

# THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON MUSLIM THOUGHT, CULTURE AND SOCIETY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO THE MUSLIM UNITY IN 21ST CENTURY

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## Introduction

The beginning of the 21st century is an important juncture in mankind's history when rapid transformations in all areas of human life are taking place in almost every corner of entire globe. People speak of orderless world (Ohmae, 1990), (Details not mentioned in the reference) where geographical and political boundaries are indistinct by information and technology. It is said that we are living in a global village, where communication systems are faster and more efficient. The process of globalization has recently and rapidly caused many changes and transformation in various fields and sectors such as economics, education, politics, technology, culture and social structure and so forth. Although it brings about structural changes within the nation states by affecting the basic fundamentals governing human relations, social organizations and world views with advantages and opportunities for the developed and powerful countries.

The end of Cold War brought about the collapse of the communism and the triumph of democracy and liberal capitalism. Consequently, the Muslim world becomes more open and liberal to acknowledge the western democracy, freedom of expression, freedom of individual, freedom of religion and other basic liberties. China, the existing communist block liberalizes its foreign and economy policies as a response

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to the force of Western democracy. The United States of America, as the sole world superpower, has shown its actual tint in the contemporary world, which is not favoured by the majority population of the world community.

This is unfortunate for the Muslim world as majority of Muslims are still not aware enough about the true concept of globalization and its impacts on the Muslim society. It seems that Muslims are not ready to compete with other developed countries. In this turmoil, it is essential to give a wake-up call for Muslim nations and for Muslims to understand comprehensively about globalization and its impacts so that Muslim nations are able to strategies and relocate the current position of the Ummah.

This paper aims to discuss and assess the meaning, concept, challenges, and opportunities of globalization and its impacts on Muslim thought, culture and society. It identifies the various challenges and opportunities to Muslim unity in the 21st century and also discusses how Muslims should respond to those issues with a moderate approach. This paper also asserts that in certain aspects, globalization is good; it could bring about human brotherhood and human unity with worldwide prosperity and a healthy cultural exchange but the negative effects of globalization should not be left unchecked, otherwise they will lead to the disintegration of Islamic institutions and disunity within Muslim social fabric. It offers views on how to overhaul challenges and unite the Ummah through opportunities brought by globalization from Islamic paradigm. The discussion on the subject matters of this paper is aimed to stimulate development and enhancement of values and cultural elements within the contemporary setting without losing Islamic religious and cultural identity.

### **What is globalization?**

There are various definitions and interpretations of globalization from diverse perspectives and dimensions. It broadly refers to the expansion of global linkage and the organization of social life on a global scale and the

growth of global consciousness for the consolidation of world society. It is a historical process, the result of human innovation and technological progress. It is a series of gradual actions that break down geographical and geopolitical boundaries and turn the world into a single global village. It is borderless world, and transparent, where everything can come in which eventually will contribute to drastic competition in all situations. The process of globalization would lead the world to a global village. It is a process of complex interconnection between society, cultures, institutions and individuals worldwide. It is a social process, which involves a compression of time and space. It is also not a phenomenon but it shapes the international system and the domestic politics and foreign relations of every country. It is like a fire, which is neither good nor bad. If properly utilized, it can be used for good purposes and if it is carelessly used may cause death of lives, society, culture and other aspects.

The world is being rapidly globalized in many ways-economically, politically, militarily, intellectually and culturally. It does not only include the domains of economy and information-technology but also thought, religion, society, culture and lifestyle. There are also broader political, economic and environmental dimensions of globalization which are not covered here.

In social, cultural and religious context, globalization refers to a cluster of processes in which products; ideas, values, cultures, practices and goods are disseminated through out the world by way of new technologies. Ulrich Beck describes that globalization includes social policy, language, history, literature, ideologies and identities of everyday life. He reaffirms that it is a transnationalization, which establishes new connections between cultures, people and places. It changes our everyday environment and lifestyle.<sup>1</sup> It influences our socio-cultural aspects such as products, goods and technologies brought into our supermarkets and new culture of modernity into our cities from foreign countries. According to Muzaffar, it is a process by which capital, goods, services

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1. Ulrich Beck, *What is Globalization*, Polity Press Cambridge: UK, 2000, pp. 64-65

and labour crosses national border and acquires a transnational character. He asserts that ideas, values and tastes across boundaries which help to reshape local political institutions, social relationships and cultural patterns.<sup>2</sup> The transfer of taste means shoes, drinks, and dress and behaviours, the transfer of values means cartoons, comics, films, languages, videos, and musicals and toys, and the transfer of ideas means secularism, postmodernism, and materialism into the mind of people. To Muzaffar, the roots of the current globalization process are based on the western colonial domination and imperial mentality. That is why major centers of economic, technological, political and cultural power are under the control of the West. The pattern and the pace globalization are directed and controlled by them.<sup>3</sup>

The Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) states 'globalization is not a single phenomenon but a range of trends and forces changing the faces of the world in which we live'. This means that it is a series of gradual action and an inexorable integration of markets, nation-states, and technologies. They enable individuals, corporations and organizations to reach around the world faster, deeper and cheaper than ever before.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, Robertson defines globalization as the compression and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole, which show a concrete global independence and consciousness of the global network.<sup>5</sup>

According to Waters, Globalization is a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding.<sup>6</sup>

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2. Chandra Muzaffar, *Dominant Western Perception of Islam and Muslims*, 1999, pg. 1, <http://www.peg.ape.org/-newdawn/misc2.htm#top>
  3. *Ibid*, pg. 1
  4. OECD, *Globalization: What Challenges and Opportunities for Governments*, 1997, [www.oecd.org/puma/gvrnance/start/pubs/glo96/notes.htm](http://www.oecd.org/puma/gvrnance/start/pubs/glo96/notes.htm)
  5. R. Robertson, *Globalization*, Sage: London, 1996, pg. 8
  6. Malcolm Waters, *Globalization*, Routledge: London, 2002, pg. 3

It influences people lives when the globe serves as the active dissemination of practices, values, technologies and other human products throughout the world for human interest.<sup>7</sup> It is a historical transformation in the economy, of livelihood and modes of existence; in politics, in culture, a devaluation of a collectivity's achievements<sup>8</sup> and their integration globally.<sup>9</sup> It encompasses a distinct set of changes, which can be studied from four perspectives such as world-systems, global culture, global society and global capitalism. It is said that it reshapes the social structures and destroys the pre-existent culture, while it is as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.

Through its diverse processes, globalization as described above has rendered the contemporary world borderless. It is rapidly turning the globe into a village. Needless to say, up to now, the processes involve a one-way traffic because the developed nations are as originators of ideas and exporters of goods while others are as receivers and consumers.<sup>10</sup>

Thus globalization could be viewed as an international phenomenon largely created by the powerful and wealthy nations but it is obviously not something that upholds completely the principle of mutuality and fairness. It is also not culturally harmless to the diverse human communities in general and the Muslim society in particular. This is because ideas, practices, and even goods, which are designed and globalized by the powerful and wealthy nations, are often charged and influenced by their social, cultural and ideological values. Globalization, definitely has various challenges, facing the Muslim ummah, which may affect and

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7. Martin Albrow, *The Global age*, Polity Press, Cambridge: UK, 1996, pg. 88

8. P. McMichael, *Development and Social Change*, Pine Forge Press, California, 2000, pp. xxiii & 149

9. J.H. Mittelman, 2000, *The Globalization Syndrome*, pg. 6

10. Elsbeth Locher, *Identity, Locality and Globalization*, A News Letter, 1998

disunite them in social and cultural aspects but also has some opportunities, which may rally round in uniting and developing Muslim's bond and ties in the society.

## **Challenges of Globalization on Muslim Religious and Social Values**

Western ideas and values continue to flood into the religious and social values of the Islamic world through mass media and other means that transfer information from one side of the world to the other. Muslims are deeply affected by western ideas, products, external manifestations and the activities of the western world ranging from cinema to literature and from philosophical ideas to economics. The challenges of globalization to the Muslim world today are of several folds namely westernized Muslim intellectuals, the activities of Christian missionary, the dichotomous educational system, the role of global economy and the unparallel and unequal economics transactions and political instability and corruption.

### **a. Westernized Muslim intellectuals**

Many of Muslim intellectuals are educated in the western academic institutions. Some of them have been influenced by the western socio-cultural values and western perception of life style. According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, number of students has been sent from the Islamic world, often intellectually and spiritually unprepared. They continue their studies in westernized educational institutions for years and face with its cultural, social and even religious dislocation.<sup>11</sup> It is very sad to say that they do not possess enough in-depth knowledge of Islamic teachings. As a result many westernized Muslim intellectuals do not know the roots of Islamic socio-cultural thought and values. Obviously, they become experts in western thought, society and culture. The confrontation has been

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11. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *A Young Muslim's Guide to the Modern World*, Mekar Publishers: Kuala Lumpur, 1994, pg. 165.

occurred between the westernized Muslim intellectuals and Muslim traditionalists about the practice of the religious and socio-cultural values. For instance, the separation of religion from the state is considered as a private matter, yet Islam does not endorse this kind of perception. Such wrong and misleading conception is alien to Islam imported from the western socio-political ideology into the realm of Islamic discourse. Such contradictive perception, in fact, reflects even in the constitutions of the Islamic world. Many Muslim countries presently are established by which Islam stated or enshrined as the state religion in their constitutions; while the laws of the Shariah have been disappeared in the state operation such as in the case of Bangladesh and Pakistan.

### **The Effects of Christian Missionary's Activities**

The Christian missionary activities have adverse effects to Muslims and their social values. They adopt many alluring tactics and methods such as establishing non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the banner of economic development, educational institutions and development, medical assistance or aid, and cooperation which have hidden agenda to destroy the faiths of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and aborigines to convert them to Christianity.<sup>12</sup> There are many missionary bodies and organizations that engage directly in converting people to one of the Christian sects such as the Protestant Church, the Roman Catholic and other various agencies. According to a survey in 1990 on the role of NGOs promoting Christianity, there are 22 thousand service agencies, 23,800 Newspapers and 2,160 radio and television centers, which engaged in disseminating Christianity.<sup>13</sup> At present, around five thousand foreign agencies and more than 100 thousand missionary institutions are working within the Muslim World.

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12. Muhammad Nuruzzaman, *Bangladesh in the Web of Creeping Colonialism*, 2003, pp. 56-58

13. Md. Saidul Islam, *The Role of NGO in promoting Christianity: The Case of Bangladesh*, *Intellectual Discourse*, Vol.9, No.2, 2001, pg. 183

The main objectives of these missionaries are to convert as many people to Christianity. Their main target groups are usually women, children, the poor, uneducated and alienated. They also influence the level of Muslim leadership and actively involve in social, religious and national development of the Muslim countries such as in the Bangladesh, Indonesia and many African countries.

The Christian Missionary in Bangladesh, for instance, has influenced socio-cultural and religious life of the people in that country. According to a survey report, there are four important Catholic missions involved directly or indirectly with different social organizations by the name of co-operation, progress and development. These missions are:<sup>14</sup>

- i. Congregation of Holy Cross (originated from USA)
- ii. Congregation of Holy Cross (originated from Canada)
- iii. Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions.
- iv. Sain Francis Xavier.

There are more than 200 agencies in Bangladesh, which work, in close co-operation with the Protestant and Catholic missions for evangelization. According to estimation, in the period between 1971 and 1991, the number of newly Christian converted in Bangladesh was around 400,000. Christian missionaries have set a target to convert 10 to 12 million people in Bangladesh for the next 20 years. They use various methods to implement their missionary activities such as corruption, seduction and conversion.<sup>15</sup>

Their policies and ideas are to create economically and educationally influential community of converts, who would control all the key sectors of power, politics, education, social policy, bureaucracy

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14. Abul Kalam Khan, *Christian missions in Bangladesh*, The Islamic Foundation, 1981, pg. 8

15. Dhaka Courier, Bangladesh, June 1994



and military.<sup>16</sup> They have a long-term dimension of strategies and use them as tools in converting people to Christianity. It is a threat and challenge to Muslim unity because the influence of Christian missionary breaks the bond of family and society as well as also corrupts the mind of people within the Muslim society.

Several strategies of the mission are identified to support conversion process such through establishing educational institutions, bible correspondence schools, reading rooms, medical services, relief and rehabilitation centers and literatures. In Bangladesh, there are more than 70 missionary schools and learning Christianity is a compulsory. The missionary schools provide scholarship and accommodation for the poors and orphanages.<sup>17</sup> They cater their own syllabuses and curriculum and publish a wide range of Christian literatures. There are some agencies which are very active in publishing missionary-oriented books, journals, handouts and magazines and disseminate them through funded literature center, national council of Churches, Bangladesh Bible society and Bangladesh mission.<sup>18</sup>

In the case of medical services and aid, it is a very effective tool to influence and convert people into Christianity. In Bangladesh, there are nine hospitals and several clinics established by the missions serving as hospitals, dispensaries and family planning clinics. They also established orphanage centres where orphans are raised and trained for missionary activities and provided with foods, clothing and education.<sup>19</sup>

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16. Md. Saidul Islam, *The Role of NGO in promoting Christianity: The Case of Bangladesh*, Vol. 9, No.2, *Intellectual Discourse*, 2001, pg. 183

17. *Ibid.*, Md. pp. 183-186

18. *Ibid.*, pg. 184

19. Abul Kalam Khan, *Christian missions in Bangladesh*, The Islamic Foundation: London, 1981, pg. 13

**c. The Effect of the Role of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)**

The role of some non-government organizations (NGOs) in the Muslim countries has adverse effects to the Muslim thought and culture. They play an important role to influence individuals, organizations and governments of the poor Muslim countries through financial assistances. Normally, NGOs are controlled and funded by people who are not sensitive to Islam and who are secular mindset. They are sometimes the mastermind to back the leadership elites of the countries. It is undeniable that NGOs have positive aspects however the negative impacts should not be left unchecked.

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Development Committee<sup>20</sup> (BRAC) is one of prominent NGOs in Bangladesh, which has undesirable effect on Muslim society and culture. It has established more than 5,000 primary schools and kindergartens where about half a million students are enrolled. It is interesting that government schools have about 15% attendance whereas NGOs have about 85% of attendance.<sup>21</sup> Most of the recipients of loans from BRAC, are women. According to a survey report of Rural Development Foundation 1990-91,<sup>22</sup> there are about 62% of women, have been misused to inculcate prejudice and hatred against majority of Muslim culture, traditions and establishments which lead to break down of family ties and hatred against Islamic teachings. Even though literacy rate has increased recently but many of educated people have been demoralized and secularized<sup>23</sup> because many

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20. In 1972, Fazli Hasan Abid, who bought lands had built high-rise buildings for training purposes in Bangladesh. At present time, BRAC has managed to establish a private university in Bangladesh with its own curriculum. The international organizations such as the UNICEF, CIDA and OXFAM contribute financial assistances.

21. Mohiuddin, *The Daily Inqilab*, 20 December 1997

22. Mohammad Nuruzzaman, *Bangladesh NGO Uponibash-ar-Durbaddu Jaly*, Falah Printing: Dhaka, 1996, pp. 50-52.

23. Abdul Karim Khan, *Christian missions in Bangladesh*, The Islamic Foundation, London, 1981, pp. 13-14

NGOs-operated schools in the rural areas make reading of the Bible compulsory. According to some Muslim scholars, at the end it is the economically and educationally influential community of converts, similar in many parts of Africa countries, control all sectors of power, education, economy, social policy, bureaucracy and military.<sup>24</sup>

#### d. The Effects of dichotomous Muslim Educational system

The dichotomous Muslim educational system has adverse effects on Muslim religious and social values which in long run produces dual citizens in the Muslim World. In the period of post-colonization, the colonial masters attempt to perpetuate their rules and introduce two streams of educational systems. One stream is to produce clerics and the other to produce clerks; modern stream represents the latter and *madrrasah* stream represents the former. For instance, the British educational systems introduced in some Muslim countries are of two streams.<sup>25</sup> The modern stream of education mainly produced clerks and administrative staff without the rites and rituals of Islam while the religious stream of education produced Islamic scholars (Ulama) without acquisition of knowledge in the of science and technology. This happens because the religious stream mainly educates people to deal with religious activities such to become Imams to lead prayers in the Mosques, solemnizing birth, to wed new brides, death, funeral and rituals. Meanwhile the modern (general) stream educates people to have advantages in public and private sectors. Normally, people educated in the modern stream get better jobs and salaries and provide better educate for their children. The relationship between the two is that the religious-educated people consider others as atheists, agonists and blind followers of Western culture and values, in contrast the modern-educated people brand them as

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24. Ibid.,

25. M. Shamsheer Ali, Scientific Indications in the Holy Quran, Islamic Foundation: Dhaka, 1990

*mullahs* and fundamentalists, reactionary, detached and backward from world development in science and technology. These two classes of people disregard each other and will continue to co-exist in the society, consequently contribute to the disunity within family, social fabric and national levels.

The phenomenon of dual education system still exists in most Muslim countries even though post-colonial period reaches fifty years. The very concept of a dichotomous educational system creates two types of citizenship which is in continuous opposition to each others that can never be reconciled. It affects the socio-cultural values of Muslim individuals and society.<sup>26</sup>

e. **The Global Economy, Unparallel and Unequal Economics Transactions**

Economic globalization has several negative aspects which not to be left unchecked. It has undesirable and unbalanced effects in developing world economy. Its aim is to increase the economics growth of the developed countries by controlling the economy of the developing and poor countries. In the era of new global economy, few numbers of people control most of the world wealth and this leads to social injustice, unfairness and disunity among nations.

It has also reinforced the emergent split and conflicts between Muslim rich and poor countries. Currently, 1.3 billion of people have to live and survive on less than 1 US dollar per day.<sup>27</sup> The 20% of richest world's population control some 85% of global income and assets. This scenario will create gap and disparity between rich and poor in the Muslim society as well as the world population. As a result the poor hate the rich and vise versa because of their inferior mentality.

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26. Md. Ferdouse Khan, 1994, The Quranic Principles of Education, Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, ISESCO.

27. Ibid.,

Another factor is dependency. Muslims have developed a kind of subsidy mentality or mentality of grants and loans from rich countries under the supervision of NGOs to support their development projects and programs. This kind of mentality gradually vanishes innovativeness and ingenuity in thought and action. Many Muslim countries include in their annual budget aid and donations from the developed countries. This will create the sense of dependency towards the donors and receive imposition of rules and demands.

### **Political Instability and Corruption**

In political sphere, there are several negative factors that hinder Muslim unity. The liberal-secularist mind-set destroys religious norms, heritages and cultural values. The separation of religion and politics is rampantly adopted as an approach in many Muslim states' administration. The adherents of this mind-set believe that the proper place for religious norms or ethical values is in the mosque not in the public spheres. The probable causes of this deterioration are derived from the influence of secular professionals, educations and political system, misunderstanding of the real Islamic teachings, impacts of the adaptation of non-Muslim secularist lifestyles and prevailing pressure from overseas secularists' headquarters.

Another factor is the money politics. Some Muslim leaders have adopted the practice of buying votes for various positions in party election. Such corrupt practices threaten and undermine leader's and party's credibility. In long run, corrupt leader and party will lost support from the masses and create instability. Such practices vanish moral value and cultural identity as well as destroy social structures and social bond within Muslim society.

### **Impact of Globalization on Muslim Thought and Culture**

The impact of globalization on Muslim thought and culture may be seen in relation to the influence of non-Islamic ideologies and global media.

The impacts manifest through the elements of modern thought such as materialism, modernism, rationalism, nationalism, spiritualism, Western democracy, communism, socialism, post-modernism and secularism within Muslim society. Today, Muslims' thought and culture are engulfed with Western thought and culture due to the process of secularization, modernization, and westernization of the Muslim world. Intellectually and culturally, Muslims' minds are subjected to the West at extent of globalization.<sup>28</sup> When Muslims ignore their own ideology, the west tactfully inculcated their own ideologies in the Muslim society. For instance, the concept and meaning of Jihad has been corrupted by the West and Muslims themselves become delusion and confused. The west has popularized it as an act of extremism, terrorism or fundamentalism without understanding the root causes of its derivation. Ali asserts that;

It is unfortunate that the western ideology and philosophy which are devastating religion, combined of materialism, nationalism and utilitarian ethics by products of rationalism and virtue of in self-interest can be conducive neither to be peace nor to the humanity at large.<sup>29</sup>

#### **a. The Process of Secularization**

The term 'secular' from Latin 'saeculum' conveys dual meaning of 'time' and 'location'. The time refers to 'now' or 'present' and 'location' refers to the 'world' and 'worldly'. Thus 'saeculum' means 'this age', which refers to events in this world or 'to the contemporary events'.<sup>30</sup>

Secularization means the deliverance of man from religious understanding, the dispelling of the worldviews, denying metaphysical and

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28. Hazim M. Shah, *Islam and Contemporary Western Thought: Islam and Post Modernism*. American Journal of Islamic Social Science, Vol. 13, Association of Muslim Social Scientists and IIIIT: Washington DC, 1996.

29. Anwar Ali, *Islam Ideology and Leading Issues*, United Ltd.: Lahore, 1978.

30. Seyed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *Islam, Secularism and the Philosophy of the Future*, Mansell Publishing Limited: London, 1985, pp. 14-16

supernatural views and the disappearance of religious determination of the symbols of cultural integration.<sup>31</sup> It is also a process of rationalization and liberalization of human condition in the society. The process of secularization has successfully attracted the attention of Muslim scholars, writers and artists to deliberate the subject. For instance, the Western secular political system believes that sovereignty belongs to the majority through political consensus arrived through elections, while Islam believes that sovereignty belongs only to the Almighty Allah (swt) and His sacred laws that guide the conduct and pattern of social prosperity and harmony.

### Post-Modernism

Postmodernism, like secularism, has influenced Muslim thought and actions. It shapes the art, architecture, practices and life-style of Muslims. The ideas of colonialism and modernity provide the ground for actual consumption and total absorption of liberalism, secularization and consumerism through postmodernism. Richard Rorty says:

“Nothing has an intrinsic nature which may be expressed or represented and everything is a product of time and chance”. He continues: “Truth is relative ... . Postmodernism rejects all forms of truth claims. It accepts nothing as absolute”.<sup>32</sup>

The objective of postmodernism, according to Rorty, is “to de-divinize the world, the best way to cause maximum pain to some one is to demonstrate that everything they hold dear is without meaning and totally powerless”.<sup>33</sup>

One of its characteristics is that it is extended to include no theory, no absolutism, and no experience; everything is doubtful. For instance, a

31. Ibid., pg.15

32. Ziauddin Sardar, *Encounters*, 5:1, 1999, pp. 111-118

33. Ibid., pg. 114

famous television series entitled X-files which promotes the idea "trust no one". Post modernists also deliberately seek freedom, equal representation of class, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity and culture. It is an emerging great force for liberation and has become an ideology to beat all ideologies. It is a new wave of western imperialism.

The idea of solidifying all kind of cultures and traditions into a single form, postmodernism creates multiculturalism. True multiculturalism is based on equal share of power and opportunity. Power itself takes a particular form of postmodernism. There is no basis for morality, no truth apart from falsehood, and good from evil. The best picture, best director, best actor, best actress and best screenplay would be considered who represent value for money by giving free reign to the allure of evil, the attractiveness of perversion and ugliness and the spectacle of bloodlust.

Postmodernism as an extension of colonialism and modernity uses all images of colonialism, which described less developed nations as barbaric, licentious, depraved, fanatical, terrorist and extremist. Films like *True Lies*, *Executive Decision*, and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* portray the non-European as barbaric and bloodthirsty bigots.<sup>34</sup>

Furthermore, relativism and skepticism as its core characteristics contradict the Muslims identity. Therefore, postmodernism is inappropriate to be a point of reference or guide to further development in all aspects in the Muslim world. It is also become a fact that western cultural values have been transported into Muslim world, aiming bring about a uniform occidental way of life or westernized lifestyle.

### **c. Negative Impact of Information Communication Technology**

The globalized Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has the negative repercussion on Muslim thought and culture which should not be left unchecked. Among the negative impacts of the globalized

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34. *Ibid.*, pg. 116, also see Ziauddin Sardar, *Postmodernism and the Other; The New Imperialism of Western Culture*, Pluto Press: London, 1998



ICT is that it has brought rapid western culture among Muslim youths due to liberalization of the global media as well as privatization of local media with unlimited freedom of press. People, who are not sensitive to religions and moral values, control the global media and ignore ethical principles.

Global media makes continuous effort to disseminate negative impression on Islam through continuous depiction of misleading and misconception of certain terminologies such as terrorism, violent behavior, fanaticism, and fundamentalism. Sometimes, it manipulates and exploits news and events occurred in Muslim countries. The Judeo-Christian Circle controls the global media and spreads hatred against Islam. The globalized Western media's manipulation, cultural invasion and neo-electronic imperialism have contributed significantly towards the disunity and deterioration of the Muslim world and image of Islam.<sup>35</sup>

The doubled-standard and biased global media coverage on Islam brings about undesirable effects to the Muslim world. Such unethical and immoral practices contradict to the teaching of Islam. Thus, it is obvious that the global media aims to liberalize thought, culture and life-style of Muslims community through exporting Western culture, values and products into the mind of the Muslim teenagers.<sup>36</sup> Consequently, Muslim teenagers are being manipulated to believe that Islamic teaching and values on dress code, social conduct and so forth become irrelevant. Global media also promotes free mingling among the sexes and cohabitation life-style, even live-in couples.

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35. Dr. Hazizan Md. Noon, Islam, Sociology and Development: Conflict or Co-existence, Paper presented at the conference on Islamization of Sociology and Anthropology: Implications for Social Development of Muslim Countries, organized by International Islamic University Malaysia and Islamic Development Bank, 1997

36. Deneen L. Brown, The six O' clock Nudes, The Stars, 21 March 2001, pg. 16, also refer Md. Salleh Yaapar, The Impact of Globalization on the Muslim Value and Culture, paper presented at the International Seminar on the Impact of Globalization on Social and Cultural Life: An Islamic Response, organized by Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) on 27- 28 March 2001, also refer Ivor Key, Beach Party Is Over, The Sun, 26 Feb 2001, pp. 14-15

The impact of globalization is much more inclined towards demoralization and inculcates value free conduct within Muslim society. The globalized ICT provides a strong impetus to global broadcasting industries to export and import values and images. For instance, Muslim countries receive daily reinforcement of negative images of inadequacy and incompetence of their own world.<sup>37</sup> Another instance is that of the role played by international news agencies such as CNN, ABC and BBC which covers daily basis of international news but at the same time tarnish the good image of Islam by putting blame on Islam as a religion of terrorism and violent.

In another instance, Internet services is considered as a safe heaven for pornographic industries offering sexual services and vulgar pictures of women, men, gays and lesbians. This phenomenon gives serious ramification to teenagers as the potential of self indulgent with adultery, fornication, and crimes is high.<sup>38</sup> Drug addicts is another example, worldwide more than 10 million people aged between 15-25 are addicted to drugs. The numbers and rates of homosexuality, gay, child abuse and incest are also increasing in the Muslim world which destroys family bond, values and culture.

Technological revolution has enabled the West to penetrate cultural identity and undermine cultural security of other nations. It has become an 'electronic imperialism' which traps Muslim nations into a mentality of total dependency towards foreign communication equipments, expertise and programmes. Today's massive development of communication technology and the subsequent changes in communication infrastructures have given the advantages to the West to perpetuate the propaganda of making their culture as the "culture of humanity" or "moderate international culture". The process will continue if Muslim nations continu-

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37. Adams, W.C., *Television Coverage of International Affairs*, Northwood NJ. Ablex Publishing, 1982

38. Deneen L. Brown, 2001, *The six O clock Nudes*, *The Star*, 21 March, p. 16, see Prof. Md. Sallieh Yaapar, *The Impact of Globalization on the Muslim Value and Culture*, a paper presented at the International seminar on the Impact of Globalization on social and cultural life: An Islamic Response, organized by Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM) on March, 27- 28, 2001. And also see Key Ivor, *Beach Party Is Over*, *The Sun*, 26, Feb, 2001, pp. 14-15

ously importing western communication equipments and information programs, thought and culture without verifying them in accordance with Islamic teachings.

## **Opportunities and Positive Consequences of Globalization on Muslim Unity**

Today's Muslims are facing various challenges coming from the West. The prejudice and negative perception of the West towards Muslims contribute to the fundamental tensions between the two civilizations. Muslims should take serious initiatives to correct such attitude by tackling the root causes of such problem. Islam has its own identity, value and culture that are unique and central to Muslims life-style. Islam contains vast ideas and moral values that benefit the West such as values that universal to the West. Islam promotes moderate, perfect, just, integrated and balanced socio-political and economic system. Islam denounces terrorism and extremism.

Contrary, the West needs to understand Islam as its true teaching and must recognize the diversity of Muslim experiences across the world. Muslims also must learn from experiences of the West in the fields of economy, education, science, technology, and medicine and adapts them into Islamic value system.<sup>39</sup> The West should not forget the contributions of Islam to their civilization. Many European scholars learnt Arabic language in order to access various branches of knowledge in Islam. The rediscovery and refinement of Islamic knowledge helped to develop today's Western civilization coloured with the advancement in science and technology. If Western nations were to believe in the ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, and the separation of church and state,<sup>40</sup> then the West need to control and share such ideas

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39. Samuel. P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations?*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 1993, p.40

40. Sayyed Hossein Nasr, *A Young Muslim's Guide to the Modern World*, Kazi Publication: Chicago, 1993,

through sympathetic dialogue, discussion and understanding, not to impose them to Muslims. The principle 'every nation should respect each others' ideology' must be respected if the world order is to be maintained.

Muslim nations should alert that cultural imperialism, human rights imperialism, and electronic imperialism are emerging aiming to propagate the ideas of Western civilization as a 'universal civilization' and must be imposed to the developing countries. The phenomena of Islamic revivalism and revolution are the consequence of Muslims' reactions and responses towards neo-Western imperialism.

It is important to note that Muslims should not simply blame the West for their failures in many aspects of development and progress. Muslim countries should re-examine the existing laws and regulations and if necessary change them to suit the Islamic frameworks of development and progress.<sup>41</sup>

There are many opportunities and positive consequences of globalization to the Islamic world provided that some improvements are instigated. Such instigations include reforms in the Islamic educational system, the role of Information Communication Technology, political reformation and its stability, economic development and material well-being.

**a. Possible Reforms in the Islamic Educational System**

Education is a backbone of society. Ignorance is the root cause of poverty and socio-political backwardness in the Muslim world. Such ignorance can only be cured through education. The present educational system in the Muslim world needs to be reformed in order to attain a balanced and practical scheme that able to meet the challenges of time.

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41. I. Bruce Waston, *Islam and Its Challenges in The Modern World*, Vol.12, No 33, 1 May 1997

Before reformation is employed, source of weaknesses and shortcomings in the educational system must be identified and modified. The main purposes of educational reforms in the Muslims world are to enhance thought and life style. By doing so, unity and justly balanced *Ummah* that responsible to the well being of over the nations can be materialized. The verse in Holy Quran states that;

*"Thus we have made you justly a balanced ummah, that you might be witnesses over the nations"*<sup>42</sup>

Educational reformations in the Muslims world promote and generate Muslim individuals that are updated with highly conscious of contemporary knowledge explosion, multidimensional and interdisciplinary linkage of different branches of knowledge and proficiency. It also makes awareness of responsibility and accountability towards himself, his creator, fellow humans and other creatures. It obviously helps Muslim in building his character and well-rounded moral personality.<sup>43</sup>

#### *Reforming Dichotomous Educational System*

It is unfortunate that many Muslim countries until today adopt dichotomous educational system even though colonial epoch has left us almost fifty years. Such weakness needs treatment through comprehensive reform in the parts of Muslims political will and thought.

The weakness of modern education is that its absence of proper religious education. While at the same time the weakness of religious stream in the modern day is its absence in scientific and technological teaching. The reforms of education in the Muslim world must adopt integral approach that merge the existing two streams of educational system into a balanced and integrated system of education of all

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42. Holy Quran, *al-Baqarah* 2: 143

43. Riazuddin, H. Zobairi, *The educational and Social Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmed*, pg. 144, quoted from *Maqalat-I-Sir Sayyid Ahmed*, Vol.15, pg. 192, 1965

discipline of knowledge that can meet the challenges in the modern world and Hereafter.<sup>44</sup>

Scientific and technological advances are the two crucial ingredients in the era of globalization. The integrated advancements in all sectors of human-related development cannot be achieved unless the moral and ethical principles are given priorities, in which religion is the source of these principles.<sup>45</sup> So called progressive individual should not be frightened about religious and integrated educational systems because it is the only system, which provides a comprehensive and balanced education that able to provide well-being and success in world life and life after death.

The present educational system in the Muslim world creates dual citizens and discriminative classes of people. For instance, One-group of students is studying religion with little emphasis on science and technology while another group stresses on science and technology with no emphasis of religion. As a result, the first group does not understand properly the necessity and value of material strength and worldly power as a means of achieving social progress and economic development while the second group lacks of Islamic understandings. In these situations, knowledge should be oriented towards objective analysis, problem-solving, creative and innovative thinking based on sound reason inspired by revealed values and rational culture based on moral spiritual values. It should be necessary to devise the syllabus and curriculum in both educational systems on the following constructive strategies.

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44. Integrated approach means integration of revealed knowledge and human knowledge. It can be done within the existing system without changing it.

45. M. Shamsher Ali, *Reforming and Reconstructing Islamic Education and It supportive of Science and Technology*. This article was presented at the International Conference on Values and Attitudes in Science and Technology, 3-6 September 1996, organized by Islamic Development Bank and International Islamic University Malaysia.

Modern and religious streams of education should be merged into one and made it compulsory for all up to 'A' level. Both should have a common curriculum with emphasis on science and religion. Students should be given the choices for their specialization at the university level. Scientific, technological and theological studies should be recognized perfectly and respectfully in almost all reputable universities of the Muslim world.<sup>46</sup> The integrated educational system will produce one class of citizens with a mutual respect for each other without discrimination. It will also strengthen the unity of faith, thinking, understanding, life style and final destiny.

### *Dialogue*

Another positive initiative is to organize a dialogue between leaders of religion and educationists. The result of the dialogue should be disseminated and publicized for public awareness through print and electronic media. The main objective of the dialogue is to demonstrate that there is no absolute conflict between Islam and other branches of knowledge. Muslims scholars should extract the relevant Quranic verses to justify their stance as well as during their public addresses.

### *Emphasis on Native Language*

Language barriers must be settled through the use of native languages to obtain both religious and scientific knowledge as in the early period of Islam. The Arabs and other Muslim intellectuals used Arabic as the language of science and other disciplines of knowledge. In relation to this, today the Europeans acquire knowledge by using their native language as a medium of instruction and are able to develop enormous scientific and technological innovations.

### *Establishing the Translation Center*

Muslim governments should establish translation centers to translate books of different disciplines into native languages. Sayyed Hossein Nasr

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46. Ibid., pg. 46

suggests that the contemporary Muslims may institute the translation movement by following the same process of translations as had been institutionalized in the early Muslim intellectual developments. For instance, in the second century of Islamic history, 'Translation movements had begun from four languages to which Islam became inheritor of scientific domains, namely Greek, Syrian, Sanskrit and Phalavi. Arabic language also has become the scientific language as Muslim scientists have prove to develop scientific knowledge in the fields of mathematic, physic, chemistry, biology, zoology, human sciences, geography, optics, pharmacology, astronomy, medicine, natural sciences and other sciences. Meanwhile in the third century, al-Mamun established Bayt al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom) to encourage Muslim intellectuals to indulge themselves in different disciplines of knowledge'.<sup>47</sup>

Sayyid Ahmed Khan has stated and emphasized that the process of translation must make Muslims to understand the true teachings of Islam. According to him:

*The most effective and easy way of providing education to the people is through the use of their own languages...obviously there are instances where this policy has worked*<sup>48</sup>

He continued:

*The only way of developing a quality education is by having all of the arts and sciences translated into their own languages*<sup>49</sup>

He continued:

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47. Sayed Hossein Nasr, A Young Muslim Guide's To The Modern World, Mekar Publishers: Kuala Lumpur, pg. 87, 1994

48. Riazuddin, H. Zobairi, The Educational and Social Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmed, pg. 144. Quoted from Maqalat-I-Sir Sayyid Ahmed, Vol. 15, 1965, pg. 192

49. Meyers Alfreda Elizabeth, Theodore Beck and Sayyid Ahmed Khan: The Myth of Provocateur and Puppet in Muslim Separatism, 1940, pg.91



*Experience has taught me that it is impossible for our nation to learn modern science through translated books only. Such translations are useful for lower education but are of little value for higher education in the universities*<sup>50</sup>

Therefore, he suggested that Muslim intellectuals must produce new textbooks for higher education as have been contributed by the early Muslim scholars.

### *Establishing the Islamic Science Foundation*

The Islamic science foundation should be established at the national and international levels in order to generate high level of scientific personnel and manpower. All Muslim countries must fund such project and the fund should be made available for the potential and talented scholars in the fields advanced and applied sciences, technologies and other disciplines. The main objectives of the foundation are to produce high level of scientific personals, skilled manpower and international standards of quality of sciences. The professionalism of international body of Muslim educationists must be identified and benefited from to make a study and modify the syllabus and curriculum according to the need of the society in the Muslim world. In addition to that, for the development of science education there must be also active dialogue of logics between modern and religious educationists in order to debate and test new ideas so that the gap of different opinions among them could be abridged.

### **b. The Role of Information Communication Technology**

The globalization of Information and Communication Technology has positive impacts on the Muslim society. It has occupied central position in contemporary living of Muslim society. This advancement can be utilized to disseminate Islamic teachings, good values even to counter the Western cultural and electronic imperialism towards the Muslim world. It can also be used as a tool to correct the good image of Islam and Muslims at large

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50. S.K. Bhatnagar, History of M.A.O college, Asia Publishing House: Bombay, 1969, pg. 13

which has been continually tarnished by the global media controlled by the West. It can also reduce the tension between Muslim world and the West.

The global media has its own culture and values. It provides latest news, reports, and information. Muslims may benefit from it by maintaining their belief and value systems. It can be used as a tool for *da'wah* and missionary activities. There are programmes for the old, youth and kids for gaining knowledge and life enjoyment.

The electronic media such as television has brought about information revolution, which narrows information gap between nations and communities in the remote areas. The Internet pushes the revolution further by putting information at the finger-click, thus making communication becomes more direct and multifunctional. It has transcended the barriers of time and boundaries which allows communities and individuals to communicate with one another, no matter what distance separates them.

Intercommunication facilitates people everywhere all around the world to be aware of events, accidents, occurrences, exchange of information and knowledge. It also facilitates people to know each other cultures, religions, values, thought and life styles. Technology has increased the capacity to fulfill human needs, advance natural powers for man's sight, hearing, memory, muscle and thought. Computer programmes replace the functions of human intelligence which capable of doing far more that what most people have predicted. The application of robotic technology is designed to operate in an unstructured environment.

Nowadays the Muslim countries are confronted by the threats and difficulties caused by information revolutions. It dissolves and demoralizes Muslims thought and community. Muslims should identify their weaknesses in the field of media and ICT. They should develop new information policies, trends and performance to repair the weaknesses in order to achieve the objectives conclusion in accordance with Islamic belief and value systems. Weaknesses and obstacles faced by the Muslim countries may be considered as follows:

- a. The absence of the cooperation among them to develop the information system jointly in the Muslim world,
- b. The lack of comprehensive research and field studies reflecting the true state of information in Muslim societies,
- c. The continuation of dependency on foreign media, especially on the information provided by industrialized exchange of information, perpetuating the dependence on what are produced countries and those under their thumb,
- d. The differences in communication standards and capabilities in Muslim countries,  
Centralization and state control of information,  
The emphasis on technical and material aspects instead of developing and encompassing the spirit and matter,  
The lack of collective self-reliance for the development of the information sector together with the absence of any common policy governing this vital area.

In these situations, it is unrealistic to believe that Muslim countries would be able to confront these challenges. Strategies are needed for Muslims countries to develop information communication technology that encourages unity, co-operation and universal brotherhood etc.

### *Unity, Co-operation and Universal Brotherhood*

Today's Muslims need to be competent and creative in order to master ICT and increased new innovations. To achieve this, Muslim countries must strengthen their unity, peace, universal brotherhood, cooperation and co-existence. According to the holy Quran, Muslims are commanded to render trust and believe in Allah (swt) and not to be divided among them.<sup>51</sup> Mankind is created in pair - male and female, tribes and nations. This indicates the unity of Allah's creation. Mankind is commanded to know

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51. al-Quran, 3: 103

and acquainted with each other (*li-ta'arafu*) and not to despise each other.<sup>52</sup> Mankind is also commanded to cooperate for goodness and piety, not to cooperate for evils and malice.<sup>53</sup> The spirit of brotherhood commanded in Islam to all creations of Allah is the greatest social responsibility of mankind. It promotes peace and reconciliation of conflicts within the society.<sup>54</sup>

### *Strength and Power*

The Muslims world must identify its weaknesses in ICT in order to compete with the developed nations. They must make serious efforts to master ICT and its operational skill in order to develop defense capability in the Muslim world. Preparedness in terms of physical, moral and spiritual strength is commanded in Islam. This means that Muslims are encouraged to develop defense capability to defend their life, wealth, integrity, religion and land from the enemy of Islam.<sup>55</sup>

### *The Investment on Information*

Muslim countries must take serious initiatives to stop infiltration of foreign cultures and media into their country instead of complaining too much. This can be done through the investment on information services as an alternative to the West's.

Many information companies have now shifted from being national firms with limited reach to huge multinational conglomerates recognizing no geographical boundaries. For example, some American media firms generate half their profit from foreign markets. Sky B, a network of the media empire of Rupert Murdoch, generates one billion US dollars

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52. al-Quran, 49: 13

53. al-Quran, 5: 2

54. al-Quran, 49: 9-10

55. al-Quran, 8: 60-61

annually. CNN, ABC, Voice of America, Star TV and so on are also generating annually thousands of dollars. This is an indication of the increased trend toward globalization giving companies with huge potential monopoly over information.

Media - both print and electronic have become a mean not only in providing information but also can be utilized to promote good values, moral consciousness and spiritual development. It also helps in promoting mutual inter-ethnic and inter-religious relationship base on universal moral and ethical principles that are common to all. Therefore, it is necessary for the Muslim world to continuously establish and maintain radio and TV centers, Islamic websites and other related apparatus to disseminate Islamic thought and culture.

### **Political Reformation and Its Stability**

Upholding human rights is one of prerequisite principles in Islam. The contentious concept of democracy imported from the West must be adapted and defined in accordance with Islamic value and belief system. The shariah must be instituted and rules of law must be observed completely. Justice and righteousness must be rendered to all humanity justly. Hatred and prejudice should be omitted from the hearts of the believers because in no situation that fairness and justice can be instigated if there is bigotry and intolerance within the society.<sup>56</sup>

The elected government should not abuse the mandate given by its citizens through election. The government should ensure malpractices such as corruption, crimes and others are combated seriously within and outside governmental bodies in order to gain confidence from the masses. Political leaders must uphold the principles of morality and dedicated to work for the welfare of their constituents.<sup>57</sup> Internal conflicts should be

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56. al-Quran, 5: 8

57. Mohd. Kamal Hassan, The Muslim World in the 21st Century: The Malay-Indonesian Region, *Journal of Islam In Asia*, No. 1, June 2004.

solved within their own circle. The government and opposition groups should not be confrontational but cooperative and operate in the spirit of complementary for the benefit of citizens' welfare.

#### **d. Economic Development and Material Well-Being**

Economic developments through globalization have brought rapid integration among nations due to liberalization of trade and financial transaction as well as privatization of the local economy. Economic growth, exchanges of goods between nations, and international free trade markets have given consumers freedom of choices.

The rapid flow of information all around the globe has not only made global trades and investments much faster but also increases the ability of traders and entrepreneurs to acquire swift information about prices of various stocks and commodities in the markets. Due to this reason, Muslims should wake up and equip themselves with the essential knowledge on how to utilize their country's economic resources so that they will not be left behind in facing challenges and obstacles in this era of globalization.<sup>58</sup>

Muslim nations need to realize and maximize the significance of economic integration among them in order to revive the glory of Islam in the past. Therefore, national and International institutions or organizations should play more vital role to promote economic integration and cooperation between them transparently and efficiently.

#### **e. Maintaining Cultural Identity and Islamic Value System**

Muslims cultural identity should reflect their faith through actions, socio-political and economic ambits of life.<sup>59</sup> No laws or administrative orders shall be ratified that contravene the Islamic value system.<sup>60</sup>

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58. Ibid

59. al-Quran, 7:54, 12:80, 67:1, 35:11, 2:56.

60. al-Quran, 24:2, 5:44-47, 4:55, 17:32, 5:90, 2:178

The Universal spirit of brotherhood should be promoted within the society regardless of colour, ethnic, race, territory, and languages.<sup>61</sup> According to Kamal Hassan,<sup>62</sup> Muslim leaders should set examples of enlightened, knowledgeable, honest, trustworthy, virtuous, caring and incorruptible leadership. Media should promote and enhance moral consciousness, spiritual developments and feeling of accountability among Muslims towards Allah (swt).

### **The Necessity of Global Muslim Unity and Globalization (Possible change of sub-topic to "Muslim Unity and Globalization"?)**

In the era of globalization and modern technology advancement, state-of-the-art of the Muslims world is in a critical condition. Illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment rates are alarming and worrisome. The Muslims world is rich with natural resources but unfortunately many Muslim countries are underdeveloped and controlled by the developed nations.

Today's the Muslims world is facing threats of cultural and electronic imperialism as well as westernization. Many Muslim countries are in conflicts and receive various pressures from foreign countries and organizations. Many of Muslim countries are left behind in terms of education, economic and political developments. In the liberal-democratic capitalist's world order, rich nations are becoming richer while poor nations are becoming poorer. As a matter of fact, many Muslim countries foreign policies are controlled by the super power and any Muslim country that adopts anti-super power policy finds it hard to struggle equitably in the international scene.

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61. Faruq Hassan, *The Concept of State and Law in Islam*, University Press of America: London, 1981, pp.58-59. Also refer to the Quranic verses in 5:2, 3:103, 110, 49:10-11

62. Mohd. Kamal Hassan, *op. cit.*

It is substantial for Muslims to change their attitudes and mentality. They should not accept blindly the ideas, approaches and practices of the west without justification from Islamic teachings. Modern knowledge and technologies are unobjectionable but its manifestations through the western approach must be scrutinized.

The Muslim scholars should develop and maintain healthy relationships with its counterparts in order to enable cooperation. Western scholars endeavor seriously in understanding the dynamic of social changes in the Muslims world, but unfortunately Muslims are not willing to put efforts to update themselves about the progress in the West. Therefore, Muslim scholars should initiate appropriate approaches in understanding the West and resolve shortcomings sincerity, systematic and practical manners.

Europe had gone through two bitter World Wars and now they are able to overcome their problems in a civilized manner by establishing a union of countries tied with same history and culture. The establishment of European Union is a best example to the world that the principle of mutual cooperation and respect are workable. The Muslim world should establish a union of Islamic countries (The Islamic World Union) through mutual respect, cooperation and constructive formula. In achieving this goal, the *Shia-Sunni* and *madhahib* impasses must be solved for the sack of unity of the Muslims world.

It is important to recall that Islam is a universal religion and comprehensive way of life. It is a religion not meant to address specific tribal problems, time, conditions and community but revealed to the benefit of all humanity in all epochs.<sup>63</sup> Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) had advised Muslims not to distinguish between the Arabs and non-Arabs. One should help each other in upholding righteousness and pious duty but not in causing sin and transgression.<sup>64</sup> The holy Quran states that;

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63. al-Quran, 10:57, 34:28, 21:10, 38:88, 7:158, 25:1

64. al-Quran, 5:2



*They must enter into Islam wholeheartedly and not follow the footsteps of the evil one and also hold fast all together by the rope, which Allah (swt) stretches out for them, not be divided among them*<sup>65</sup>

## Conclusion

The above discussion has shown that globalization has brought people of diverse cultures, values and religions closer with the rapid progress in communication hence, the global quickly becomes smaller. The Muslims world must embark on serious efforts to develop policies that reinforce the strength of the *Ummah*. *Tawhidic* paradigm, Islamic brotherhood, self-consciousness, self-criticism, unity, peace and co-existence must be adopted to reduce Muslims dependency towards the non-Muslims. Muslim thoughts and socio-cultural integrity should be safeguarded from the process of westernization and secularization. All resources available in the Muslim world must be consolidated and utilized efficiently in order to bring about many developments and living conditions of the Muslims.

Islamic educational institutions and non-government organizations must play vital roles to point out socio-economic and political problems and make necessary improvement. Technologies and resources must be fully utilized for the intellectual development of the *Ummah*.

As has been pointed out in the above discussion, negative effects of globalization must not to be left unchecked because in long run it will disintegrate the core of social fabric in the Muslims world. Muslims must look out for adverse consequences of globalization and must be to filter them according to the teachings of Islam. At the same time, Muslims must work hard to improve their economic, educational, cultural and moral achievement.

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65. al-Quran, 2:208 and 3:103

In an ideal situation, globalization may be good for some angles. It could bring about human brotherhood as a consequence of worldwide prosperity and a healthy cultural exchange. However, the prevailing situation is that many countries are not able to compete in equal footing at the international stage. This has contributed to the discontentment between and within nations and communities that lead to conflicts.

A poorly regulated process of globalization could impoverish more than half of mankind, which is already poor and helpless. At the same time, it leads to cultural imperialism, electronic imperialism and economic imperialism and consequently will prolong the Western liberal capitalist hegemony.

It is important to note that without peace, unity, cooperation and coexistence among Muslims countries, it is impossible to see progresses and developments in the Muslim world. Those elements are prerequisite to the advancement of the Muslim world and its ability to counteract neo-imperialism.

Dialogue should be organized frequently among Muslims and non-Muslims in order to narrow down potential gap of misunderstanding in various issues. It could be positively managed provided that Muslims are aware of their own identity and work hard to ensure their progress.

The revival of Islamic consciousness beginning from the middle of last century provided hope that success would not be too far. In fact, a positive projection was made about the future role and condition of the ummah. According to this projection, Islamic civilization has the potential to be a global player in the 21st century. If this becomes a reality then the burden of one-sided globalization currently endured by Muslims will be lightened. Instead, they would be able to participate equally in the process of globalization in a more democratic, fair and balance footing.

Muslims should not strive for unity for the sake of uniformity but struggle to attain unity in diversity. This approach which allows people of diverse backgrounds to co-exist, respect and co-operate with each other in

a mutual manners in a global village. By the blessing of Allah (swt), it is hoped that the 21st century will be the glory of Islam. In this regard, Surah 13 of verse 11 of the Holy Quran states that;

*Verily Allah (swt) will never change the condition of a people until they change themselves (with their own souls)*

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