ISLAM, DEMOCRACY, AND DEVELOPMENT

Zaglul Haider[i]
Professor of Political Science,
University of Rajshahi,
Rajshahi, Bangladesh

Abstract:

This paper argues that Islam is an all-embracing ideology, which deals with the entire worldly affairs as well as the hereafter. Islam does not confront democracy or development. Islamic polity, called by Westerners a theocracy, (where religion and politics are inseparable), is unlike Western theocracy, which separates religion from politics. The Quran and the Sunnah underpin the state in Islam. Islamic State is not ruled by any religious class or race, but by the whole Muslim community. This system is called theo-democracy or a divine democratic government where Muslims have been given limited sovereignty under the suzerainty of Allah. Indeed, democracy is the spirit of Islamic governance where Muslims are directed to conduct their affairs through consultation. What is Islam? Does democracy exist in Islam? How does Islamic democracy contradict secular democracy? Is development compatible with Islam? This paper addresses these questions. This paper unfolds that Islamic State is seen as a kingdom of Allah where absolute sovereignty belongs to Him. His representatives settle state matters through debate, discussion, mediation, and conciliation. Islam is a growing, and development-oriented ideology which inspires people to hard work to change their situations on the ground that Allah does not change one's condition unless he /she works hard to do so. Islamic development considers the equitable development of men and women in society. Islamic democracy is based on the sovereignty of Allah, and Western democracy rests on the sovereignty of the people. While Western development is limited to worldly or material development, Islamic development is the combination of worldly development and development in the hereafter.

Keywords: Islam, democracy, development, ideology, worldly affair, hereafter. jihad, terrorism

1. Introduction

This paper joins the ongoing theoretical debates on Islam, Democracy, and Development. It argues that Islam is an all-embracing ideology, which deals with entire Worldly Affairs

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[i] Correspondence: email zaglul61@yahoo.com

as well as the Hereafter. Islam does not confront democracy or development. Islamic polity, called by Westerners a theocracy, (where religion and politics are inseparable), is unlike Western theocracy, which separates religion from politics. The Quran and the *Sunnah* underpin the state in Islam. Islamic State is not ruled by any religious class or race, but by the whole Muslim community. This system is called '*theo-democracy*,' which Abul A'la Maududi, construes as a divine democratic government where Muslims have been given limited sovereignty under the suzerainty of Allah.[i]

Indeed, democracy is the spirit of Islamic governance where the Muslims are directed by the Quran "*to conduct their affairs through consultation.*"[ii] The establishment of the state of Medina in the early 7th century (622 AD) under the stewardship of Prophet Mohammad is the best example of a social contract or democratic governance.[iii] Similarly, Islam is a pro-growth and pro-development ideology. Islamic development is a process of maintaining individual affairs as well as state affairs of human beings according to the Islamic rule of law for the material and non-material developments of this World as well as the Hereafter. The Quran states: "*And when the prayer is finished, then you may disperse through the land and seek of the bounty of God….*"[iv] Islam has urged Muslims to establish a just economic order by adopting right or good means and avoiding evil means. In short, Islamic development is the combination of Worldly development and development in the Hereafter.

What is Islam? Does democracy exist in Islam? How does Islamic democracy contradict secular democracy? Is development compatible with Islam? This paper will address these questions.

2. Defining Islam as an Ideology

Etymologically the term Islam[v] has been derived from the two Arabic words *salam and silm*, meaning peace and submission respectively.[vi] Islam signifies total submission to God/Allah. Allah decreed in the Quran: "*Lo the religion with Allah is al-Islam to His will and guidance.*"[vii] Sayed Khatab argues that "*Islam signifies the nature of the relationship between the creator and the creation-- the universe, life, and humankind is but a complete submission and obedience to the order of the hakimiyyah (Sovereignty of all sovereign)*".[viii] Maududi states that Islam stands for complete submission and obedience to Allah.[ix] "*Islam is the attainment of peace*" as Zafrullah Khan argues, "*through submission to the will of God, that is, through conformity to divine law and guidance*".[x] Islam is not a mere religion in the Western sense, says Kurshid Ahamad, He points out, *"It is faith as well as way of life, a religion and social order, a doctrine and code of conduct, a set of values and principles and a social movement to realize them in history"*.[xi] In both the East and West, Islam is popularly established as resistant to secularization. For religious Muslims, Islam is a steadfast attachment to God and his revelation, valid for all times, and the Westerns, Islam is impervious to the march of modernity and progress heralded by the West.[xii]

Islamic modernity is uniquely tied with religion; quite unlike anywhere else. This argument reveals the fact that religion is the essence of Muslim Society, thus animating all aspects of life[xiii]. In the Muslim World, Secularism is simply unacceptable because of

the failure of the Western modernization program to incorporate Islam into it. In the West, modernization comes with democracy, human rights, and pluralism. In contrast, in the Muslim world in most cases, modernization has been inflicted and recognized as dictatorship, repression, and corruption. In the Muslim World secularism is an imported ideology which means Western hegemony in the form of colonialism and imperialism which establishes Christian supremacy.[xiv] Indeed, it was the construction of a colonial and post-colonial state. Vali Naser points out:

> "In the Muslim Middle east and Asia Secularism was not the product of socio-economic, technological, or cultural change - it was not associated with any internal social dynamic. In fact, it was not even an indigenous force. Secularism was first and foremost a project of the state-first the colonial state. It was a Western import, meant to support the state's aim of long-run development. As a result, from the outset of the religious- the secular divide came to reflect the increasingly contentious relations between the society and the colonial state."[xv]

To the West, secularism is a symbol of freedom, and political and religious pluralism but the image of secularism in the Muslim World is occupation and oppression. Arguably the U.S. supports the repressive regime of the Shah of Iran from 1953-1979, supported the military junta of Algeria by the French in the aftermath of the aborted democratic process in 1992, and uniform western support in 2007 for Mahmud Abbas and his secular Fatah Party in Palestine against the democratically elected Hamas Government. The image of Western secularism was once again exposed after the Iranian election of 12 June 2009, where Ahamadi Nazad was declared reelected with a margin of 11 million votes, but the West unanimously supported the opposition candidate Mousavi and encouraged unrest in Iran on the ground of unproved rigged election because of his pro-Western and liberal agenda. What lesson can the Muslim World learn from the Secular West in the aftermath of the uniform Western support in 2013 to the military dictator Abdel Fattah el- Sisi who toppled Mohammad Morsi, the first democratically elected president in the history of Egypt? The Western attitude towards Islam naturally made secularism an antithesis of Islam. Secularism is close to the Quranic word *Dahr* whose semantic evolution came to refer to atheism, explained by Jamal Eddin Afghani– a prominent 19[th-] century Muslim political activist.[xvi]

Whereas secularism advocates for only *Dunya* (worldly affairs), Islam stresses both *din* (religion, cult, worship) and *Dunya.[xvii]* Islamic ideology rests on the idea that no separation exists between religion and politics which is the opposite of secularist assertions.[xviii] Apart from divine concerns, Islam deals with very many worldly affairs. Islam does not preclude the enjoyment of worldly life. Islam like other religions affirms the importance of life in this world.[xix] The *Quran* exhorts Muslims to work hard and improve their conditions. The Quran states, "*verily never will God change the conditions of a people until they change it themselves.*"[xx] Lapidus points out that "*the Islamists believe that Islam provides a total system of belief and a model for the holy society and government. They see Islam as a comprehensive alternative to capitalism, communism, democracy, and other Western*

ideological systems and to the existing regimes in Muslim countries."[xxi] *Certainly Islam is neither a mere religion nor a "fundamentalist" political activism.*" It is a religion, a civilized culture, and a lifestyle based on humanism that the West does not always recognize.[xxii]

Indeed, like Christianity, Islam is a religion supported by the holy text and unlike Christianity, politics is not separate from religion in Islam instead, religion and state are fused in Islam.[xxiii] Politics does exist in the teaching of Islam, the method of Islam, and the guidance of Islam. Following the thirty years of religious war in Europe, the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648 marked the end of the reign of the church and gave birth to a secularized nation-state system. But this does not have any impact on the Islamic state on the ground that Islam does not clash with politics.

3. Islam and Democracy

A western attack against Islam is that it does not allow free thinking and democracy. They allege that the Islamic system is dictatorial because the state enjoys vast powers and authority. So, they brand Islam as a tyrannical rule. They conclude that these vast powers lead to dictatorship and the common people are made slaves with no human rights of thinking about themselves. Freedom of thought is lost forever.[xxiv] This line of argument of the West unveils the double standard of the West. Khalid Amayreh, a Journalist repudiated this kind of Western claim in an article entitled "*Why I Hate America.*" He writes,

> "*I do hate it (the American government) so really, so deeply and yes, so rightly. …America is the all-powerful devil that spreads oppression and death …America is the tyrant, a global dictatorship that robs hundreds of millions of Arabs and Muslims of their right to freely elect their government because corporate America dreads the outcome of democracy in the Muslim World…. It is almost impossible for me as indeed is the case for most Palestinians, Arabs, or Muslims not to hate America so much.*"[xxv]

The spirit of democracy (decisions through consultations) is evident in the *Quran*. The Quran particularly instructs the people to ensure democracy, justice, and rule of law: "*Who obey the command of their Lord and fulfill their devotional obligation, whose affairs are settled by mutual consultation*"[xxvi]. The Quran further says: "*And that when you judge between people you judge with justice.*"[xxvii] In another verse, the Quran Says: "*…and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision put your trust in Allah, certainly Allah loves those who put their trust in him.*"[xxviii]

To build a strong Islamic Governance the Quran has stressed the allegiance of the ruled to the rulers. The Quran states:

> "*O you who believe, Obey Allah and obey the messenger, and those who are in authority. And if you differ in anything amongst yourself, refer it to Allah and His messenger if you believe in Allah and the last day. That is the best and most suitable for final determination.*"[xxix]

Islamic polity is the Kingdom of Allah, which is called by Westerners a theocracy, but Islamic Theocracy (where religion and politics are inseparable) is unlike Western Theocracy, which separates religion from politics. The Theocracy developed by Islam is not ruled by any religious class or race, but by the whole community of Muslims. The entire Muslim population runs the state according to the book of Allah and the practice of his prophet. Maududi calls this system a 'theo-democracy,' which he explains as a divine democratic government where Muslims have been given limited sovereignty under the suzerainty of *Allah*. [xxx]

In Maududi's view, the Islamic revolution will occur within the existing state structure, not to overthrow the state structure. He discourages the use of violence in promoting the cause of Islam and defends the ideal Islamic state as Theo democracy or democratic *Caliphate.* Moreover, he stresses education rather than revolutionary action as central to his approach to Islamic activism.[xxxi] Hasan al-Banna another celebrated Islamic Political thinker had a similar line of argument. Banna admits that Islam approves of parliamentary democracy with one-, two-, or several-party systems.[xxxii] For an Islamic State, the importance of creating a political party, and the necessity of formulating a comprehensive political strategy was first developed by Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brethren Association (MBA) in 1928.[xxxiii]

The Islamic State should be run by those who believe in Islamic Ideology based on divine law. Allah alone is the real sovereign in an Islamic state and the rulers of the state should be regarded as the representative of the sovereign power (Allah). "*Allah has promised to those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will assuredly make them succeed (the present rulers) and grant them vicegerency (Khilafa) in the land just as He made before them to succeed (others).*"[xxxiv]

In an Islamic Society where everyone is the *Caliph* of God and has equal participation, this *Caliphate*[xxxv] does not allow any class or, division based on the distinction of birth and social position. All enjoy equal status and position in this society. Prophet Mohammad says:

> *"No one is superior to another except in point of faith and piety. All men are descended from Adam and Adam was made of clay. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab over an Arab; neither does a white man possess any superiority over a black man, nor a black man over a white man, except in point of piety."*[xxxvi]

In an Islamic society, everybody is entitled to express his or her opinion. Each one of them is the repository of the *Caliphate*. On this ground, all Muslims have equal freedom to express their opinion.[xxxvii] Indeed, democracy is the spirit of the Islamic government system where Muslims are directed by the Quran to conduct their affairs through consultation.[xxxviii] Although the contributions of Muslim scholars to the development of democratic governance are not available in the existing Euro-centric literature, the contributions of Muslim scholars are also very important. Adel Safety notes:

"The European thinkers of the Enlightenment were not the only, indeed not the first, source of the values that came to be associated with democratic governance. Long before Rousseau and Locke, Arab social philosopher Al-Farabi spoke of liberty, equality, and rule based on the consent of the governed."[xxxix]

In a survey of Freedom House in 2000 it was demonstrated that in the 47 Islamic countries with a Muslim majority, only 11(23%) have democratically elected governments, while 110 of the 145 non-Islamic states (76%) are electoral democracies. Based on this study of Freedom House Karatnycky, concludes that non-Islamic states are nearly three times more likely to be democratic than Islamic State. Furthermore, none of the 16 Arab states is an electoral democracy.[xl] The above two conclusions of Karatnycky appear to be logically fallacious and theoretically misleading. Karatnycky, could not unfailingly differentiate between the Islamic State and the Muslim State.[xli]

Moreover, he has also mixed up the Arab states with the Islamic States. There is no correlation between the Arab States and the Islamic states. The Arab state like the *Ba'athist* Iraq was Socialist one while, countries like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, Qatar, etc. are Monarchical, not Islamic in a strict sense. Most of the Muslim States who are members of the OIC are secular states while the numbers of the Islamic states are very insignificant and are ruled strictly by the Islamic principles of the *Quran* and *Sunnah*.

Islam affirms that man is the representative of *Allah* (*khalifa*) on earth. Every individual in an Islamic society enjoys the rights and powers of the *caliphate* of God and in this respect all individuals are equal. The government for running the state will be formed by an agreement with these individuals. And the authority of the state will only be an extension of the powers of the individual delegated to it.[xlii] Their opinion will be decisive in the formation of the Government, which would be run by their wishes.[xliii] The responsibility for the administration of the Government in an Islamic state is entrusted to an *Amir (leader)* who is equal to the Head of the State and Head of the Government in a western democratic State. All adult men and women who subscribe to the fundamentals of the constitution are entitled to vote for the election to the *Amir.* The *Amir* should command the confidence of the majority and should have the qualities of God-fearing and the qualities of statesmanship. In short, Amir should combine both virtue and quality.[xliv]

In Islamic democracy, a *Shura* (advisory council) is also elected by the people to advise and guide the *Amir* to administer the country. The *Amir* may retain office only if he enjoys the confidence of the people and must relinquish it when he loses that confidence.[xlv] Generally, Western, and pro-Western scholars claim that democracy and religion are contradictory and conflicting because religion is based on beliefs and rituals related to the divine and sacred. It is decidedly metaphysical and otherworldly in orientation. Democracy on the other hand is decidedly this-worldly.[xlvi] This argument is simply inapplicable, and unacceptable in Islam because it is believed to be the way of life that covers this worldly and other worldly affairs. Siddiqi elucidates:

"In the West Islam is often thought of as a religion like any other. What is overlooked is that the founder of Islam the Prophet Mohammad, did not merely preach a creed and a set of gospels enshrined in a book; he, unlike any other founder of a great religion, also established a dominion. The Prophet was not an old man who simply gathered his flock in prayer in a mosque and taught them the gospel. The prophet in the last 10 years of his life at medina was also Head of State. He led prayers in the mosque, and he led his army of the faithful into battle. He experienced victory (at Badr, A.D.623) defeat (at Ohad, A.D.624), and signed at least one peace treaty (at Hudaiybiya, A.D.630). In private life, he was no recluse. He was a husband and father. He transformed the Arabian Peninsula from a congeries of warring tribes and feuding family clans into a united nation. It was this consolidated and disciplined nation that the second Caliph of Islam, Omar the Great (A.D.634-44), sent into battle against the Persians, the East Roman Empire, and the Egyptians. The momentum that built up landed the Muslims in Spain in the West and India in the East."[xlvii]

The difference between Islamic democracy and Western democracy, therefore, is that the latter is based on the concept of popular sovereignty while the former rests on the principle of popular *Khilafa*. In Western democracy, people are sovereign; in Islam, sovereignty is vested in *Allah* and the people are his Caliphs or representatives. In the former, people make their laws; in the latter, they must follow and obey the laws given by Allah through his prophet (*Sharia)*. Without understanding the intricacies of Islamic politics, the Western efforts to enforce Western democracy by ignoring the mainstream Islamists and endorsing their chosen reformists in Muslim societies obviously will fail to be credible, and it will do little good and might lead to considerable harm to the West.[xlviii] Islam discourages the concept of cultural nationalism and supports Tran's nationalism or *Shariah* culture. Unlike *Islamisation* which takes place within the parameters of the nation-state system, *Shariatisation* goes beyond the territorial boundary. *Shariatisation* derives from globalization but the discourse of Islam.[xlix] In a western democracy, Government undertakes to fulfill the will of the people, while in an Islamic democracy; the government and the people must fulfill the will of God.[l] Indeed, the politically developed Islamic society is based on rule of law (*Sharia* law) as interpreted and applied by the learned scholars of Islam, the *ulema*, the legists, and the *fuqaha* as a religion of worldly as well as divine concerns. Islam regulates men's conduct according to the principles of justice and equality transmitted by the prophet.[li] In brief, Michael Hudson rightly points out that *"politically developed Islamic society is God-centered whereas the politically developed western society is man-centered"*.[lii] In a concrete sense, the example of an Islamic state is the Medina state under the stewardship of Prophet Muhammad (PBH), and the state under the first four successors to the prophet well-known as *rashidun caliphs,*[liii] meaning rightly guided caliphs.

4. Islam and Development

We can argue that obviously, Islam is an ideology that deals with entire worldly affairs as well as the hereafter. The outcome in this world and the hereafter depends on the lifetime activities of everyone in the world we live in. In other words, the Worldly deeds of everyone are the causes and the returns in this world and the hereafter are effects. Islamic Ideology leads an individual or a nation toward the way of Islamic development. Islamic development involves absolutely the maintenance of individual affairs and state affairs of Human beings according to the Islamic rule of law or *Sariah* law for the material and non-material development (*Hasana or khair*)[liv] of this world as well as the development of the hereafter. Both at the individual and state levels *God-fearing* or accountable to God for every action can ensure the real development of Worldly affairs as well as the development of the hereafter. God states in the *Quran*:

> "*There are men who say: Our lord! Give us (your bounties) in this world! "But they will have no portion in the Hereafter. And there are men who say: Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and defend us from the torment of the fire!". To these will be allotted what they have earned, and Allah is quick in account."*[lv]

It should be recalled that for the economic development of an individual, and the economic development of a state, freedom of work and enterprise are made obligatory in Islam. That's why" Allah *has permitted trade and forbidden usury.*"[lvi] An Islamic government must protect individual freedom,[lvii] and encourage hard work to achieve individual as well as national development. The Quran decreed: "And when the prayer is finished, then you may disperse through the land and seek of the bounty of Allah and celebrate the praise of Allah often (and without stint), and you may prosper."[lviii]

Individuals have been given the right in Islam to enjoy the resources or wealth that he or she earns legally and whatever wealth he or she receives through the Islamic law of inheritance. Islam urges upon the Muslims to establish a just economic order by adopting right or good means (*Maruf*) and avoiding evil means (*Munker*)[lix] Quran points out: ("*They are) those who, if we establish them in the land establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid wrong; with Allah rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs.*"[lx]

Islamic Ideology unfolds in that it tends to lead individuals and nations toward the goal (Islamic Development), and Islamic ideology is an ultimate ideology of an Islamic State. Its goal is the establishment of an Islamic political order in the form of a state. The political and legal system of this state originates directly from *shariah* which is called a "*holistic totalizing system*" that covers all aspects of human life.[lxi] Islamic Economic system is called an egalitarian system based on social justice. Banna calls this system a "*reasonable socialism*" which combines the best aspects of both capitalism and communism, permitting individualism on the one hand and affirming the essential state intervention on the other.[lxii]

Maududi posits that the Islamic state is ideological and all-embracing. "*Its sphere of activity is coextensive with the whole of Human life*", which is the very antithesis of secular Western democracy, based on the sovereignty of people, as opposed to the sovereignty of *Allah* –central to an Islamic state.[lxiii] *Allah* completed his favor upon the Muslims through Islam. *Allah* confirms in the Quran "*…I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.*"[lxiv]

4.1. Islam, Women, and Development

Repudiating the western imagination that Muslim societies are backward in the status of women, Ali Mazrui argues that British women got property rights in 1870, while Muslim women have always had the right. While in many Western cultures' daughters could not inherit anything if there were sons in the family, Islamic law has always allocated shares from every inheritance to both daughters and sons. In almost all Western countries but New Zealand women did not get voting right until the twentieth century. Great Britain granted voting rights to women in two stages in 1918 and 1928 and the U.S. in 1920, France in 1944, and Switzerland in 1971, decades after Muslim women in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan had been casting ballots.[lxv]

The Western World did not have any experience with women presidents/prime ministers before the Muslim World. While two of the most populous Muslim countries Pakistan and Bangladesh have experienced women as prime ministers. Benazir Bhutto was the prime minister of Pakistan for two terms and Khaleda Zia and Sheik Hasina headed the governments in Bangladesh consecutively. Tansu Ciller served as the prime minister of Turkey.[lxvi] Ali Mazrui's argument clearly shows that Muslim women are ahead in female empowerment.

In the Western mind, it is ingrained that Islam means 'polygamy or '*harem*,' and *purdah* (veil)".[lxvii] But they failed to understand the real spirit of Islam. The Quran upgraded the status of women in several directions. Women are given a fully pledged personality. The spouses are declared as each other's garments.[lxviii] This means that the husband-wife relationship is determined by "*mutual support, mutual comfort, and mutual protection, fitting into each other as a garment fits the body.*"[lxix] The woman has been granted the same rights over the man as the man has over his wife. Unlimited polygamy is strictly regulated, and the number of wives was limited to four. The Quran warned that "*You shall never be able to do justice among wives no matter how desirous you are (to do so)*"[lxx] and that "*if you fear you cannot do justice (among wives) then marry only one.*"[lxxi] This is a clear warning from Allah about polygamy.[lxxii]

Instead of leaving any scope for illegal sex relationships, it is permitted to have more than one wife under strict conditions which means the husband will have to take care of all wives with perfect equality in material things as well as affection and non-material things. Practically this condition is impossible to fulfill.[lxxiii] While Westerners ignore unlimited extramarital sexual activities which sometimes make it difficult to ascertain the real father of children, and very often which is decided by the court based on DNA tests. Extramarital sex in the West is so common that even it is causing an alarming number of teenage pregnancies. The modernity in Islam further appears when

Islam permits Muslim men to marry Christian and Jewish women. It did not force these women to convert to Islam but allowed them to practice their religions. Again, Islamic law does not distinguish between the rights of wives, whether Muslim or people of the book.[lxxiv]

On the other hand, the West is very critical of the *Purdah* or veil of women. But they are unaware that *purdah* is a mandatory part of Islamic culture. It enhances women's visibility in the public sphere and protects women from sexual harassment.[lxxv] *Purdah* is not only mandatory for women, but also for men as well. For women, *purdah* means covering her external beauty and controlling internal sexual desire and for Men, *purdah* is refraining from looking at the forbidden things externally and controlling internal desires as well. Unfortunately, even in the patriarchal Muslim society *purdah* for men is not a very talked-about issue.

The Quran commands: *Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things) and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them. Verily, Allah is well acquainted with what they do.*"[lxxvi] Indeed, Westerners ignore the intrinsic distinction between the Islamic and Western Secular cultures.

4.2. Islam and Terrorism
Lapidus portrayed the Western imagination about Islam:

> *"Islam inspires fear in the western imagination. It calls to their mind puritanical holy warriors, fanatics, dervishes, suicide bombers, hijackers, and human waves thrown into battle. The strange fulminations of Khomeni, Qaddafi, or Saddam Hossain about martyrdom and death to the enemies of Islam help to sustain these images… What is more Journalists and scholars constantly remind us of the historic clash of Civilization between Islam and the West."[lxxvii].*

The western claim about Islam is overruled by other scholars that tolerance is the fundamental pillar of Islam. It strongly disowns aggression and terrorism. Quran lays down: "*Whosoever kills a human being (without any reason like) manslaughter or corruption on earth, it is thought he had killed all mankind, and whose ever saves a life it is as though he had saved the lives of all mankind.*"[lxxviii] The Quran further says in another verse: "*Take not life which Allah has made sacred, except by way of justice and law.*"[lxxix] Islamic philosophy unfolds that peace is an achievement of human beings and a gift of *Allah.*[lxxx]

The Quran unambiguously condoned terrorism. The Quran strongly emphasized tolerance and justice.[lxxxi] The Quran says, "*Don't go about committing iniquity in the earth and causing disorder*".[lxxxii] In another verse, the Quran succinctly points out, "*They seek to create disorder, and Allah loves not those who create disorder.*"[lxxxiii] Allah further says: "*Seek not to create disorder in the earth. Verily Allah loves not those who seek to create disorder*"[lxxxiv] chaos, conflict, and disorder are not the rules in Islam. Sayyid Kutb argues:

> *"Peace is the rule in Islam …and emerges as the preamble to the principle of harmony. Peace means harmony in the universe, the laws of life, and the origin of man, while War is the result of violations of harmony, such as Injustice, despotism, and corruption".*[lxxxv]

Islam prioritizes non-violence over violence. For peaceful dispute settlement and avoid violence, the Quran prefers forgiveness even in case of injustice or crime: *"The recompense of any injury is an injury the like thereof: but whoever forgives and thereby brings about a reestablishment of harmony, his reward is with God; and God loves not the wrongdoers."*[lxxxvi] Indeed, Islam prefers forgiveness.

Fighting is sanctioned under restricted conditions to stop aggression against the truth and its supporters and to maintain peace.[lxxxvii] Islam is not an emotional or whimsical philosophy. It stresses thinking, understanding, and arguments. The Quranic discourse emphasizes people's use of their intelligence in comprehending the revealed guidance.[lxxxviii] A genuine Islamic Acton *Jihad* which is often meant by the West and the unwise Muslim scholars, as only holy war has virtually undermined the other appealing meaning of *Jihad*. The West always equates this Quranic option of dispute management as terrorism or violence. Indeed, *Jihad* also means struggle or effort. To establish Justice in society, struggle or efforts are essential which is called *Jihad*. *Jihad* is traditionally divided into *al-jihad al-akbar*, and *al jihad –al asghar*. *Al-jihad al-akbar* is the greater struggle –the inward effort to purify the self and human nature. *Al jihad –al asghar* is the lesser struggle –the outward effort of confronting social injustice. It includes teaching, and the active pursuit of culture as well as resistance to oppression.[lxxxix] The Muslim code of conduct is based on *Quran* and *Hadith*. The Quran asserts: *"Fight in the cause of Allah, those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; For Allah Loveth, not transgressors."*[xc]

Therefore, it is evident that aggression is prohibited in Islam, and fighting although permitted has its limit. Other relevant verses of the Quran further state: *"And fight them on, until there is no more Tumlut or oppression, and there prevail Justice and faith in Allah."*[xci] One of the reasons for fighting oppression is that t*umlut* or, oppression is worse than slaughter.[xcii] From these Quranic verses, it is obvious that fighting for the cause of *Allah* in Islam is synonymous with fighting for justice. Different Islamic Schools of thought have given different views on Jihad[xciii] Al-Thawri says, *"Fighting against the associators (non-believers, i.e., those who associate others with God's divinity) is not an obligation unless they start the fight; then it is an obligation to fight back against them…"* Abu –Hanifa says: *"Jihad is a duty on Muslims but they are not required to (fight) unless they are needed."* Al-Sarakhsi says, *"The command of Jihad and fighting (to Muslims) had been revealed in stages(the final stage being) the absolute order to fight (non-believers)…this means an obligation but this obligation is meant to exalt the religion (of Islam)and to subdue the associates."* Al-shafii says, *"Allah made the jihad an obligation after it had been a matter of choice."* The Quran further reveals:

> *"Men, women, and children, whose cry is, "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; And raise for us from Thee, One who will protect; And raise for us from Thee, One who will help."*[xciv]

Therefore, Jihad means to fight/struggle against aggression, despotism, and injustice. But doing excess in the name of *Jihad* is not permitted in Islam. The purpose is to put an end to structural violence. Not only the lives of the non-combatant are sacred in *Jihad* but even a tree must be spared according to Quranic instructions.[xcv]

Before *Jihad*, most importantly Islam preferred diplomacy as the best way for conflict resolution. Prophet Mohammad adopted the strategies of negotiation, mediation, and arbitrations as instruments of diplomacy. For conflict resolution, Prophet Muhammed was engaged in a negotiation process called "*Sulh el Hudaibia*" which is a perfect example of a negotiated settlement. In Arab society, the process of *Sulh* (peacemaking and conciliation) helps the parties air their anger and reach an agreement through debate and discussion.[xcvi] Islam stresses arbitration (*Tahkim*).[xcvii] Prophet Mohammed was a great arbitrator among Muslims and non-Muslims. After he migrated to Yathrib (al Medina) he established himself as the leader, the ruler, and the arbitrator of the community in addition to his status as a messenger of Allah. He drafted the first Constitution of Islam (or *al-sahifah*) called the *Charter of Medina* which established the first political entity for the Muslims as well as non-Muslims in Medina. He framed the Charter of Medina as a great political Scientist and diplomat and as Statesman. The authority of the prophet as an arbitrator was sanctioned by revelation. The Prophet's role as arbitrator (*hakam*) and the scope of his arbitration (*tahkim*) are mentioned in the Quran.[xcviii] The legitimacy of arbitration even in private life is recognized in the Quran:

> "*And if you fear a breach between them twain (the man and the wife), appoint an arbitrator (hakam) from his folk and an arbiter from her folk. If they desire amendment, Allah makes them one mind. Lo! Allah is ever knowing, aware. [xcix]Indeed, the scope of Prophet Muhammad's arbitration was reinforced by what God revealed to him.*"

Western media and scholars who find a linkage between Islam and terrorism have failed to ascertain the identity of terrorists. Islam has no room for extremism. It is the religion of moderation. For its approach of moderation, Quran calls the Muslim a middle nation or balanced nation. The Quran says: "*Thus we have made you an ummat justly balanced.*"[c] Invalidating the Western allegations Fasahat H. Syed argues:

> "*The origin of terrorism in fact lies in the economic and political terrorism which has been perpetuated on developing nations (including Muslim countries). In the past it was in the form of Imperialism, Colonialism, neo-Colonialism, etc.; today it is being through by not resolving outstanding conflicts, fanning the existing ones, and creating new conflicts.*"[ci]

The westerner further blames Islam for only speaking with a sword and acting on men with a destructive spirit that founded it.[cii] S. P. Huntington holds the view that Muslim societies are prone to political violence and at the micro level the clash of civilization is between Islam and the rest of the world. Huntington argues:

"The overwhelming majority of fault line conflicts however have taken place along the boundary looping across Eurasia and Africa that separates Muslims from non-Muslims. While at the Macro or global level of World politics the primary clash of civilization is between the west and the rest, at the micro or local level it is between Islam and the others"[ciii].

Hunting ton unfolds that during 1993-94, among 50 ethnopolitical conflicts 26 were with the Muslims where 11 were intra- civilizational (among the Muslims) and 15 were inter-civilizational (among the Muslims and non-Muslims). While the non-Muslims had 24 conflicts out of 50 and 19 were intra- civilizational and 5 were inter-civilizational.[civ] Huntington further shows that in 1993 out of 59 ethnic conflicts in the World, 28 were among the Muslims, where 7 were intra- civilizational (among the Muslims), 21 were inter-civilization (Muslim –non- Muslims), and 31 of 59 conflicts were between other civilizations. Among those 21 were intra-civilizational, and 10 were inter-civilizational.[cv] But Monty Marshall's study[cvi] invalidates Huntington's view that Islamic countries are violence prone. Monty Marshall has assembled a comprehensive list of incidents of political violence in the world during the post- War period. By Marshall's account, there were 207 episodes of major intrastate political violence. All of them occurred in different parts of the world. Of these events, 72(35%) of the total took place in Muslim countries. The data show that the Muslim World has had its "fair share" of political violence or, a bit more than its fair share.

Since 30 percent of the World's polities are predominantly Muslim, the evidence does not show that the Islamic world has been the place for a grossly disproportionate amount of political violence. Given that 30 percent of world politics are predominantly Muslim, Huntington's evidence is less than overwhelming.[cvii] Indeed for some neoconservatives' *"Islamofascism"* is now the *"sworn foe in a looming World War III."*[cviii] But the neoconservative's argument is invalidated by Graham E. Fuller. He argues that according to Euro Pol. (EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report), 498 terrorist attacks took place in the European Union in 2006. Of these 424 were perpetrated by separatist groups, 55 by left-wing extremists, and 18 by various other terrorists. Only one was carried out by Islamists.[cix] Refuting the Western argument Fuller succinctly points out:

"We live in an era when terrorism is often the chosen instrument of the weak. It already stymies the unprecedented might of U. S. armies in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. And thus, Bin Laden in many non-Muslim societies has been called the next Che Guevara. It's nothing less than the appeal of successful resistance against dominant American power, the weak striking back-an appeal that transcends Islam or Middle Eastern culture."[cx]

Radical Islam although has been claimed to pose a threat to the West, indeed has also been claimed to be closely linked with western imperialism and authoritarianism. In most the cases, the alleged radical Islamists have grown under the direct patronage of western imperialist forces. The U.S.A. has allegedly sponsored the *Mujahadeen* in Afghanistan when they confronted the former Soviet Union and Israel also allegedly

supported the *Hamas* at its earlier stage to weaken the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as a part of the divide-and-rule strategy.[cxi]

Islamic danger is enforced in the western mind. "*Islam's encounter with the West*" as Oliver Roy maintains, "*is as old as Islam itself.*"[cxii]Although many Westerners believe that World without Islam could have been heaven on earth, the fact remains that rivalries, conflicts, and crises of such a world might not look so vastly different than the world we live in today.[cxiii]

Again, the Muslim struggle against European imperialism and the struggle for independence from the colonial rule were dubbed as Islamic dangers posed to the West.[cxiv] In the post-Cold War situation, the western attitude towards communism has shifted to the Islamic threat. Echoing with the West, many pro-Western Muslim governments use the danger of Islamic radicalism or terrorism to control or suppress Islamic movements. Although pro-western rulers succeeded in many countries with their new techniques of controlling extremism, they failed in some countries too. For example, the Kemalist model in Turkey built a secular state introducing the European fashion of institutions instead of the Islamic model (Ragab, 1980:518). But it did not last long. Now, the transition to Islamic fashion of development under the strong leadership of President Erdogan is occurring and today the Turkish nation is "*increasingly defined by Islamic practices rituals*"[cxv] (Yavuz and Ozturk, 2019: 2). Similarly, after 9\11 US occupation over Afghanistan and regulating the country through puppet governments did not last long too. The mighty US had to leave Afghanistan in the hands of the Taliban whom they fought for twenty years. In contrast to the Western claim, many Muslims in the World believe that the real threat to Islam is the West. Esposito argues:

> "*If there is an Islamic threat…there has also been a Western threat…of political, economic, and religio-cultural imperialism, a political occupation accompanied by cultural invasion. As a result, many in the Muslim World like their counterparts in the West opt for easy anti-imperialist slogans and demonization.*"[cxvi]

5. Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that Islam is an all-embracing ideology. The spirit of Islam is the spirit of democracy. Islamic State is seen as a kingdom of Allah where absolute sovereignty belongs to Him. His representatives settle state matters through debate, discussion, mediation, and conciliation. It is also evident that Islam is a growth and development-oriented ideology that inspires people to work hard to change their situations on the ground that Allah does not change one's condition unless he /she works hard to do that. Unlike Western development, Islamic development is a twofold development, Worldly development, and development in the hereafter.

Islamic development considers the equitable development of men and women in society. The Husband-wife relationship is determined by mutual support, mutual comfort, and mutual protection. The woman has been granted the same rights over her

husband as the man has over his wife. Here, Women's rights cannot be seen through the western lens of human rights rather, the Islamic lens of human rights is appropriate.

Similarly, Islamic development is opposed to terrorism. In Islam *Jihad* or struggle against oppression is allowed but it cannot exceed the limit that Allah has demarcated. Before accusing the Muslim or Islam of terrorism, the West should realize whether oppression or, aggression has been imposed from the West over Muslims or Islam, and if any such thing happens, should be stopped forever. Terrorism in the West or Muslim World should be considered evil actions. Not the West or, Islam or, Muslims should be held responsible for terrorism. No matter who is responsible deserves due punishment for it.

Likewise, Muslims throughout the world should give up the idea of making themselves accountable for all their sufferings to the West. Before doing this, they should find out the root causes of their backwardness and overhaul their loopholes. Instead of a clash, both the Islamic civilization and Western civilization can go hand in hand through mutual respect, trust, and cooperation. It will enrich both civilizations.

In the final analysis, it is unfolded that Islam does not contradict democracy and development, rather embraces everything, but Islamic democracy and development are unlike the western ones. Islamic democracy is based on the sovereignty of Allah and Western democracy rests on the sovereignty of the people. While Western development is limited to worldly, or material development, and Islamic development is the combination of worldly development and development in the hereafter.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The author declares no conflicts of interest.

About the Author
Zaglul Haider (PhD) is a Political Scientist and a full Professor at the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh. He was a Research Fellow at the York Centre for International and Security Studies (YCISS), York University, Toronto, Canada. The University Press Limited, Dhaka in 2006, published his book, *The Changing pattern of Bangladesh Foreign Policy: A Comparative study of the Mujib and Zia Regimes*. He published articles in *Security Dialogue, Asian Survey, The Round Table, Asian and African Studies, African and Asian Studies, South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs, South Asia Research, Regional Studies, Asian Profile, the Asiatic Society Journal, Journal of International Relations,* and in some South Asian academic journals. Currently, he is working on a book manuscript entitled, *Biharis in Bangladesh: Transition from Statelessness to citizenship*. Professor Haider holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Clark Atlanta University, U.S.A. He also earned an LLM from Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, Toronto, Canada.
OrcidID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2307-6564;
ResearchGate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Zaglul-Haider,
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/zaglul-haider-0361a275/?originalSubdomain=ca.

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[iii] Emajuddin Ahamed, "Democracy and Governance" in Abul Kalam ed., *Bangladesh in the New Millennium* (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 2004) p. 44.

[iv] *The Quran*, 62:10.

[v] Islam is a religion based upon the surrender to God who is one. Today Islam is one of the three major World religions along with Judaism and Christianity that profess monotheism or the trust in a single God. After its birth in Arabia in the 7th century Islam spread rapidly throughout the World., see, Zafar Ahmad, *Future of Islam in South Asia* (Delhi: Authors Press, 2003), *Preface.*

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[xxxiii] Youssef M. Choueiri, *Islamic Fundamentalism* (Boston: Wayne Publishers, 1990), p.48.

[xxxiv] The *Quran*, 24: 55; Islam uses the term 'vicegerency (Khilafah) instead of sovereignty. Secondly, the power to rule over the earth has been promised to the whole community of believers. Every believer is a Caliph of *Allah* in his capacity. Under this position, he is individually responsible to *Allah*. See Maududi, "Political Theory of Islam," p.168.

[xxxv] Leonard Binder argues that "*the Caliphate was devised by the companions of the prophet to maintain the unity of the Arabs.*" This argument appears to be contradictory to the spirit of Islam. Islamic theory posits that no Arab is superior

over non –Arab and no white is superior over black. In this context obviously Leonard Binder's explanation is distorting the spirit of Islam. For Leonard Binder's explanation, see, Leonard Binder, *Religion and politics in Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p.13. For Islamic explanation, see, Maududi, *ibid*, p.169.

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xl Adrian Karatnycky, "The 2001 Freedom House Survey: Muslim countries and the Democracy Gap", *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no. 1, January 2002, pp. 99-112.

xli An Islamic State is one that ruled by the *Shariah* law, i.e, the *Quran* and *Sunnah, while* a Muslim state is not always necessarily an Islamic State. A Muslim state is a Muslim majority state that could be led by a Muslim ruler but through secular laws and principles. Most of the OIC Countries are ruled by secular laws. For details, see, Zaglul Haider, *The Changing Pattern of Bangladesh Foreign Policy: A Comparative study of the Mujib and Zia Regimes* (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 2006), p.220.

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lix Hannan, *Law, Economics and History*, pp.73-74.

lx *The Quran*, 22:41.

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lxxxiii*The Quran,* 5:65.

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