which is nearer to the Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger should be carried out.¹

The third reference of the term shūrā occurs in Sūrah 2:233:

If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent and after consultation (Tashāwur) there is no blame on them.

The context of the āyah here deals with the

1. Op. cit. Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Siyāṣah al-Shar^cīyyah, pp.158-9.

way parents reach agreement concerning the weaning of their child.¹ Al-Qurtubī explains the term tashāwur

as evidence for allowing al-ijtihād (To endeavour to interpret a matter according to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet),² with respect to the revelation, for God has permitted parents to consult each other in whatever leads to the best interest of the child, and this is dependent on their opinions and not on reality and certainty.³

Al-Ṭabarī explains the term tashāwur in this āyah as a reference to consultation between parents and the flexibility of their decision with regards to the period of weaning of their own child.⁴ Reference in this āyah to shūrā denotes

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 3, p.172; also al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, pp.312-3.

2. Wehr interprets al-ijtihād as the independent judgement in a legal or theological question based on the interpretation and the application of the four uṣūl. Op. cit., p.43.

the responsibility of both parents to reach an agreement concerning their child. Reference is here to any parents with regard to the manner of settling an issue with respect to their child.

As already noted, early Islamic history has seen the term shūrā used in connection with consultation over decisions of the leadership of the Islamic ummah. In particular it is the term used for the procedure adopted by ^CUmar on his deathbed for six important Companions of the Prophet to decide on the leadership of the ummah after him.¹ In controversies about the khilāfah of ^CAlī, frequent reference is made by opponents to the absence of shūrā in his appointment.² Documents which one purported to be evidence of an agreement made between Mu^Cāwiyah and al-Ḥasan also refer to shūrā as the procedure to be adopted after the death of Mu^Cāwiyah.³ When Yazīd

Cont'd: 3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 3, p.172.

4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.313.

1. Al-Ṭabarī, Ta'rīkh, op. cit., Ser.1-6, pp.3069,3074-5.

2. Ibid., Ser. 1-5, pp.2777-2798; al-Balādhurī, Ansāb al-Ashrāf, vol.2, pp.211-2.

3. Al-Balādhurī, Ansāb al-Ashrāf, Dār al-Ta^Cāruf

Cont'd:...

was appointed, there were also references by his opponents to the invalidity of his appointment because it has not been decided by a shūrā.¹

It would seem that ^CUmar and some of the other early Khulafā' interpreted shūrā as meaning a council of established Islamic figures who would make decisions on behalf of the ummah. It is also true that the historical reports about the early Khulafā' present ample evidence of their full consultation with such notable people in the ummah. It is also noteworthy that, particularly in questions of policy, these leading figures, perhaps the ulū al-amr of the time, also consulted with those who were not among the members of the shūrā. An example of this is the case of the shūrā which met to decide on the leadership after ^CUmar.

Thus it is possible to suggest the term shūrā and its connotations, in the three Qur'ānic passages discussed above, is of a general nature and may refer to the duty of every Muslim to

Cont'd: li-al-Matbū^Cāt, Bayrūt, 1977. Vol.3,
pp.41-2.

1. Ibn A^Ctham, Kitāb al-Futūḥ, Haiderabad, 1971, vol.5, pp.242, 244, 246.

consult other Muslims in his public affairs as well as in his private affairs. However, it seems at least likely that the shūrā principle denoted by the Qur'ān had replaced al-Nadwah and was intended to be the means of government of the ummah after the death of the Prophet, in however ill-defined a way. Yet it seems that such a consultation process was quickly overcome by the institution of autocratic rule within the territory of the domain of Islam.¹

1. Cf. Manzooruddin Ahmad, "Key political concepts in the Qur'ān", article pp.77-102, Islamic Studies, no.10, 1971, p.94.

CHAPTER 5

TWO EXPRESSIONS OF THE METAPHYSICAL-TEMPORAL
LINK IN THE ISLAMIC UMMAH

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Al-zakāt and al-jihād can be considered as two expressions of the link between the metaphysical aspect of the religion of Islam and its pragmatic application. These concepts are proposed to be examined in this chapter on the assumption that they represent the actualization of the divine will in everyday practice of men.

Syed Nadvi accepts the idea that if a religion or creed refuses to conform to the needs of the time and advance with the changing environment, it practically refuses to progress.¹ He suggests that,

the principles of a religion must remain fixed and unchangeable, but details are

1. Syed Muzaffar-Ud-Din Nadvi, Muslim Thought and its Source, S.Z. Nadvi, Calcutta, 1933, p.159.

always to be prepared in the light of the circumstances.¹

Hossein Nasr writes that,

shari^cah is the divine law and that it is the ideal pattern for the individual's life and the law which binds the Muslim people into a single community. It is the embodiment of the Divine Will in terms of specific teachings whose acceptance and application guarantees man a harmonious life in this world and felicity in the hereafter.²

Nasr considers revelation as the concrete embodiment of the Divine Will, according to which, man ought to live in both his private life and his social life.³ In this way the actual

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1. Syed Muzaffar-Ud-Din Nadvi, Muslim Thought and its Source, op. cit., p.159.
 2. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Ideals and Realities of Islam, Unwin Paperbacks, London, 1979, p.93.
 3. Ibid., p.93.

implementation of the Divine Law in the everyday life of the ummah can be regarded as the link between the metaphysical aspect of Islam and the material life that men live. It is the actions of men that decide the nature of the link disconnecting it by kufr or actualizing it by īmān.

al-Zakāt

It has been suggested that

zakāt is a quasi-tax alms levy which is mentioned in the Qur'ān.¹

The author of these words asserts that the term zakāt as it occurs in the 32 verses of the Qur'ān is spelt zakūt which, he claims, corresponds exactly to a similar Hebrew word. He asserts that the term is not derived from the Arabic root but is taken over from the Hebrew as used by the Jews. He adds:

1. A. Ben Shemesh, Taxation in Islam, Vol.3, E.S. Brill, Leiden, 1969, p.2.

It seems to be synonymous for alms giving.¹

Although possibly sharing a common root with the Hebrew term, the word zakāt in Arabic had acquired a whole range of meanings. The Arab lexicographers derived it from the verb zakā-yazkū,² which refers to the meanings: to thrive, to grow, to increase, to be pure in heart, to be just, to be righteous, to be good, to be suitable, to be fit, to purify, to chasten, to justify, to bear witness to someone's integrity, to attest to the truth, to commend, to praise, to recommend, to cause to grow and to be purified.³ The verbal noun is zakā' and the noun is zakāt. The term zakā' means growth, purity, integrity, honesty and righteousness.⁴ The term zakāh or zakāt has the plural forms zakān and zakawāt referring to

1. A. Ben Shemesh, op. cit., p.25.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, pp.358-9; also al-Rāzī, op. cit., p.273.

3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, pp.358-9; Lane, Book 1, part 3, pp.1240-1; also Wehr, p.379.

4. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, p.358; Lane, Book 1, part 3, pp.1240-1; also Wehr, p.379.

purity, justness, integrity, honesty, justification, vindication, alms-giving, alms, charity, alms tax.¹ In the Encyclopedia of Islam we read that zakāt refers to the alms-tax and that

it is one of the principal obligations of Islam. By this the law means a tax, which is levied on definite forms of property and is distributed to eight categories of persons.²

Hughes informs us that,

In its primitive sense the word zakāt means purification, whence it is also used to express a portion of property bestowed in alms, as a sanctification of the remainder to the proprietor. It is an institution of Islam and founded upon an express command in the Qur'ān (Sūrah 2:77), being one of the five foundations

1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.14, pp.358-9; also Wehr, pp.379-80.

2. E.I., vol.4, pp.1202-3.

of practical religion.¹

The term zakāt and its derivative forms occurs in many instances in the Qur'ānic text. In Sūrah 24:21 the term zakā is mentioned:

O you who believe! Do not follow Satan's footsteps: if any will follow the footsteps of Satan, he will (but) command what is shameful and wrong: and were it not for the grace and mercy of God on you, not one of you would ever have been pure (zakā)...

Al-Qurtubī explains the meaning of the term zakā here as

to receive guidance, to accept Islam, integrity of actions and good.²

Al-Ṭabarī explains the term in this āyah as

1. Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, op. cit., p.699.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.6, part 12, p.207.

to purify from the disgrace of sins.¹

Ibn Kathīr explains the term as

to purify from the disgrace of the soul
and its sins.²

Al-Zamakhsharī gives a similar interpretation
of the term,

to purify of the dishonour and disgrace
of the sin.³

Al-Bayḍāwī gives a similar interpretation.⁴ Ibn
Jazzī explains the term as,

To purify from sins and wrong and to
adopt proper religion.⁵

Al-Fīrūzābādī explains the term as,

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.17-19, part 18, pp.80-1.
 2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.3, p.275.
 3. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.3, p.56.
 4. Al-Bayḍāwī, vol.3-5, part 4, p.76.
 5. Ibn Jazzī, vol.3, p.62.

to mend and put right and proper.¹

The second usage of the term occurs in the same āyah above (24:21):

... But God does purify (yuzakkī) whom He pleases ...

Yuzakkī means to purify from sins in this āyah.² Al-Fīrūzābādī explains the term as,

to guide unto what is right and to put aright and make good.³

In the above āyah the terms zakā and yuzakkī are referred to God as the actor. Another reference to the term as enacted by God who purifies can be observed in Sūrah 4:49:

1. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.275.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.6, part 12, p.207; al-Ṭabarī, vol.17-19, part 18, p.81; Ibn Kathīr, vol.3, p.275; al-Zamakhsharī, vol.3, p.56; Ibn Jazzī,

Cont'd:...

... No, but God does purify (or sanctify) (Yuzakkī) whom He pleases.

Al-Qurtubī explains the term yuzakkī here as purifying and sanctifying from sins.¹ Al-Ṭabarī offers a similar interpretation.² The term and its derivative forms occur in several instances in the text of the Qur'ān with reference to God as the Actor of purification, i.e., where God purifies men from their sins and mistakes.³ The second level of using the term with reference to purifying men in the Qur'ānic text is when the Messenger of God, Muḥammad, becomes the actor of purifying through the medium of the Message of God. In Sūrah 2:151 we are informed:

We also have sent among you a Messenger of your own, rehearsing to you Our Signs, and purifying you (or sanctifying you)

Cont'd: vol.3, p.62.

3. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.275.

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, p.246.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, p.82.

3. Yuzakkī-him, Sūrah 2:174; Sūrah 3:177.

(yuzakkī-kum).

The term yuzakkī-kum in this āyah, explains al-Ṭabarī, refers to the Messenger of God performing the act of purifying men, through the āyāt of the Qur'ān, from their disgraceful sins.¹ Ibn Kathīr explains the term here,

to purify them from moral vices and the disgrace of the souls and the practices of the jāhiliyyah and bring them out of darkness into light, and he, the Messenger, teaches them the Book, which is the Qur'ān and wisdom, which is the Sunnah, and teaches them what they did not know. So through the Message of God the Messenger transfers them from the state of jāhiliyyah to the state of knowledge becoming the awliyā' and the ulamā' by the grace of God.²

The Qur'ānic reference to Muhammad as the actor of purifying men is also mentioned in

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.22.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, pp.195-6.

some of the āyāt.¹ But it is in Sūrah 9:103, that we are able to observe the relationship between the act of purification performed by the Messenger, upon the command of God, with the act of paying a portion of one's own property:

Take alms of their goods (or wealth - amwālī-him), that so you will purify and sanctify them (tuzakkī-him)...

In this āyah we are able to trace the translation and implementation of the divine will into the normal and mundane practice of the temporal actions of men. In other words the alms or al-zakāt becomes at this stage the link between the metaphysical aspect of the Islamic religion and the temporal pragmatic aspect of the lives of men, namely the Muslims.

Al-Tabarī explains that in this āyah,

God is saying to His Prophet (P.B.U.H.);
Take, O Muhammad! of the wealth of those

1. Yuzakkī-him, Sūrah 2:129; Sūrah 3:164;
Sūrah 62:2.

who admitted their sins and repented, alms (ṣadaqah) in order to purify them from the disgrace of their sins and mistakes and to lift them and raise them above the degrading and low status of the hypocrites to the status of the sincere ones.¹

Al-Ṭabarī further quotes Ibn ʿAbbās who explains the āyah here as follows:

Abū Labābah and his companions when they were set free came to the Messenger with their wealth and asked the Messenger to take it and pay it in charity and asked him to ask God's forgiveness on their behalf. But the Prophet told them that he was not yet commanded to take any of their wealth. So God revealed: 'Take from their wealth alms so that you will purify and sanctify them (tuzakkī-him)', and by this it is referred to al-zakāt as an expression of obedience to God and

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 11, p.13.

sincerity.'

Al-Qurtubī mentions in his interpretation of the āyah here two opinions. The first opinion holds the view that the reference of alms (al-Ṣadaqah) is not the duty of the Muslim obliged by al-shar^c but the alms, for the Messenger took from Abū Labābah and his companions one third of their wealth.² The second opinion holds the view that reference in this āyah is to the duty specified by sharī^c ah since it is in the absolute and does not have any conditions in the āyah. This way the second opinion refers to the regular zakāt namely two and one half per cent of some types of property and goods to be taken from the wealth of the Muslim after being in his possession for one calendar year.³ The purpose of the zakāt is to purify the Muslim of his mistakes to sanctify him and recommend him.⁴

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 11, p.13.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.244.

3. Ibid., vol.4, part 8, p.246.

4. Ibid., vol.4, part 8, p.249.

Ibn Kathīr explains the reference here to al-zakāt being incumbent as a religious duty on every Muslim.¹ Al-Zamakhsharī explains the āyah with reference to the term tuzakkī-him to command the Messenger to take a portion of their wealth in order to purify them, and al-tazkiyyah is an exaggeration in purification and an increase of it. It also means, al-Zamakhsharī writes further, expansion and blessing of the wealth.² Al-Nīsābūrī offers a similar interpretation for the term and the āyah to the account given by al-Zamakhsharī.³ Ibn Jazzī explains the āyah as a reference to the duty of all Muslims to pay the duty of al-zakāt as a purifying act.⁴ Al-Fīrūzābādī interprets the reference here as a command to the Messenger to take one third of their wealth as alms in order to purify and make them suitable and proper after they have redeemed their sins.⁵

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1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.385.
 2. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.2, p.212.
 3. Al-Nīsābūrī in al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-14, part 11, p.14.
 4. Ibn Jazzī, part 2, p.84.
 5. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.155.

Before dealing with the zakāt proper we ought to look into the third level. The third level of the concept of zakāt in the Qur'ān deals with man himself as being the actor of purifying himself. In Sūrah 35:18 we read:

Nor can a bearer of burdens bear another's burden. If one heavily laden should call another to (bear) his load, not the least portion of it can be carried (by the other), even though he be nearly related.

You can but admonish such as fear their Lord unseen and establish regular Prayer. And whoever purifies himself (tazakkā) does so (yatazakkā) for the benefit of his own soul...

Al-Zamakhsharī explains the terms tazakkā and yatazakkā in this āyah:

Whoever purifies himself by performing pious deeds and abstaining from sins earns the reward.'

1. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.3, pp.305-6.

Al-Qurtubī interprets the term as,

to accept guidance for the benefit of oneself.¹

Ibn Kathīr explains the meaning of the terms as,

whoever does good he would do so for his own benefit.²

Al-Baydāwī writes,

whoever purifies himself from the disgrace of sins would benefit himself.³

Al-Ṭabarī writes,

whoever purifies himself from the disgrace of rejection and sins by turning to God, believing in Him and obeying Him, he would do so to his own advantage and gain the Garden and avoid punishment which is

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 14, p.339.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.3, p.552.

3. Al-Baydāwī, vol.3-5, part 4, p.181.

prepared for those who reject.¹

This idea of man purifying himself occurs also in several instances in the text of the Qur'ān.² The meaning in these instances denotes the absolute, covering all men who accept belief and are willing to do good, embodied in the global atomistic interpretation. In this way whoever takes the initiative to purify himself does so for his own benefit.

On this third level where man is the actor of purification we are able to observe (in Sūrah 92: 17-18) the close relationship between self-purification and the spending of one's wealth. Here again the link between the metaphysical aspect of the Islamic religion is exemplified in the temporal mundane action of man:

But those most devoted to God shall be removed far from it (the Fire), those who

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.20-3, part 22, p.84.

2. Sūrah 91:9; Sūrah 20:76; Sūrah 87:14; Sūrah 79:18; Sūrah 80:3, 7; Sūrah 24:30.

spend (yatazakkā) their wealth for self-purification.

Here the divine will is actualized in earthly practice. Al-Ṭabarī explains the link between the divine law and compliance with the divine law in terms of,

giving one's wealth and goods in the earthly life in paying for 'the right of God' which He obliged him to pay, purifying himself, thereby, from his sins.¹

Al-Zamakhsharī explains the usage of the term yatazakkā in this āyah as

being derived from al-zakāt, and means: to ask to be purified in the sight of God, and not to be a hypocrite nor seek mere good reputation.²

Ibn Jazzī explains the term in the context of the āyah as being

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 30, p.146.
 2. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.4, p.262.

derived from paying al-zakāt or to be purified in the sight of God or to purify himself from his sins (through paying al-zakāt).¹

Ibn Kathīr writes when interpreting the term in the āyah:

It means to spend one's wealth or money in compliance with God's command in order to purify his soul and his wealth and what God has given him of religion and earthly benefits.²

Al-Qurtubī writes that the sense here means that,

One asks to be purified in the sight of God, nor does he do this as an act of hypocrisy nor desiring good reputation, but he ought to pay in charity seeking with the face of God almighty.³

1. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.204.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, p.521.

3. Al-Qurtubī, vol.10, part 20, p.88.

Al-Bayḍāwī explains the reference in terms of

spending according to the ways and means
of right and good spending.¹

Al-Fīrūzābādī explains the term here as

to give one's wealth and money seeking
the good favour and face of God.

The reference here, he adds, is specifically made
to Abū Bakr.²

Al-Nīsābūrī explains the term here as a
specific reference to Abū Bakr freeing Bilāl
from being tortured by the idolators and also
it refers to

the one, in the general sense, to be purified
in the sight of God.³

1. Al-Bayḍāwī, vol.3-5, part 5, p.188.

2. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.481.

3. Al-Nīsābūrī, in al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 30,
p.105.

The term and its derivative forms have also been used in the text of the Qur'ān to denote purity whether in relation to persons, food, or deeds.¹

The term al-zakāt proper, i.e., with reference to paying regular charity, is used thirty-two times in the Qur'ānic text.² In Sūrah 2:43, we read:

1. With reference to persons (zakiyyan):
Sūrah 19:19; Sūrah 18:74 (zakiyyat-an).

With reference to food the term (azkā) is used in Sūrah 18:19; with reference to deeds the term (azkā) is used in Sūrah 2:232; Sūrah 24:28; and Sūrah 24:30.

2. In Sūrah 2:43, 83, 110, 177, 277; 4: 77, 162; 5:12, 55; 7:156; 9:5, 11, 18, 71; 18:81; 19:13, 31, 55; 21:73; 22:41, 78; 23:4; 24:37, 56; 27:3; 30:39; 31:4; 33:33; 41:7; 58:13; 73:20; 98:5. In 18:81; 19:13 (al-zakāt refers to persons).

And establish regular prayer; practise regular charity (al-zakāt); and bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship).

Al-Qurtubī explains this āyah with reference to al-zakāt as a command from God that obliges compliance and necessitates obligation. The term al-zakāt, he adds, is derived from zakā which means growth and increase.

To extract a portion of the wealth or goods is called zakāt, for this decreases the amount of wealth whence it shall grow and increase with bliss or with the reward given to the giver of zakāt namely (al-mutazakkī).¹

The term zakāt is derived also from purification. In this way al-zakāt purifies, as it were, the money from the responsibility of the right given by God to the poor. The Prophet called the zakāt as the extractor of the dirt

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 1, p.343.

of the people.¹ The meaning here denoted by al-zakāt refers to the obligated portion of the Muslims' wealth and goods.² Al-Ṭabarī explains the term zakāt in this āyah along side prayer al-salāt as being incumbent duties upon the Muslims. He writes that,

giving al-zakāt is to perform the specified and obligated charity. The origin of al-zakāt is to develop the wealth, to make it fruitful and increase it. Al-zakāt is called as such for it is wealth extracted out of wealth for God makes fruitful the wealth that was extracted from. It is also possible that the term zakāt is used to denote purification of whatever is left of the wealth or money of the one who gave the zakāt and it refers also to meaning to sanctify the person who gives al-zakāt and purify him from his sins and bad deeds.³

Al-Nīsābūrī explains the term al-zakāt in

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 1, p.343.
 2. Ibid., vol.1, part 1, p.344.
 3. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.203.

this āyah in the following manner,

as for al-zakāt, it means in the language growth and increase and in the shar^c it refers to the amount or quantity extracted from the wealth on which the zakāt is due, for it increases the blessing of the wealth or money that was paid for. It can also be said that al-zakāt is derived from purification, since the one who gives al-zakāt commends himself and purifies himself from his sins and wrongs.¹

Al-Zamakhsharī writes explaining the reference in this āyah, that it is addressed to the Jews to pray the prayer of Muslims and to pay al-zakāt of the Muslims and in accordance with the Muslims' practice.² Ibn Kathīr explains the āyah here as addressing the Jews to pay al-zakāt to the Prophet .³ Al-Bayḍāwī offers a similar interpretation to his colleagues,

1. Al-Nīsābūrī, in al-Ṭabarī, vol.1, p.273.

2. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.1, p.277.

3. Ibn Kathīr, vol.1, p.84.

namely that,

the reference here is to the Jews commanding them to pay the zakāt like the Muslims, and al-zakāt means an increase in the wealth if paid and a bliss to the wealth itself, for it purifies it from evil and purifies the soul from greed and niggardliness.¹

Al-Fīrūzābādī explains the use of the term al-zakāt here as a reference to paying the amount due for the wealth or money.²

From these explanations we can conclude that al-zakāt, as it appears in the Qur'ānic text, refers to an amount or a portion of the Muslim's wealth, specified in quantity and is given as a purification for the giver from his sins and to increase the blessing of the wealth or money which was extracted therefrom.

By its very nature al-zakāt is incumbent

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1. Al-Bayḍāwī, vol.1-2, part 1, p.150.
 2. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.8.

on every Muslim and hence it has communal dimension, which can be identified as political or economic-political. A jurist in the Islamic Sunnah defines al-zakāt as

a noun for whatever man extracts from the right of God Almighty to give to the poor.

He adds,

Al-zakāt has the hope of obtaining bliss, purifying the soul and benefiting it with what is good. Al-zakāt is synonymous with development, purity and bliss. It is one of the five pillars of Islam, it is combined with prayer in eighty-two āyāt, it is also obligated by the Book of God and the Sunnah of the Prophet and the consensus of the ummah.¹

Al-Bukhārī refers to many Traditions by the Prophet urging Muslims to pay al-zakāt.

1. Al-Sayyid Sabiq, Fiqh al-Sunnah, Dār al-Kitāb al-^c Arabī, Bayrūt, (n.d.), vol.1, p.327.

He quotes a Hadīth that Jarīr ibn ^c Abd Allāh said:

I pledged to the Prophet . to establish prayers, to give al-zakāt and to give good advice to every Muslim.¹

Hughes explains that al-zakāt is a religious duty incumbent upon any person who is free, sane, adult, and a Muslim, provided he be possessed in full property of such estate or effects as are termed in the language of the law niṣāb, or fixed amount of property upon which zakāt is due, and that he has been in possession of the same for the space of one complete year.²

The property that is subject to al-zakāt can be summarized as follows:

- a. The zakāt of camels. Zakāt is not due upon less than five camels, and upon five camels it is one goat or sheep. The idea of one

1. Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol.1-2, part 2, pp.110-111.

2. Hughes, op. cit., p.699; also Sabiq, op. cit., vol.1, p.334.

fifth of the property here is ascribed to a Hadīth by the Prophet;'

- b. The zakāt of bulls, cows, for more than thirty cattle a one year old calf is due;
- c. Zakāt upon sheep and goats, for more than forty one goat is due;
- d. Zakāt upon horses, one dinar per head;
- e. Zakāt upon silver, for two hundred dirhams five dirhams are due;
- f. Zakāt upon gold, for more than twenty mithqāl, one half of a mithqāl is due;
- g. Zakāt upon articles of merchandise, if it exceed two hundred dirhams in value then two and a half per cent is due;
- h. Mines or treasures, one fifth (khums) is is due;
- i. Zakāt upon the fruits of the earth, a tenth is due for everything produced from the earth.

It ought to be mentioned that al-zakāt is due to whatever excess of property, wealth, goods and money, since it is not due for the necessities of life which are required and man cannot do

1. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, vol.2, pp.673-5.

without, namely food, clothes, lodging, means of transportation and the tools of the profession.¹

There are eight categories of persons upon whom al-zakāt ought to be bestowed. These categories are mentioned in Sūrah 9:60:

alms (al-ṣadaqāt) are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to Islam); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of God; and for the wayfarer: (thus is it) ordained by God.

The poor and the needy are defined in terms of their property and wealth. If a person has less than he needs of food, clothing, shelter, means of transportation and the tools of his profession then he is considered to be poor and in need and al-zakāt is due to him.² The Qur'ān

1. Hughes, op. cit., p.699; also Sabiq, op. cit., pp.334, 339-82.

2. Sabiq, op. cit., vol.1, p.383.

considers all these eight categories as having their lawful right in the wealth and property of those who have them in excess, and it is not a favour bestowed by the rich upon those in need. The Qur'ān is clear about this. In Sūrah 51:19 we read:

And in their wealth and possessions there is the right of (the needy) him who asked, and him who (for some reason) was prevented (from asking).

In this way al-zakāt is considered as the lawful right of all the eight categories mentioned above.¹ Al-zakāt can either be collected and then spent according to the shar^c or it can be spent by the (mutazakkī) the giver of zakāt himself to one or more of the eight categories.²

1. Sabiq, op. cit., vol.1, pp.415-21.

2. Hughes, op. cit., p.700; Sabiq, op. cit., vol.1, pp.402-3; also al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 17, pp.38-9.

Practice in Madīnah:

During the Makkah period the zakāt was at the dawn of Islam free from any specifications and conditions. The amount to be given at this stage was not defined yet, nor was the property and wealth that zakāt was due for specified and defined. It was left to the generosity of the Muslims to decide on the amount to be given to the poor.¹ It was not until the second year of the Hijrah that the zakāt became specified and the details of every item of wealth and property were also specified as well.² Ignaz Goldziher asserts that Islamic law at the advent of Islam had to cope with everyday practice. He poses the question of

how everyday life was to be lived in the spirit of the religious law?³

1. Sabiq, op. cit., p.328.

2. Ibid., p.328.

3. Ignaz Goldziher, Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law, tr. Andras and Ruth Hamori, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1981, p.31.

and gives the answer that,

only the basest essentials of these things were regulated and they were uncertain and unstable.¹

He considers the proportional rate for levying of taxes established by Muhammad necessitated under the circumstances at the time of the Prophet, to change the zakāt from rudimentary form of collective alms-giving to an obligatory tax levied in fixed amounts by the state.² He sees that,

in Islam legal development commensurate with public need began immediately after the Prophet's death.³

This practice, although true on the pragmatic side of the shar^c, does not, however, imply any basic change in the nature of Islamic law as such. It merely acts within the shar^c which is

1. Goldziher, op. cit., p.31.

2. Ibid., p.31.

3. Ibid., p.32.

general and limited to specific measures that cannot be modified. The zakāt, being two and one half per cent, is but one part of the institution of alms (al-sadaqāt) in Islam.

In a Doctorate Thesis Muhammad Siddiqui considers the institution of zakāt as the result of a gradual evolution during the twenty-three years of the prophetic life of Muhammad. He suggests that at the beginning of the Madīnah epoch the believers were urged to spend in terms of zakāt, sadaqāt, and infāq fi sabīl Allāh (to spend in the way of God) without any specification of a definite system of regulating these. But that it was,

in the latter years of the Prophet's life in Madīnah that a system of collection and distribution was established with definite zakāt rates, exemption limits and other regulations in this regard.¹

1. Muhammad Akhtar Saeed Siddiqui: Thesis: A Study of the Evolution of Ijtihad in the Development of the Zakāt during the 1st

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Siddiqui explains the development of the institution of al-zakāt through the major and effective role of ijtihād in the formulation and evolution of the law.¹ He considers the Qur'ān as a binding and normative source for the ijtihād activity of the Prophet beside his own personal judgment. He suggests that consultation with the Companions and the selective adaptation of the ancient Arab traditions/legal customs as well as those of Ahl al-Kitāb might be considered as the secondary source of subjective nature.² But he concludes that the enforcement of the law of zakāt as a divine command differed from the practice of the other religious duties such as salāt (prayer), sawm (fast) and hajj (pilgrimage) as well as shahādah (testimony), as being the four other pillars of Islam, in that it involved the institution of the state to enforce it. The collection and implementation of the zakāt required, in actual history, the institutionalized form of the collectors and

Cont'd: Century A.H., University of Edinburgh
Library, 1981, p.227.

1. Ibid., p.IX.

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distributors of the funds levied.¹

Montgomery Watt asserts also that the implementation of the institution of al-zakāt was done on an ad hoc basis,

The Prophet appointed men to collect the zakāt (or 'legal alms') which recent allies were obliged to pay.²

Ibn Hishām writes that

the Messenger of God sent his chieftains and tax collectors to wherever Islam has spread of the various lands.³

In the Tradition of the Prophet there are many Hadīths ascribed to him with relation to

Cont'd: 2. Siddiqui, op. cit., p.IX.

1. Ibid., p.IX.

2. William Montgomery Watt, Islam and the Integration of Society, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 4th Impression, 1970, p.162.

3. Ibn Hishām, vol.4, pp.271-2.

al-zakāt. Al-Bukhārī tells one Hadīth that sums up the idea of the motivation of paying al-zakāt. He writes,

A man asked the Prophet, 'tell me of a deed that will make me enter the Garden'. The Messenger of God (P.B.U.H.) said, 'Worship God and never associate anything with Him, establish regular prayers, give al-zakāt and establish close relations with the kins'.¹

Here again, and as in the Qur'ān, the link between the metaphysical aspect of the religion of Islam is expressed in the mundane-earthly practice of the Muslim. Worship is related to the expressions of the worshipper in terms of his everyday practice in the economic-communal realm. The idea of connecting the metaphysical punishment and the gaining of the reward in the hereafter is actualised by giving in charity. This is clear in the Hadīth told by Musī¹m that Ibn Hātīm said,

1. Sahih Bukhārī, vol.1-2, part 2, p.109.

I heard the Prophet saying:
'Whoever is able to take refuge of the Fire
(even by giving) half a date, then let him
do so'.¹

The consequences of paying the zakāt and being charitable leads to circulating some of the wealth among the Muslims. The idea of zakāt strengthens the responsibility of Muslims among one another, creating a bond of solidarity and social care. It also prevents cases of poverty and need and the ummah becomes an interdependent community in terms of the economic-social phenomenon.²

The early Islamic ummah understood the payment of zakāt to be as much a part of dīn as the performance of salāt. Thus an act which was

1. Sahih Muslim, vol.2, p.703.

2. Wahbi Sulayman Ghawji, al-Zakāt, al-Risālah, Bayrūt, 1978, pp.115-21; Subhī al-Ṣāliḥ, Ma^cālim al-Sharī^cah al-Islāmiyyah, Dār al-^cIlm li-al-Malāyyīn, Bayrūt, 1975, pp.352-7; al-Bughā, Nizām al-Islām, op. cit., pp.296-7;

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essentially religious in that it was an act of worship to God was also an expression of membership of the Islamic ummah. It was a practical expression of the brotherhood (ukhūwa) of Islam by ensuring that those who had provided for those who had not. Al-zakāt was a metaphysical expression of the internal relationship within the ummah at the practical level.

Al-Jihād

Al-jihād is yet another expression of the implementation of the Divine Will, or the metaphysical aspect of Shar^c, in actual concrete and mundane practice. Nasr contends that jihād can be understood to denote two aspects of the actual human endeavour to implement the Divine Will namely: externally it means fighting wars, either military, political or social ones, the war which the Prophet named the 'little holy war', al-jihād al-aṣghar; inwardly this combativeness meant a continuous war against the carnal soul nafs, against all that in man

Cont'd: Tabbārah, op. cit., p.320.

tends towards the negation of God and His Will, the 'great holy war', al-jihād al-akbar.¹

It has been suggested by some writers that jihād is 'holy war', and that

the spread of Islam by arms, as the term jihād was understood to mean, is a religious duty upon Muslims in general.²

Majid Khadduri asserts that,

the duty of the jihād (holy war) required the Muslims to fight all the unbelievers, 'whenever you find them' (9:5).³

Another writer suggests that,

the primary aim of the jihād is not, as it was often supposed in the older European

1. Nasr, op. cit., p.73.

2. E.I., vol.1, p.1041.

3. Majid Khadduri, The Law of War and Peace in Islam, Luzac and Co., London, 1940, p.5.

literature, the conversion by force of the unbelievers, but the expansion, - and also defence - of the Islamic state.¹

Masse writes,

spreading Islam by means of arms is a religious duty.²

In this thesis we do not agree with the view that men are faced, in Islam, with the choice of either the Qur'ān or the sword, and agree with the idea which suggests that,

it may well be questioned whether the term 'Holy War' is an adequate translation of the concept of jihād. By 'Holy War' is commonly understood a war which is conducted exclusively or almost exclusively for religious reasons.³

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1. R. Peters, Tr., Jihad in Medieval and Modern Islam, Brill, Leiden, 1977, p.3.
 2. Henri Masse, L'Islam, Editions Oueidat, Beyrouth, 1960, pp.87-8.
 3. Peters, op. cit., pp.3-4.

Jihād is derived from the terms al-jahd and al-juhd. The term al-jahd means mashaqqah in the Arabic language (trouble, toil, labour difficulty, hardship). The term al-juhd means al-tāqah in the language (ability, capability, capacity, power, strength, potency).¹ The verb form of jihād is jahada-yajhad: jahdan and ijtahad meaning jadda,

to take something seriously, to strive earnestly, go out of one's way to do something, make every effort, be in earnest, mean business, to strive, endeavour, take pains, to apply oneself earnestly and assiduously to, to be bent on something, to be intent on something.²

The term jahada means to endeavour, strive, labour, take pains, to overwork, exhaust, to fight for, to strain, exert, tire, wear out, to go to great lengths, to go out of one's way for, to put one's mind to, to apply one's self to, to

1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.3, p.133; also Wehr, p.450, p.575.

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work hard.¹ Al-Jahd means exaggeration and aim, goal, end, objective, intent, purpose and destination.² The terms ijtihād and tajāhud refer to

do one's utmost, to do one's best, and to take pains.³

The terms jahada the enemy mujāhatan and jihādan mean to fight against the enemy and strive jāhad for the cause of God.⁴ Al-Jihād is to fight against the enemies and to do one's utmost and ability whether in speech or deed.⁵ Lane considers jihād to refer to

strive, labour, toil, exert, to fight with

Cont'd: 2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.3, p.133; also Wehr, p.113.

1. Ibn Manzūr, vol.3, pp.133-4; also Wehr, p.142.

2. Ibn Manzūr, vol.3, p.134; also Wehr, p.688.

3. Ibn Manzūr, vol.3, p.135.

4. Ibid., vol.3, p.135.

5. Ibid., vol.3, p.135.

an enemy (to war, to wage war, in the way of God, in the cause of religion).¹

Al-Rāzī see jihād as being derived from jahd (power and ability) and jahd (toil, hardship), and jāhada, in the way of God, mujāhadatan means to do one's utmost and one's best.²

Hughes explains jihād as

'An effort or a striving', a religious war with those who are unbelievers in the mission of Muhammad. It is an incumbent religious duty enjoined specially for the purpose of advancing Islam and of repelling evil from Muslims.³

Qur'ānic Meaning:

In the Qur'ānic text we are told in Sūrah 6:109:

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1. Lane, Book 1, part 2, pp.473-4.
 2. Al-Rāzī, p.114.
 3. Hughes, op. cit., p.243.

And they swear their strongest (juhda) oaths by God.

Al-Qurtubī explains the meaning of the term juhda in this āyah as the highest, most sacred and strongest, of oaths. They made the extreme of oaths which their knowledge came to and to the utmost of their ability. God was to them the highest object to swear by. The term juhda refers to capacity, ability, power, trouble and hardship.¹ Ibn Kathīr explains the term as a reference to the idolators who made a definite and assured juhda oath.² The term juhda is used in the same sense and meaning in four other instances in the Qur'ān.³ In Sūrah 9:79 the term juhda is used:

Those who slander such of the believers as give themselves freely to (deeds of) charity, as well as such as can find nothing to give except the fruits of their labour (juhda-hum).

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 7, pp.62-3.
 2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.2, p.164.
 3. Sūrah 5:53; 16:38; 24:53; 35:42.

Here the term juhd means a small amount or quantity of subsistence sufficient for the donator to live by.¹ Al-Zamakhsharī explains the term juhd in this āyah as tāqah (capacity, ability, one's means).²

In Sūrah 29:8 and Sūrah 31:15 we read the āyah:

We have enjoined on man kindness to parents:
but if they strive (jāhad-āka) (to force)
you to join with Me anything of which you
have no knowledge, do not obey them.

The term jāhad-āka is in the dual form and refers to both parents or either of them. The term means to strive forcefully, to endeavour their utmost to make their children leave Islam and to believe and to associate with God other deities. The āyah here refers in the specific to Sa^cd ibn Abī Waqqās whose mother refrained from food until he might become again an idolator. But the atomistic meaning has a

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.215.

2. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.2, p.204.

global denotation as is clear in the Qur'ānic address in the āyah.¹

The idea of jihād is perhaps most observed in terms of strife and struggle for the cause of God in Sūrah 29:69:

And those who strive (jāhadū) in Our (Cause), - We will guide them to Our paths: for verily God is with those who do right.

Al-Qurtubī explains the use of the term strive (jāhadū) in the plural form in this context of the āyah as a reference to those who strive against the rejecters or unbelievers for the cause of God, meaning in order to gain the favour of God.² He quotes al-Saddī who said that,

this āyah was revealed before ordaining

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, pp.328-9; al-Ṭabarī, vol.20-3, part 20, p.85; al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 14, p.65; also al-Ṭabarī, vol.20-23, part 21, p.45.
 2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.364.

fighting as a divine ordinance of God.¹

He quotes Ibn ^CAtiyyah who said,

the āyah was revealed before the traditional jihād (was decreed). But it is a general jihād for the religion of God and for gaining the favour of God.²

He also quotes Ibn ^CAbbās and Ibn Adham who said,

the āyah is revealed to refer to those who do according to what they know.³

He quotes Abū Sulaymān al-Dārānī who said,

Al-jihād in this āyah does not refer to fighting against the unbelievers only but to defend^{ing} and protect^{ing} religion, to reply to those who (advocate) falsehood, to

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.364.

2. Ibid., vol.7, part 13, p.364.

3. Ibid., vol.7, part 13, p.354.

repress the transgressors, and the highest (of jihād) is to enjoin what is right and good and forbid what is evil and wrong; and to it (al-jihād) belongs striving against the soul when complying with the commands of God, and this is the great jihād.¹

^cAbd Allāh ibn ^cAbbās is also quoted by al-Qurtubī, he said,

those who do their utmost in obeying the commands of God and this refers to obedience in all sayings.²

He quotes ^cAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr who said,

to do to the best of one's knowledge and to avoid the worst of one's knowledge.³

And lastly, he quotes al-Ḥasan ibn al-Faḍl who said,

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, pp.364-5.

2. Ibid., vol.7, part 13, p.365.

3. Ibid., vol.7, part 13, p.365.

it refers to those who strove for Our cause We have given guidance.¹

Al-Ṭabarī explains the āyah as a reference to those

who fought the disbelievers of the rejecters of Quraysh who belied the Truth, and were seeking to protect Our religion.²

Al-Zamakhsharī explains the meaning of the term jāhadū in this āyah as a reference to the absolute and that the meaning is not restricted to anything in specific but it refers to everything that ought to be the subject for striving:

such as the evil soul which commands man to do evil and wrong, Satan, and the enemies of religion. The striving ought to be for the cause of God only.³

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.265.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.20-3, part 21, p.11.

3. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.3, p.213.

Ibn Kathīr explains the term within the context of the āyah as a reference to the Messenger, his Companions, those who follow him until the Day of Judgment, those who strive for Our cause.¹ Al-Baydāwī interprets the term within the context of the āyah to refer

to those who strive for the sake of Our Truth, and the mujāhadah here is not restricted in any sense but is generalized to include striving against the external obvious enemies and the internal-esoteric ones.²

Ibn Jazzī explains the term here as a reference to jihād al-nafs (striving against the evil inclinations of the soul), by being patient to the offences of the unbelievers and enduring and bearing exile from the homeland. He adds that

it was reported that it referred to fighting, but this is feeble and weak for

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.3, p.422.

2. Al-Baydāwī, vol.3-5, part 4, p.142.

fighting was not decreed when this āyah was revealed.¹

Al-Fīrūzābādī explains the term here as a reference to

striving to comply with the commands of God, and Ibn ^CAbbās said, striving in what God has said.²

Another reference in the Qur'ān indicating a general denotation of striving in the cause of God can be observed in Sūrah 22:78. In this āyah we read:

And strive in His cause as you ought to strive.

The term strive (jāhidū) addresses all the Muslims in the plural form.

Al-Qurtūbī explains the āyah and the term here as a reference to the believers to fight

1. Ibn Jazzī, part 3, p.119.

2. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.317.

against the unbelievers.¹ He also mentions another opinion where the meaning refers to compliance with all the commands of God and to abide by the things which He forbade. The meaning can also be interpreted as to forbid the soul from doing what is evil and wrong. In other words here the reference is to jihād al-nafs, and to strive against the inclinations and insinuations made by Satan, and to fight against those who aggress against the believers and do them injustice, and the unbelievers to repel the evil of their unbelief.² Al-Qurtubī quotes Ibn Shurayh who tells a Tradition ascribed to the Prophet that,

al-mujāhid is the one who strives with all his soul and self jāhada for the cause of God Almighty.³

Al-Zamakhsharī explains the term here as a reference to taking up arms, to strive against the evil inclinations of the soul and this is

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.6, part 12, p.99.

2. Ibid., vol.6, part 12, p.99.

3. Ibid., vol.6, part 12, p.99.

the al-jihād al-akbar. He quotes a Tradition ascribed to the Prophet, that when the Prophet came back from one of his fightings he said:

We came back from the al-jihād al-asghar to the al-jihād al-akbar.¹

He further explains the reference in the āyah to the jihād being confined only for the sake and cause of God.²

Ibn Kathīr explains the term jihād in this āyah as a reference

to striving in the cause of God with the wealth, the tongues and the selves.³

Al-Baydāwī interprets the term with reference to the external enemies such as the deviators from the path of God, and internally such as the inclinations of the soul towards evil, and that this jihād is dedicated solely

1. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.3, p.23.

2. Ibid., vol.3, p.24.

3. Ibn Kathīr, vol.3, p.236.

to God.¹

In this way, and from what has been discussed so far, the concept of jihād develops in the following manner. First the meaning of jihād in the text of the Qur'ān is to strive and do one's utmost. Second this striving is devoted to God and only to God. In this the striving is outward and inward. The outward striving is against the enemies of the believers and the form of jihād is by tongue, wealth and taking up arms. The inward fighting is against the inclinations of the soul which commands man to do evil and this is achieved by patience and forbidding the soul from doing evil. The third idea in the concept of jihād is that the action itself whether giving one's wealth, or striving with one's tongue or taking up arms and fighting in a battle, all are dedicated and offered to God. The striving of men is for the sake and sole purpose of gaining the favour of God. The inward striving is also aimed at gaining the favour of God by shunning evil and doing what is good. In the line of the development of the

1. Al-Baydāwī, vol.3-5, part 4, p.61.

concept of jihād in the Qur'ān we are able to discern and observe gradually and clearly the concept itself as an expression of the divine will being actualized in the temporal earthly existence of man. Jihād becomes the expression of the link between the metaphysical and the earthly actions of men. The believer strives with his wealth, verbal behaviour and self for the sake of God. The concept develops further when the effort of man is invested in the divine but reaps its own reward. In Sūrah 29:6 we are told:

And if any strive (with might and main), they do so for (the benefit) of their own souls: for God is free of all needs from all creation.

Al-Qurtubī explains the term yujāhid (strive) in this āyah as a reference to

whoever strives (jāhad) in the cause of religion; who was patient when fighting the unbelievers, and patient to obey the commands, he would do so for his own sake, i.e., the reward would be all his, and no benefit would God get out of this, for

God is free from the benefit of people's deeds and actions.¹

Al-Ṭabarī explains the term jāhada-yujāhidu in this āyah in terms of

striving in jihād against the enemy of God of the idolators, and the believer does this jihād seeking the reward of God for his striving and escaping His punishment, for God has no need for anyone or anything.²

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the term here as striving against one's own soul by forbidding it what it commands and making it do what it would not otherwise. For the benefit of this goes back solely to the one who strives.³

Ibn Kathīr quotes the opinion of al-Ḥasan al-Basri who says:

A man may strive (yujāhid) all his life,

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.7, part 13, p.327.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.20-23, part 20, p.84.

3. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.3, p.197.

even though he may not have used the sword once.

And Ibn Kathīr writes that God shall reward all those of His creatures who do good deeds and righteousness.¹

Al-Bayḍāwī explains the use of the term jāhada-yujāhidu in this āyah to refer

to striving against one's own soul by being patient when complying with the commands of God and abstaining from the lower desires, for this will benefit only those who do so.²

Ibn Jazzī is of the opinion that both jihād of the soul and jihād in fighting can be taken from the term jāhada-yujāhidu used in the āyah.³ Al-Fīrūzābādī explains the reference here is made in the specific to fighting at the battle of Badr and reward shall be the share of

1. Ibn Kathīr, vol.3, p.404.

2. Al-Bayḍāwī, vol.3-5, part 4, p.135.

3. Ibn Jazzī, part 3, p.113.

those who fought at this battle.¹

The idea of jihād as the expression of the divine will realized in actual reality through the actions of man is further enhanced in the Qur'ān by making the jihād as a proof of īmān. In Sūrah 49:15 we read:

Only those are the Believers who have believed in God and His Messenger, and have never since doubted, and have striven (jāhadū) with their wealth and their persons in the Cause of God: such are the sincere ones.

Al-Ṭabarī explains the term jāhadū as a reference to the believers who strove against the idolators by spending their wealth and putting their utmost effort into striving against them according to what God has commanded them to do, so that the word of God would be the highest and the word of those who have rejected would be the lowest, these are the true

1. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.311.

ones.¹

Al-Qurtubī explains the term in the context of this āyah as a reference to the believers who believed and never doubted and realized their belief with jihād and good deeds.²

Ibn Kathīr writes explaining the usage of the term here as a reference to the true believers who believed and spent their lives and souls and the best of their goods and wealth in the cause of God and obeying him.³

Al-Zamakhsharī explains that the term jāhadū can be a reference to striving against the fighting enemy, or Satan or inner inclinations of the soul, or it can refer to exaggeration in juhd; it can also refer to fighting with one's person or refer to all types of worship, or it may refer to spending one's wealth, and can refer to all that the believer spends in charity and in terms of zakāt.⁴

1. Al-Tabarī, vol.24-7, part 26, p.91.

2. Al-Qurtubī, vol.8, part 16, p.349.

Cont'd:...

Al-Baydāwī considers al-jihād here to refer to al-mujāhadah (striving) in the ways of obeying God, and mujāhadah with the wealth and goods and the persons which denotes to the act of worship expressed through money spending and also giving one's life as a means of worship.¹ We are able to observe in the explanation of al-Baydāwī the ideas of zakāt and jihād as being expressions and manifestations as well as proofs of īmān and worship.

Ibn Jazzī interprets the term jāhadū as a reference to fighting against the rejecters for this is an evidence of īmān, but he does not see in the term any connotations of striving against the inclinations of the soul or against Satan, for it is specified in the āyah

they strive with their wealth and persons.²

In the Qur'ān the concept of jihād is not only related closely to īmān being part of it

Cont'd: 3. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, p.219.

4. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.3, p.571.

1. Al-Baydāwī, vol.3-5, part 5, p.90. Cont'd:...

and proof to it, but the type of reward connected with it also metaphysical in nature and form. If we observe the term jihād within the context of the following āyāt, we will be able to see this idea clearly, i.e., that the source of the command of jihād, or striving with the wealth and the life of the believer, is metaphysical and the practice is earthly while the reward or incentive is also metaphysical. In Sūrah 61:10-13 we are informed:

O you who believe! shall I lead you to a bargain (or trade) that will save you from a painful punishment? - That you believe in God and His Messenger, and that you strive your utmost (tujāhidūna) in the cause of God, with your wealth (and belongings) and your persons: that will be best for you, if you but knew! He will forgive you your sins, and admit you to Gardens beneath which rivers flow, and to beautiful Mansions in Gardens of eternity: that is indeed the supreme achievement. And another (favour will He bestow), which

Cont'd: 2. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.62.

you do love, - help from God and a speedy victory. So give the Glad Tidings to the Believers.

Al-Qurtubī explains the term jihād in this āyah as a reference to the bargain, and he considers the address here is made to all Muslims. The bargain is one of exchange, the believers exchange belief and jihād with the wealth and their persons with the Gardens of bliss. The bargain also includes help and victory as a reward in the earthly life.¹

Al-Tabarī explains the context of the āyāt here and the meaning of the term jihād by defining the deal as a commercial bargain of exchange. The believers exchange belief in God and jihād for eternal bliss and avoiding punishment. Jihād refers, he explains, to striving for the religion of God and for His Way which He decreed for them with their wealth and their persons. This exchange or bargain will be, he adds, to the best interest of the believer. The reward will be forgiveness from God for all

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.9, part 18, pp.86-9.

the sins and will admit you to eternal gardens of bliss and felicity, and that is the greatest of all rewards since they shall be saved from the grievous end in the hereafter and admitted to Gardens of bliss. Al-Ṭabarī explains further the favour of God as being part of the bargain which is a reward in the earthly life.¹

Al-Nīsābūrī explains the reference here in terms of belief and jihād being better of the wealth and the persons.² And in this lies the essence of the good bargain.

Ibn Kathīr explains the āyāt here and the term jihād as the best trading bargain the believers can have, for to believe in God and strive on His path is a better bargain than all the trading and commercial deals they would have in their earthly existence. God has taken on Himself to give them in exchange for their belief and jihād the reward of the hereafter which is the supreme achievement.³

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 28, pp.58-9.

2. Al-Nīsābūrī, in al-Ṭabarī, vol.28-30, part 28,

Al-Zamakhsharī explains the āyāt here in terms of a profitable bargain for the believers, for if the believers knew about the good and the reward they would get in the hereafter and the earthly life, they would prefer īmān and jihād to their own wealth and property and to their own lives in the worldly existence. He adds that the bargain is the exchange of belief and jihād for eschewing punishment, being rewarded in the hereafter, with eternal bliss, and in the worldly existence for victory.¹

Al-Bayḍāwī explains the āyāt here as a reference to the best bargain the believer can strike exchanging belief and jihād with eternal bliss and also a reward in the earthly life in the form of speedy and close victory. But he adds that in the āyah there is an indication that they, the believers, prefer the earthly life and its gains to the reward in the latter life:

Cont'd: p.61.

2. Ibn Kathīr, vol.4, p.361.

1. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.4, pp.99-101.

they prefer the ready and near to what comes later.¹

Ibn Jazzī explains the āyāt as a bargain which God urges the believers to ratify.²

Al-Fīrūzābādī interprets the āyāt as a reference to the bargain and explains the āyah

and you strive (tujāhidūna) for the cause of God,

as

to comply by the commands of God in obedience.

This is expressed by

spending your wealth and going out to fight, and this is better for you than your own wealth since it is exchanged for eternal bliss and felicity in the hereafter and

1. Al-Baydāwī, vol.3-5, part 5, p.131.

2. Ibn Jazzī, part 4, p.118.

a victory in your earthly life.¹

The Qur'ān establishes a relationship between reward and striving in the cause of God. The Qur'ān promises a scale of rewards to those who strive in the cause of God. Those who strive less obtain lesser rewards and those who strive more obtain greater rewards. In Sūrah 4:95-6 we read:

Not equal are those believers who sit (at home) and receive no hurt, and those who strive (al-mujāhidūn) in the cause of God with their wealth (or goods) and their persons. God has granted a grade higher to those who strive (al-mujāhidīn) with their wealth and persons than to those who sit (at home). And both has God promised good: but those who strive (al-mujāhidīn) has He distinguished above those who sit (at home) by a great reward, - ranks specially bestowed by Him, and forgiveness and mercy. For God is all-forgiving, all merciful.

1. Al-Fīrūzābādī, p.440.

Al-Qurtubī explains the meaning in this āyah by quoting Ibn ^CAbbās who says,

not equal are those who sit at home and do not go out to fight at the battle of Badr and those who go out and fight at the battle.'

Ibn ^CAbbās interprets the part of the āyah 'and receives no hurt' (ghayru ūlī al-ḍarari) as a reference to those who have chronic illness and are unable to go out and fight.² In this way the translation of the āyah in the English language would be:

Not equal are those believers who sit (at home) - apart from those who suffer from great impediment...

But al-Qurtubī offers also the other view namely that the āyah, 'ghayru ūlī al-ḍarari', refers to those who sit, and are healthy enough

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, p.341.

2. Ibid., vol.3, part 5, pp.341-2.

for fighting and receive no hurt.¹

Al-Qurtubī explains the distinction of those who fight and strive with their persons (al-mujāhidīn) is made in degrees and ranks. He writes that,

distinction is made in terms of ranks and grades to show exaggeration, explanation and confirmation.²

He further adds that those who strive (al-mujāhidūn) who receive no hurt are distinguished from those who do not strive in terms of higher ranks and better rewards in the hereafter.³

He writes that both parties, since they are believers shall receive the reward but those who strive with their belongings and persons and receive hurt in the cause of God shall receive by far the greater reward than those who sit (at home).⁴

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.3, part 5, pp.343-4.

2. Ibid., vol.3, part 5, p.344.

3. Ibid., vol.3, part 5, p.344.

4. Ibid., vol.3, part 5, p.344.

Al-Ṭabarī explains the āyah here and the meaning of the term al-mujāhidūn by distinguishing between those who strive with their wealth and belongings and prefer to take the trouble to travel and put up a risky fight and are prepared to die on the one hand, and those who prefer to stay at home and lead a gentle life in complacency on the other. Those, who go out of their way and exert all their efforts and take pains of fighting the enemy to make the word of God higher, and strive in the cause of God and His religion, are granted many degrees higher in the Gardens of bliss than those who sit at home and receive no trouble or hurt. The distinction between those who go out and fight and those who stay at home because of a grave illness, like blindness, but spend their goods and would fight otherwise is made in the āyah, according to al-Ṭabarī, in terms of one degree, for those who strive with their belongings and their persons are preferred to those who cannot fight with their persons. But each group God has granted the Garden of bliss. But God has preferred those who go out and fight with their goods and persons in a greater way to those who do not fight and have no excuses for

lagging behind.¹ Distinction is made between these in terms of degrees and ranks of bliss in the Garden.²

Along the line of urging believers to take the course of jihād is another comparison similar in nature and essence to the one above occurring in Sūrah 9:19-22. In these āyāt we are informed:

Do you make the giving of drink to pilgrims, or the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque, equal to those who believe in God and the last Day, and strive (with might and main) (jāhada), in the cause of God? they are not equal in the sight of God: and God does not guide those who do wrong. Those who believe, and suffer exile and strive (with might and main) (jāhadu), in the cause of God, with their wealth (goods and property) and their persons, have the highest rank in the sight of God: they are the people who

1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.5-6, part 5, pp.144-6.

2. Ibid., vol.5-6, part 5, p.146.

will achieve. Their Lord does give them Glad Tidings of a mercy from Himself, of His good pleasure, and of Gardens for them, wherein are delights that endure. They will dwell therein for ever. Verily God has a great reward.

The distinction among the believers themselves is specified in terms of their deeds. Jihād is made, in the Qur'ān, the criterion for not only salvation from punishment and a way to forgive sins but it is made the measuring weight for distinction and better rewards in the life in the hereafter. In this context there is yet another comparison and example of how the believers themselves are distinguished by the Divine. In this there is yet another advancement and development of the idea of how the earthly behaviour of man realizes the metaphysical aspect and hence links the temporal with the metaphysical in the practice of jihād.

Al-Qurtubī writes explaining the context of these āyāt that God informs the believers in their worldly existence what type of reward they should expect when they believe, suffer

exile and strive with might and main in the cause of God. They shall be in distinctive ranks compared with those who believe but dedicate themselves to the services of the pilgrims and to the maintenance of the Holy Mosque.¹

Al-Ṭabarī gives a similar interpretation to that of al-Qurtubī.²

The concept of jihād as taking up arms against the enemy can be further observed in the two āyāt, namely in Sūrah 9:73, and the same repetition of this āyah in Sūrah 66:9 where we are told:

A Prophet! strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be firm against them. Their abode is Hell, - an evil refuge indeed.

In Sūrah 9:74 we are told the reason for this command:

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, pp.91-3.
 2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, pp.67-9.

They swear by God that they said nothing (evil), but indeed they uttered blasphemy, and they did it after accepting Islam; and they meditated a plot which they were unable to carry out: this revenge of theirs was (their) only return for the bounty with which God and His Messenger had enriched them!

Al-Qurtubī explains the term jihād in terms of fighting against the unbelievers with the sword and against the hypocrites with the tongue, for they wanted to kill the Prophet of God.¹ Al-Ṭabarī explains the term jihād as a command from God to the Prophet and the believers to take up arms against the rejecters and the hypocrites and strive against them with might and main, for they wanted to kill the Prophet.² Al-Nīsābūrī explains the jihād in terms of fighting against the rejecters with arms and the hypocrites with the tongue for they have plotted to kill the Prophet.³

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, pp.204-7.

2. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, pp.126-9.

Cont'd:...

It ought to be noted at this point of investigating the concept of jihād in the Qur'ān that the term, as we have seen can refer, to fighting with arms against the enemy of God and the believers. The term qātala is used to refer to jihād and is derived from the verb qātala-yaqtulu (to kill, to slay). In Sūrah 9:111 we are informed:

God has purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise): they fight (yuqātilūna) in the cause of God, and slay (yaqtulūna) and are slain (yuqtalūna): a promise binding on Him in Truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur'ān: and who is more faithful to his Covenant than God? then rejoice in the bargain which you are concluded: and that is the supreme achievement.

Al-Qurtubī explains the āyah as a reference to all those who strive mujāhid in the cause

Cont'd: 3. Al-Nīsābūrī, in al-Ṭabarī, vol.9-10, part 10, pp.126-8.

of God of the Ummah of Muhammad until the Day of Judgment.¹ Al-Nīsābūrī explains the term (yuqātilūna) to mean the same as (tujāhidūna) in the cause of God with your wealth and your persons, and the āyah indicates the same bargain between God and the believers who strive for the cause of God.² Al-Zamakhsharī writes that the term (yuqātilūn) means (tujāhidūn) in the cause of God with your wealth and goods and your persons. And the promise of God, he adds, is the promise made to the mujāhidīn in His cause.³

Fighting (al-qitāl) or al-jihād is defined in the Qur'ān in terms of the purpose of fighting, in terms of those who should be fought against and in terms of the limitations of the fighting. In other words the Qur'ān defines the conditions and limits of the concept of fighting or jihād for the Muslims. In Sūrah 2:190 we read:

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.4, part 8, p.267.
 2. Al-Nīsābūrī, in al-Ṭabarī, vol.11-4, part 11, p.24.
 3. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.2, p.216.

And fight (qātilū) in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress (limits): for God does not love transgressors.

Al-Qurtubī quotes Mujāhid who explains the āyah here as a command to the believers to fight against those who fight them and not to transgress by slaying women, children and monks.¹ He also quotes Mālik who said,

that this is a command to all Muslims to fight those who fight them.²

Al-Qurtubī mentions that some scholars consider this āyah to be abrogated, since it was the first āyah revealed about fighting, but there is no consensus among the ulamā'^c in this matter.³ Al-Qurtubī explains the āyah as a command to the believers to fight in the cause of God which He made clear and in the cause of His religion which He decreed for His servants

1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.1, part 2, p.348.

2. Ibid., vol.1, part 2, p.350.

3. Ibid., vol.1, part 2, p.348.

saying to them,

fight in the cause of obeying Me, and call on those who rejected My religion with the hands and the tongues.¹

Al-Ṭabarī adds further,

and fight in the cause of God those who fight you, and God permitted the Muslims not to fight those who did not fight them of the idolators and the unbelievers.²

Al-Ṭabarī does not think that this āyah is abrogated.³

The attitude of the Qur'ān towards those who disbelieve is defined in Sūrah 2:256:

Let there be no compulsion in religion:
Truth stands out clear from Error.

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1. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.2, p.111.
 2. Ibid., vol.2, p.111.
 3. Ibid., vol.2, p.111.

Al-Qurtubī writes explaining this āyah, that religion (al-dīn) is belief or creed.¹ He adds that there is no consensus among the ulamā' that this āyah is abrogated.² He quotes Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Jubayr and Ashāb who consider the unbelievers of the idolators, Majūs and the People of the Book (Ahl al-Kitāb) to be free to accept Islam or keep to their belief.³

Al-Ṭabarī mentions that the āyah is not abrogated and that it is a command to the Muslims not to compel non-Muslims to become Muslims and accept Islam, and that belief is free. Truth stands clear from falsehood and the unbeliever is capable of seeing the difference for himself, hence, al-Ṭabarī explains, it is unlawful to compel non-Muslims to accept Islam by force.⁴

Al-Zamakhsharī writes

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1. Al-Qurtubī, vol.2, part 3, p.279.
 2. Ibid., vol.2, part 3, p.280.
 3. Ibid., vol.2, part 3, pp.280-1.
 4. Al-Ṭabarī, vol.3-4, part 3, pp.12-3.

that God did not make the way to īmān by means of compulsion and forcing but rather by enabling and free choice,

and he quotes the āyah 99 of Sūrah 10:

If it had been your Lord's will, they would all have believed, - all who are on earth! will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!'

He adds that belief is distinguished from falsehood by clear evidence and clear signs.²

Al-Baydāwī explains the āyah as

there is no compulsion in Truth for it stands clear with clear signs and the person is free to choose between eternal bliss and felicity - and this īmān does not need compelling or choose rejection which leads to misery and eternal loss.³

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1. Al-Zamakhsharī, vol.1, p.387.
 2. Ibid., vol.1, p.386.
 3. Al-Baydāwī, vol.1-2, p.259.

In this way, and from what has been discussed, it is clear that the opinion of the leading Muslim exegetes does not at all consider jihād as the way to make non-Muslims accept Islam. And there is no evidence in these writings and views that the Qur'ān gives non-Muslims the choice between accepting Islam or facing death.

The Tradition of the Prophet has many references to the jihād. In one Hadīth ascribed to the Prophet we are told:

The Messenger of God was asked, 'who is the best among men', the Messenger of God said, 'A believer, striving (yujāhidu) in the cause of God with his person and goods.'¹

Another Hadīth is also ascribed to the Prophet is:

I swear by God I should like to be killed in the cause of God, then be brought to

1. Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, op. cit., vol.3-4, p.201.

life again, then be killed again, then be brought to life again, then be killed again, then be brought to life again, then be killed again.¹

Muslim quotes a third Hadīth ascribed to the Prophet:

When the Messenger of God appointed a commander for the army or a military detachment he advised him to, 'fight in the name of God, in the cause of God and to fight those who rejected God'.²

In Makkah the practice of the Prophet could not involve any concept of jihād as fighting. The Muslims were a persecuted minority with no power base. For them, jihād was the struggle against evil in themselves and steadfastness in the face of persecution. When the Prophet moved to Madīnah and the Islamic ummah took on a physical as well as a spiritual dimension,

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1. Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, op. cit., vol.3-4, p.203.
 2. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, vol.3, p.1357.

Islam was faced with enemies from outside who were determined to crush it. If Islam was to escape physical annihilation, then it was necessary that it defend itself. Then āyāt 39-41 of Sūrah 22 were revealed:¹

To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged ... they are those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, - (for no cause) except that they say, 'Our Lord is God'.

When the Prophet was permitted to fight he commanded his Companions to leave Makkah to Madīnah.² Jihād as the practice of the Prophet was concerned with striving with the wealth and the goods of the Muslims and their persons in fighting the rejecters. This practice was exemplified in the defensive battles of the believers and to undertake, battles like Badr, Uhud, al-Khandaq, al-Hudaybiyyah. Sābiq explains that al-jihād is fard kifāyah (that which

1. Ibn Hishām, op. cit., vol.2, pp.75-6.

2. Ibid., vol.2, p.76.

suffices for performing a duty) or a number of the believers can be sufficient enough to perform the duty of jihād on behalf of all the Muslims.¹ It is a duty for the Muslim who is a male, of age, sane, healthy, and who has means of subsistence to provide for himself and for his family until he returns.² Sābiq asserts that the practice of jihād during the life of the Prophet was merely defensive fighting against the aggressors, and that the purpose of jihād was to strive in the cause of God and earthly benefits to keep the word of God the highest. He quotes a Ḥadīth which he ascribes to the Prophet, that,

Whoever fights to make the Word of God the highest, he is fighting in the cause of God.³

In the political writings of Muslim scholars, as well as non-Muslim scholars the

1. Sābiq, op. cit., vol.2, p.261. Fard kifāyah means 'general duty'.

2. Ibid., vol.2, p.623.

3. Ibid., vol.2, p.624.

concept of jihād is considered an important part of the political phenomenon. Al-Māwardī, for example, considers Imārat al-jihād as one of the largest special wilāyah. It deals, according to him, with managing and directing the army; in managing and leading the warfare; in taking care of the army personnel and the army affairs; it deals with the rights and duties of mujāhidīn and the obligations of jihad; with having patience and steadfastness in fighting, with the strategy in the battlefield.¹ Al-Māwardī defines jihād in terms of fighting the rejecters.²

Ibn Taymiyyah considers fighting against those who received the call of the Messenger of God and did not respond favourably to it as a mass punishment obligated by al-shar^c.³ He defines al-jihād as legitimate and lawful fighting and the purpose of jihād is to claim religion over all others, and to make the word of God the highest, therefore whoever impedes the course of this ought to be fought.⁴ He asserts that

1. Al-Māwardī, op. cit., pp.35-54.

2. Ibid., p.35.

Cont'd:...

in al-jihād the believer ought either to slay the enemy or be slain and hence his reward with eternal bliss.¹

Shaltūt considers the idea of war in Islam as a means to defend the safety of the ummah, and not to destroy and enslave people.²

Ṭabbārah considers Islam as the basis of peace, for it does not allow slaying persons for their disbelief, or for believing in other creeds. On the contrary, he writes it commands its followers to deal with the disbelievers in the best of ways, and he quotes the āyah 8 of Sūrah 60:

God does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you for (your) faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for God loves those who are just.

Cont'd: 3. Ibn Taymiyyah, op. cit., pp.117-8.

4. Ibid., p.123.

1. Ibid., p.123.

2. Shaltūt, op. cit., p.506.

Ṭabbārah also quotes Sūrah 4:90 in support of his argument:

Therefore if they withdraw from you and do not fight you, and send you (tokens) of peace, then God has opened no way to you (to war against them).¹

Al-Bughā explains jihād in terms of the basic fundamentals of Islam. He writes that the basic principle of relationships among persons in Islam is peace and war, in which Islam is non-aggressive but defensive in nature and form. Whenever, he adds, the other party resorts to peace the Muslims are obliged by al-naṣṣ to stop the war, and the prisoners of war in Islam are treated in the best ways until they are released by favour or ransom.² He writes that the mannerism of war in Islam does not allow the believers to destroy or maltreat the parties that do not take part in the war, such as the civilians, the old, the children and women.³

1. Ṭabbārah, op. cit., p.391.

2. al-Bughā, Nizām al-Islām, op. cit., p.364.

3. Ibid., p.365.

Al-Ṣāliḥ suggests that the concept of jihād in Islam is to strive one's utmost, not only in fighting in wars, but also in terms of the psychological abilities and material capacity to build a better life as well as one is capable of.¹

In his voluminous treatise on war and jihād al-Zuhaylī defines al-jihād as

to strive one's best in resisting the enemy.²

He considers al-jihād as striving against the external enemy, Satan and the inner inclinations of the soul.³ This jurist rejects the interpretation of jihād as the 'holy war' offered by the orientalist, for this interpretation is full of barbarism and savagery and bloodshed. He rejects the definition offered by Majid

1. al-Ṣāliḥ, op. cit., p.260.

2. Wahbah al-Zuhaylī, Āthār al-Ḥarb, Dār al-Fikr, 3rd Impression, Bayrūt, 1983, p.32.

3. Ibid., p.32.

Khadduri that al-jihād is a type of religious missionary^{which} strives to persuade man by argument or force.¹ He asserts that al-jihād is a means to strive in peaceful terms and it might have to resort to fighting to defend the safety of the land, without any compulsion to make others accept belief. In this way, he adds, that the Qur'ān preferred the term jihād to war.²

The writer contends that the spread of Islam was not by force but by peaceful call and men were left with the free choice during the life of the Prophet.³ This concept of jihād is not in agreement with the idea of Watt that,

the jihād or 'holy war' was a fundamental part of the mechanism of Islamic expansion both within Arabia and the wider world.⁴

1. Zuhaylī, op. cit., p.34.

2. Ibid., p.34.

3. Ibid., pp.63-87.

4. Watt, Islamic Political Thought, op. cit., p.14. Watt defines the term jihād as 'striving', 'in the way of God', ibid., p.16.

Though Watt adds,

the phenomenal expansion of the Arabs in the century after Muḥammad's death in 632 was a continuation of Muḥammad's policy of Jihād. There was probably no thought of extending religion by conquest. Expansion rather came through further development of razzia.¹

Watt also suggests that rulers after the first century A.H. abused the practice of jihād.²

Another commentator writes that,

it is due to the Muḥammadan legists and commentators that jihād came to be interpreted as a religious war waged against unbelievers, who might be attacked even though they were not the aggressors; but such doctrine is wholly unauthorised by the Qur'ān. But though some Muḥammadan legists have maintained the rightfulness of

1. Watt, op. cit., p.17.

2. Ibid., p.15.

unprovoked war against unbelievers, none (as far as I am aware) have ventured to justify compulsory conversion but have always vindicated for the conquered the right of retaining their own faith on payment of jizyah.¹

Hamidullah deduces the following precepts of jihād from the Qur'ān:

That recourse to arms in Islam must have the prerequisites: a. for the sake and in the path of God; b. in case of defence; c. without least transgression; d. the right of belligerency includes killing wherever the enemy may be found, and may be turned out from places he occupies oppressively; e. no bloodshed in the vicinity of the House of God, except in self-defence; f. scrupulous observance of treaties and other contractual obligations, with regard to non-Muslims; g. avarice may be suicidal,

1. T.W. Arnold, The Preaching of Islam, Ashraf publications, 4th reprint, Lahore, 1979, Appendix iv, p.451.

and suicide is prohibited.¹

Jihād, then, was first and foremost a spiritual struggle of the individual believer to preserve and strengthen his faith in Islam. The metaphysical dimension of the concept applied to both the individual Muslim and the ummah as a whole. However, the integrity of the ummah required that this metaphysical dimension should also take on a physical dimension which was extended to the individual as a representative of the ummah. When the ummah, the community of Muslims, was threatened by outsiders, it should defend itself with physical force. The ummah's relationship with outsiders was governed by their attitude and behaviour towards Islam. In the event of that being hostile, then the ummah would take active means to defend itself. This concept of activity in defence of Islam through jihād is reflected in the Islamic concept of martyrdom. The Muslim concept of martyrdom lays far greater emphasis on the active

1. Muhammad Hamidullah, The Muslim Conduct of the State, M. Ashraf, 7th edition, Lahore, 1977, pp.165-6.

role of martyr who dies fighting in defence of
Islam.

CONCLUSION

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In this thesis it was proposed to show whether or not there is in the document of the Qur'ān a framework of political terminology. Through the examination of some of the key political terms in the Qur'ān, it has been demonstrated that some of these key concepts have political implications. Thus, according to our findings, the terms ummah, ulū al-amr, shūrā, ukhūwah and walā' have, indeed, political connotations within the Qur'ānic context, and the terms jihād and zakāt are metaphysical expressions which designate a practical applications of relationships within and outside the ummah,

The term ummah refers to a people forming a religio-political community. The Islamic ummah denotes an entity of Muslims unified in terms of a doctrine. This doctrine is metaphysical in its essence and form. The objective of the Islamic ummah is to serve and worship God with the incentive of the reward which awaits Muslims. Such a religious community is political insofar as it is communal, as well as individual, in character. It is political, insofar as it has power and authority as well as sovereignty. There exist

precepts for entering into peaceful pacts, ratifying leagues, as well as engaging in war with other entities of men. It is political because, within its framework, it continues a structure of power and authority. The theoretical concept of the Islamic ummah in the Qur'ānic document expresses these features which are reflected, to a great extent, in the practice of the Prophet in Madīnah.

The duties of the members of the ummah are moral, namely to do good and shun evil. Excommunication from the ummah is the consequence of apostacy (al-riddah). Apostacy would cause a Muslim to leave the community, for this is an infringement on the testimony (al-shahādah).

In examining the relationship of the members of the ummah, we discussed the relationship of wala'. The term had political connotations in the pre-Islamic era. The first meaning referred to hulf, pact or league, between two groups or tribes or families. The conditions of this type of muwālāt specified the terms of the pact to provide mutual assistance in wars against an aggressor.

The concept is expressed in terms of protection and co-operation. Usually in this case one tribe offered protection to another group in return for certain services or conditions that had to be fulfilled by the other group. Another usage of the term with political reference by the Arab tribes is found in the term walā', allegiance and obedience to the god or chief of the tribe al-walī. In its political sense the term was used at the time of the Prophet to denote a relationship of authority and alliance.

In the Qur'ān, the term and its derivatives denote authority, protection, friendship, assistance, league, or pact, and kin. But the Qur'ānic usage referred to a main relationship, namely the walā' relationship between the Muslims and God, and the wilāyah between the Muslims. At one level the term refers to God and the Muslims being awliyā', friends and helpers. Reference to God as the walī of the believers expresses God's role as protector, friend, benefactor, companion, assistant, and guardian of the believers. At another level, the term means that the believers are the companions and friends,

as well as protectors, ^{and} assistants
of one another.

These two types of bonds are interdependent. The nature of the community of the believers is revealed in Sūrah 9:71,

The believers, men and women are awliyā' (friends, assistants, protectors and helpers as well as guardians) of each other: they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong (or evil): they observe regular prayers, practice al-Zakāt, and obey God and His Messenger. On them God will have His mercy.

This āyah denotes the responsibility of each Muslim towards the other Muslim within the framework of the general responsibility of the Muslim towards God. This type of walā' among the believers refers to co-operation among them as an incumbent obligation through guidance and mutual care that marks the ummah as a community distinct from other types of community.

The relationship of superior with inferior involved in the Arabic usage of the term walā', is preserved with regard to God and His Prophet. However, in the relationship of individual Muslims, we see a shift of emphasis so that essentially the walā' relationship became a relationship of equals. It is implied that the kind of walā' relationship which took place in pre-Islamic times is no longer relevant to the Islamic community. History shows us, however, that that break down of pre-Islamic practice took a long time, and perhaps still is taking a long time, to disappear from the Islamic ummah.

However, it became clear that the walā' relationship should be interpreted alongside the concept of ukhūwah as reflected in the Qur'ān and the Prophet's practice in Madīnah.

In this way the basic grounds of the ummah were belief and faith and not race, territory, language, kinship and heritage. Brotherhood among the believers specified the nature and form of the duties and rights of the members of the Islamic ummah vis-a-vis each other. The brotherhood of

Muslims aimed to create among the unity, solidarity and has integrated them into an organic entity.

The structure of the ummah became, on the theoretical level, a structure of mutual affection between the Muslims bound by love for each other. They should not harm or do injustice to one another, they should express the true faithful feelings that are implied in a brotherly attitude. The homogeneity and harmony of the Muslim community should create a type of political unity among the members of the ummah. On the other hand, the Qur'ān specifies the type of attitude taken by the believers vis-a-vis the unbelievers. The believers ought not to take the unbelievers as protectors or brothers. But this does not mean that they should not be just to unbelievers or that they should not deal with them fairly.

The attitudes of walā' and ukhūwah mark the characteristic features of the Islamic ummah. These attitudes among the members of the ummah lead to the formation, on the theoretical level,

of a new community, distinct from the syndrome of the pre-Islamic Arab tribe. This community is also distinct with regards to other factors. The nature and form of the entity of Muslims stems from a metaphysical framework of the system of belief depicted in the Qur'ān. This system of belief has a political expression that is communal in character and is based on the concept of ukhūwah and walā'.

As already noted, the Islamic ummah is a politico-religious entity whose members are joined together by virtue of the concepts of walā' and ukhūwah. These two concepts do not give us much idea about authority in the ummah. However, it is clear that the ultimate authority in the ummah is God but what of lesser authority? Again the Qur'ān makes clear that the Prophet, while alive, was the next source of authority in the ummah. This authority is still with the ummah in terms of those decisions made by the Prophet, which have been preserved and which form the basis of the Sunnah or practice of the ummah. As we have already discussed, the Muslims who survived the Prophet introduced a system which was eventually termed

khilāfah as the main instrument of authority within the ummah. The Islamic political theorists have described this institution in an idealised form which does not accord with its actual practice at any point in Islamic history. This idealised form may well have been forced on them as a result of their eagerness to present an alternative to the ideal infallible Shī^cī imāmah. It could also, in some cases, have become so in order to placate individual rulers at the time these political theorists were writing. The Qur'ānic evidence for the actual name of such an institution is based mainly on two āyāt.

In both cases men regarded as Prophets by Islam are described as khalīfah, i.e. Ādam and Dāwūd. Furthermore both the Qur'ān and Islam generally seem to regard prophethood and political leadership as a dual role. In the case of the Qur'ānic reference to Ādam as khalīfah, or successor, this can also be, and was, interpreted to refer to the whole of mankind. References are also frequently made to imām and a'immah. However, all these references are to past events and have not been interpreted by any

Muslim exegete as referring to an institution that was to succeed Muhammad.

In trying to construct an institution of political leadership based on the Qur'ān, the Shī^cah have perhaps come closest to a logical position. This is the case because at least their conception of imāmah involves a status for the imām which is akin to prophethood. Yet, it is difficult to find any acceptable evidence from the Qur'ān that this was an institution which it was in fact prescribing. The main references used by the Shī^cah are 5:55:

Your walī is God and His Messenger and also those who believe, who establish prayers and pay the Zakāt and (the Shī^cah translate "while") they prostrate.

This depends on a very tentative argument that it refers to ^cAlī, who gave a beggar zakāt while praying and makes the plural refer to the singular.

They also use Sūrah 4:59:

Obey God and obey the Messenger and ulū al-amr.

It is a fact that ulū al-amr are men with some authority in the Islamic ummah. All the exegetes are agreed on that. They do differ on what this authority is acquired by military expertise and the like or by knowledge of Islam. The earliest ulū al-amr seem to have been those foremost Companions who advised and helped the Prophet. They included such men as the first four Caliphs and the members of ^c Umar's shūrā. Yet, while it was possible for the Prophet to indicate such men during his life, the problem of who they are later is more difficult to assess. It seems likely that such men must emerge in the Islamic ummah and be accepted as such by a general consensus.

The Islamic ummah does seem to involve some men of authority (ulū al-amr) within itself. The means by which these men, in conjunction with the other members of the ummah, run the affairs of the ummah seems to be a shūrā or institution of consultation within the ummah. Perhaps during

the earliest days of the khilāfah, that is, in the time of Abū Bakr, this kind of institution of consultation was most used in Islamic history. Abū Bakr was, it would seem, one of the ulū al-amr and he always tended to make decisions after consultation with the others, trying to base his judgement on a correct view of Islam and policies acceptable to Muslims. He could almost be described as primus inter pares. Yet, even in this case, there is a movement away from the idea of true consultation between men of authority and other Muslims towards a more autocratic institution which was the khilāfah (an institution as has already been pointed out, the Qur'ān associates with prophethood). This autocratic element of rule, which was the khilāfah, increased steadily over the course of Islamic history. Its power became subject to the physical power of the incumbent and the manipulations of more powerful outsiders.

The shūrā was, in early Islam after the Prophet, an institution that seems mainly to have involved the ulū al-amr. In a very short time, it came to be associated only with the appointment

of the ruler or the khalīfah. Very soon, even this limited function was abandoned. Yet it would seem from the examination of the fundamental religio-political concepts of Islam that the shūrā has much wider implications than the limited function it was given by Islamic rulers or theorists.

Any brief survey of the history of the early years of the khilāfah will indicate how anxious Islamic historians are to portray the consultation that went on during that time. This consultation is at the heart of political action in Islam.

In the Introduction of this thesis, the views of two schools of thought with regard to whether or not the sources of Islam can be considered as the precepts of political thought and political theory were presented. On the one hand the school that advocates the view that the Qur'ān in particular and the Sunnah of the Prophet are in fact the source of political theory, is represented in modern literature by Rashīd Ridā and Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabaṭabā'ī. The first, namely Rashīd Ridā, can be considered to represent the Shī^ci view. The view of Ridā can be summarised in the following comments: He

considered Islam to have laid down the foundations of social politics, and granted to the ummah the opinion and ijtihād in these foundations; among its foundation principles is that authority belongs to the ummah. Its affairs are managed by mutual consultation; and that its government is a type of a republic, and the successor (khalīfah) of the Messenger has no more privileges than the weakest of its people. He is only the executor of the shar^c and the opinion of the ummah.¹ Ridā considers al-khilāfah, the greater imāmah (al-imāmah al-'uzmā) and imārat al-mu'minīn are three terms having one meaning, namely they refer to the presidency of the Islamic government which combines the benefits of religion and earthly life.² Ridā asserts that there is a full consensus among the predecessors and the people of Sunnah that appointing an imām is a duty incumbent on Muslims by al-shar^c and not by al-aql^c.³

1. Muḥammad Rashīd Ridā, Al-Khilāfah aw al-Imāmah al-'Uzma, Matba^c at al-Manār, Miṣr,

A.H. 1341, p.5.

2. Ibid., p.10.

3. Ibid., p.10.

Husayn Ṭabaṭabā'ī writes concerning the imām,

Imām or leader is the title given to a person who takes the lead in the community in a particular social movement of political ideology or scientific or religious form of thought.'

He adds further,

Shi^cism believes that since Islamic society is in dire need of guidance in each of the three aspects (the perspective of Islamic government, of Islamic sciences and injunctions, and of leadership and innovative guidance in the spiritual life), the person who occupies the function of giving that guidance and is the leader of the community in these areas of religious concern must be appointed by God and the Prophet.²

According to the findings of this thesis the views of Ridā and Ṭabaṭabā'ī fall short of

1. Ṭabaṭabā'ī, op. cit., p.173.

2. Ibid., p.173.

the Qur'ānic view. The Qur'ān does not specify, nor define any political institutions. It does not also draw out or depict any form of any institution as advocated by the above writers.

On the other hand the second view which is represented in modern times by ^cAbd al-Rāziq has more of a legitimate claim, but, nevertheless, still falls short of the Qur'ānic view, according to the findings of this research. ^cAbd al-Rāziq asserts that Islam is a religious call to God almighty, and is one way to reform mankind and to guide mankind in whatever brings it nearer to God. This is a holy call to this world in order that they fasten to the rope of God and be brothers in worshipping him.¹ ^cAbd al-Rāziq considers two types of wilāyah. The first wilāyah is the wilāyah of the Messenger of his people, and this wilāyah is related to guiding men to God. The other wilāyah is related to this earthly life. It deals with the benefits of this life and aims at flourishing and constructing the earth. The first wilāyah belongs to God and the second wilāyah belongs to men. One is religious

1. ^cAbd al-Rāziq, op. cit., p.151.

leadership and the other is political leadership, and the two are distinctly set apart.' ^cAbd al-Rāziq rejects the view that khilāfah or imāmah as a political institution can be found in either the text of the Qur'ān or in the Tradition of the Prophet.² The writings of these modern scholars are based to some extent on the writings of al-Māwardī, Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Khaldūn. The findings of the research in this thesis do not reflect the theories of these classic writers with reference to the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. In my research here the three classic scholars fail to provide evidence from the text of the Qur'ān or legitimate claim in the Sunnah. In the final analysis we can conclude, from the findings of this research, that in the sources of Islam there is a framework of a religio-political community of men, namely the 'Ummah Muslimah'.

The institutions of zakāt and jihād were established fully after the Hijrah of the Prophet to Madīnah. Al-Zakāt constituted the necessary tax-giving of which the rich gave to the poor and

1. ^cAbd al-Rāziq, op. cit., p.141.

2. Ibid., pp.191-201.

the needy. The true receiver is God who is the one who purifies the giver. Purification is understood in terms of pardoning the sins of the giver which are attached to the wealth he has. In other words the money and property become purified through their share which is allotted to the poor, and in this way the money becomes cleansed as it were. The giver of al-zakāt becomes purified in the sense that he has paid his duty, a rightful share in his wealth, to God. In this way both the giver and the wealth of the giver become purified. Al-zakāt can be regarded as the expression, in actual earthly practice of everyday life of the divine will. It can be viewed as the link between the metaphysical aspect of Islam and its actual practice. Muslims pay in their earthly existence in order to fulfil the command of the divine. The institution of zakāt was institutionalised gradually during the Madīnan epoch where a certain share of the wealth of those who had, was considered as the lawful right of the poor. Although the practice is economic in essence, it reflected the interrelationships among the Muslims in general. Al-zakāt did not mean only economic aid but it also meant responsibility on the part of the wealthy and those who have the means

towards those who have not. This meant social care and solidarity within the ummah. This was realised within the framework of the ummah, strengthening the ties and creating a sense of responsibility. The institution of zakāt expressed the link between the metaphysical and economically political community.

The institution of jihād was expressed in the Qur'an just before the Hijrah. In fact it has prompted the Hijrah of the Prophet and his Companions. Al-jihād meant, as a concept in the Qur'an, for the Muslims striving with one's goods and wealth, his tongue and his person, in the cause of God. The institution of jihād in the sources of Islam is yet another expression of the divine will being implemented through the actions of men in an earthly and mundane form. It is the preference of the reward of the hereafter to the benefits of the earthly life that prompted the Muslims to strive in the cause of God. Jihād can be considered as political in essence and form since it is related to the communal behaviour of the Muslims vis-a-vis other entities of peoples.

The Islamic ummah, then, is provided with a loose framework in the sources. We have a community of believers who are related to each other by belief. These believers are united within this religio-political entity by the relationships of walā', which perhaps can be best translated as a relationship of mutual help and protection, and a relationship of ukhūwah, brotherhood and brotherly love. Those with special expertise emerge from among them as the ulū al-amr, men who will be recognised by their brother Muslims for their potential contribution to the Islamic ummah.

In this way the affairs of the ummah will be conducted by a process of consultation, shūrā, between the ulū al-amr themselves and their brother Muslims.

This type of political aggregate runs its affairs by means of mutual consultation among its members. Those members who have knowledge and experience in the various fields of the life of the community share in the formation of decision-making, like every member of the ummah. Their advice is sought where the need may arise. This

type of communal co-operation in the running of the affairs of the ummah seems to be, in as far as the findings of this research are concerned, the means to execute the will of God the Lawgiver.

In our analysis of the sources of Islam, it is inevitable that the picture which these fundamental religio-political concepts give us, will be ideal. Certainly, it runs counter to the actual practices of the Islamic ummah in history. Yet, it seems to be closest to what the Qur'ān and the Prophet envisaged.

From our investigation it would appear that the concepts of walā', ukhūwah and shūrā receive as much, if not more, emphasis in Qur'ānic usage, and therefore validity as a basis for the development of a framework of religio-political concepts for the ummah as do the concepts of khalīfah, imām and ulū al-amr, which have received so much more attention in Islamic political thought.

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