Application and Practice of the Principles of *Da'wah* in the Age of Globalisation

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ABSTRACT

Today despite the scientific and technological strides that have turned the world into a village, the long cherished values of a true traditional village life are rarely found in the prevailing global village. The fact seems to be that while human scientific and technological advancements have made life on earth more convenient and comfortable, it has failed to make it more decent, peaceful and sustainable. While studies abound on how the Islamic socio-economic, political and ethical teachings can help re-direct the future of globalisation technologies towards a sustainable and peaceful world there are only few works on how the principles of *Da'wah* intersect with such issues like multiculturalism, pluralism and inter-religious dialogue to build a more peaceful multicultural, multi-religious and equitable global society. This paper, therefore, examines how *Da'wah* can be employed in promoting a global peace culture among the diverse groups in today's world. The study discusses the involvement of Islamic organisations in inter-religious dialogues and situates it within the contemporary Islamic understanding of the *Da'wah* principles and how these principles can help to militate against religious intolerance and the unwholesome effects of the prevailing cultural, religious and other clashes. The paper finally concludes that these *Da'wah* principles are useful and desirable for improving upon and sustaining not only Muslim non-Muslim relations but also Muslim Muslim relations.

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Introduction

The Muslim world today is witnessing enormous and momentous impact of globalisation, which can be observed in the recent events in the Arab part of the *Ummah*. While scholars are divided on whether to study globalisation as a phenomenon or a process, one undeniable reality of globalisation is the reduction of the world to a global village with the advancement in communication technology which now covers the "the length and breadth of the world as if it is a local village."[1] "Globalisation," writes Thomas Friedman (1953–   ), in the preface to his book, *Understanding Globalization: The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, is "not simply a trend or a fad but is, rather, an international system. It is the system that has now replaced the old Cold War system, and, like the Cold War system, globalization has its own rules and logic that today directly or indirectly influence the politics, environment, geopolitics and economics of virtually every country in the world."[2]

One of the global challenges facing the Muslim world today in the course of overwhelming speed of communication is how the world has become borderless through the internet revolution. The internet applications, especially the e-mail revolution, have opened new opportunities through which people can rapidly organise and network. These opportunities can also be seen in the immense impact of the satellite channels, which are a significant element of globalisation. Rather Mass media with its various technologies and tools is playing a pivotal role in today's globalisation.

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1. Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "The Muslim Ummah and the Challenges of Globalization," a paper presented in the International Conference on, Muslim Unity in the 21st Century: Opportunities and challenges, organised by International Institute for Muslim Unity, IIUM, Malaysia, October 2003, published in *Conference Papers of the International Conference on Muslim Unity in the 21st Century: Opportunities and challenges* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute for Muslim Unity, IIUM, 2003), vol.1, p. 304.

2. Thomas L. Friedman, *Understanding Globalization: The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: First Anchor Books, 2000), p. vi.

This paper, therefore, before turning to its main theme attempts to shed some light on the relevance of the internet applications, especially the e-mail revolution, satellite channels and other tools and technologies of the mass media as well as the impact and influence they make by instantly transferring news and information in the world today. This can be seen today in the revolution that is taking place in some parts of the Arab world. This revolution was ignited by the information that Muslim youths were able to gather about events round the world from the satellite channels and the mass media. They saw how people in various democracies and even in non-democracies were able to utilise the 'people's power' in challenging and bringing their leaders to accountability.[3]

By using what they learn from the satellite channels and the mass media and using their ability to mobilise and organise through cyber networking they challenged their leaders and in fact unseated some of them as is seen in Tunisia and Egypt. Events in the Arab World today, especially in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Libya have confirmed the enormous power of the global information and communication technologies in mobilising youth in the Muslim World to rise and challenge their leaders to develop and improve upon the conditions of living of the people in a holistic manner. According to news reports, especially by the BBC News on Africa, the unprecedented street demonstrations and protests against the failure of government over the years as characterised by lack of employment, price hikes and public corruption, have sent shock waves throughout the Middle East region.[4] The Arab world has been transfixed by the recent dramatic events which became possible through the aid of cyber networking.

Another preponderant impact of globalisation in the world today is what Na'amah Kelman (1955—   ), the first woman Jewish Rabbi, has defined as the "tidal wave of mass marketing, western capitalism

3. See, Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, L. O. Abbas and K. K. Oloso "Contributions of Islamic Scholars to Sustainable Human and Environmental Development: Islam Hadhari and Future Development of Muslim Countries" *International Journal of Arab Culture, Management and Sustainable Development*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2011), pp. 17–29.

4. See, ibid., p. 27.

and consumerism gone unchecked."[5] According to the former rector of the International Islamic University, Malaysia, Muhammad Kamal Hassan (1361– /1942–), "the new challenges of globalisation, demonisation of Islam as a terrorist religion,…. and I.C.T. revolution make it imperative for the Muslim community …. to excel in all branches of contemporary knowledge, acquire, the attributes of a highly competitive and highly-achieving society ….."[6]

The result of this capitalist dimension of globalisation can be perceived in the global upsurge of financial speculation which culminated in the recent economic meltdown; violence, especially global terrorism; child labour, especially of the girl-child and other criminal activities. In fact, no facet of life appears to be insulated from this onslaught of globalisation and what has been referred to as comprehensive secularism by a contemporary Arab Muslim scholar, Abdelwahab M. Elmessiri (1357–1429/1938–2008).[7]

This can even be seen in the religious realm where the global focus of many churches is the 'prosperity Gospel.' This gospel is prominent in the commercialisation of miracles towards attaining better lives, good jobs, husbands, wives or improved businesses that dominate newspaper, television and radio religious features. This trend is so common in Nigeria today that a former president of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) once noted that some commercially minded people had been hiding under Christianity to establish "runaway churches that play on people's superstitions and human sorrows."[8]

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5. Na'amah Kelman, "Globalization and Religion," *Current Dialogue*, published by World Council of Churches, Geneva, Issue 33 (July, 1999), quoted in Uthman, "The Muslim Ummah and the Challenges of Globalization," p. 304.

6. M. Kamal Hassan, "Islam Hadhari (Civilisational Islam) Approach as a new Government Policy," *Journal of Islam in Asia*, vol. 2, no. 2 (2005), p. 101.

7. See, Abdelwahab M. Elmessiri, "The Dance of the Pen, The Play of the Sign: A Study in the Relationship between Modernity, Immanence, and Deconstruction," *The American Journal of the Islamic Social Sciences*, vol. 14, no. 1 (1997), pp. 1–12

8. Quoted in, Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "The Problems of Child Abuse and Islamic Solutions," *Journal of Religion and Culture*, University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Nigeria, vol. 1, no. 1 (2000), pp. 81–87.

What are the implications of these various facets of globalisation for *Da'wah*, what are the issues that characterise the practice of *Da'wah* in the face of the above globalisation challenges, and how can the principles of *Da'wah* be appropriated to enrich and produce a fully holistic humane global village in social, economic, intellectual, moral as well as political dimensions and in fact an integrative multicultural and multi-religious global village? This paper attempts to answer these questions in the sections below. In doing so, it reviews the concept of *Da'wah* in Islam. This is followed by an examination of some of the contemporary issues involved in the practice of *Da'wah*. The paper also discusses fundamental principles of *Da'wah* in the modern society. It finally recommends ways through which *Da'wah* in the modern society can harness the opportunities of globalisation and avert its threats, and be incredibly empowered by the fast and unifying tools of globalisation in homogenising individuals, organisations and cultures as well as eradicating religious intolerance and acts of terrorism. By so doing, *Da'wah* can, undoubtedly, benefit from the opportunities of globalisation while avoiding the adverse effects of its incredible coercion as well as democratisation pains and various other acts militating against the conduct of *Da'wah* in this age of globalisation.

The Concept of *Da'wah* in Islam

Da'wah literally means invitation, propagation, call and summoning, etc.[9] It is used in the Qur'ān to technically mean calling, inviting and guiding all humans towards [submission to none but] Allah or to the way of life (*Dīn*) He revealed through all of His Messengers and Prophets (peace be on them) for guidance of mankind to properly conduct their responsibility as being the vicegerents of Allah on earth.[10] This divinely revealed way of life (*Dīn*) Islam is *Dīn al-Fiṭrah* or in other words innate in human nature on which each and every human being is born.[11] *Da'wah* also refers to propagation of the

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9. See, J. M. Cowan, ed., *Arabic-English Dictionary*: *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (India: Modern Language Services, 1960), p. 283.

10. See, the Qur'ān 2: 30–39; 24: 55; 35: 39.

11. See, the Qur'ān 7: 172–173; 30: 30.

message of Islam among sane creatures of Allah or calling and inviting them towards His book, towards Islamic way of life, Islamic teachings, practices and commandments.[12] According to Muslim scholars like Muhammad Kamal Hassan, the Islamic worldview teaches that human original state or "nature (*Fiṭrah*), is sinlessness and" human "spiritual essence is inherently inclined to recognise and worship God"[13] which makes *Da'wah* both a call or invitation to Muslims to remind them of their responsibilities towards Allah and to remain firm on the truly correct way of life revealed from Allah and not to die except as Muslims[14] as well as to non-Muslims to return to the way of life revealed from Allah, *Dīn al-Fiṭrah,* or the *religio naturalis* that is already innate to their nature as every one is born with this nature.[15] In short, human beings from the Islamic perspective are homo-religious. Human relationship with Allah has been open and common to all of humanity from time immemorial and historically linked through all the Prophets (peace be on them) who were sent to guide the human Society and to establish it on the basis of complete justice[16] founded on "absolute and uncompromising monotheism."[17] *Da'wah* in short, is a Muslim way of professing openly the *Dīn al-Fiṭrah* and total commitment to Allah through personal examples that constitute the final argument or witness for Allah.[18]

The Qur'ān enjoins on Muslims the duty of invitation to the path of Allah, or in other words the duty of *Da'wah*, using several terminologies at various places, indicating various modes and manners of *Da'wah* that are to be adopted in differing situations. The following *ayah* enjoins this duty in the most explicit manner:

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12. See, the Qur'ān 3: 104, 110; 16: 125.

13. Muhammad Kamal Hassan, "World-view, Orientation and Ethics: A Muslim Perspective," *IKIM Journal of Islam and International Affairs* vol. 3, no. 1, p. 9.

14. See, the Qur'ān 3: 19, 85, 102 and 5: 3.

15. See, the Qur'ān 7: 172–173; 30: 30.

16. See, the Qur'ān 57: 25.

17. Hassan, "World-view, Orientation and Ethics," p. 9.

18. See, Ismā'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī, *Islam and other Faiths* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1998), p. 305.

﴿ٱدۡعُ إِلَىٰ سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِٱلۡحِكۡمَةِ وَٱلۡمَوۡعِظَةِ ٱلۡحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجَـٰدِلۡهُم بِٱلَّتِى هِىَ أَحۡسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِۦ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعۡلَمُ بِٱلۡمُهۡتَدِينَ﴾

Invite (all) to the Way of your *Rabb* (Creator and Sustainer) with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for your *Rabb* knows best, who have strayed from His Path, and best knows He who are on the right Path.[19]

Da'wah or invitation to the path of Allah as used in the Qur'ān 16: 125, according to, a 20th century Islamic thinker and writer, Sayyid Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadvī (1331–1420 / 1913–1999), is characterised by an unlimited horizon of thoughts, actions, methods, strategies and approaches embedded in the terms, *al-Ḥikmah wa 'l-Maw'iẓah al-Ḥasanah* (wisdom and beautiful admonition). Nadvī employs the imagery of Prophet Ibrahīm (peace be on him) presented in the passages of the Qur'ān[20] preceding the above mentioned *āyah* to underscore the Prophetic model predicated on sound and deep knowledge, especially of the culture, psychology and philosophy of the immediate audience and recipients of *Da'wah*.[21]

Based on the above characteristics, Islam makes *Da'wah* a compulsory duty, albeit, a collective obligation or *farḍ kifāyah*, meaning if enough Muslims are performing the work of *Da'wah* ensuring conveyance of the message to all humans in a proper manner then the remaining Muslims would be free from the task.[22] It implies that involvement in any sort of *Da'wah* work is very much required from all Muslims and those who are involved in *Da'wah* activities will be rewarded highly. On the other hand Muslims who are not involved in *Da'wah* will not be held accountable if this collective responsibility is being fulfilled adequately by other Muslims, however, if this collective

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19. See, the Qur'ān 16: 125. English translation of the meanings of *āyāt* of the Qur'ān, in this paper, are taken from English translation of the meanings of the Qur'ān by 'Abdullah Yūsuf 'Alī (1289–1373/1872–1953), this author, however, made modifications wherever necessary for greater clarity.

20. See, the Qur'ān 16: 10–123.

21. See, Syed Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi, *Inviting to the Way of Allah* (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 1996), pp. 11–15.

22. See, the Qur'ān 3: 104, 110 and 9: 122.

responsibility is not duly being fulfilled all non involved Muslims will be held accountable.[23] The implications of this collective obligation of *Da'wah* will be discussed further later in this paper.

Contemporary Issues Facing the Practice of *Da'wah*

Khurram Murad (1351–1417/1932–1996), a leading 20th century Islamic thinker and writer, rightly observed, Muslims are doing almost no *Da'wah* in the world today when he stated that "Muslim societies remain indifferent to their duty [of *Da'wah*] as ever. Instead, they are dedicated to pursuit of the same ideals as non-Muslims."[24] This statement is not quoted here to negate or even underestimate the valuable efforts which are being exerted by some Muslims living in the West where they have passed through the stage of building Islamic organisation to a further step of forming effective postures of *Da'wah* and outreach programs. Though being controversial to some extent I think this statement is useful here because it describes aptly the global image of *Da'wah* activities today. This image of Muslims not presenting momentous *Da'wah* efforts can be observed all over the Muslim world today. Islamic *Da'wah* in the Muslim world has not benefited adequately from the opportunities of globalisation as it has done in the West. The ineffectiveness of whatever little *Da'wah*, the Muslims all over the Muslim world are doing in this age of globalisation can best be appreciated when the categorical statement about the relevance and strength of Islam in the 10th/16th century, made by the comparative historian, Marshal Hodgson (1922–1968) [who was a professor of Islamic Studies and Chairman of the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago], is recalled. According to Hodgson, Islam reached the zenith of its political power and cultural creativity in the 10th/16th century that any visitor to the earth from Mars "might well have supposed that the human world was on the verge of becoming Muslim."[25] This was

23. See, the Qur'ān 41: 33; 9: 122; 7: 164–165.

24. Khurram Murad, "Foreword" in Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi, *Witnesses unto Mankind*: *The Purpose and Duty of the Muslim Ummah*, ed., and tr., Khurram Murad (Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 1986), p. 22.

25. Marshal G. S. Hodgson, *Rethinking World History*: *Essays on Europe, Islam and World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 97.

"exactly the time of inception of the modern era."[26] While different explanations have been propounded for the sudden evaporation of the Islamic political power at the dawn of globalisation,[27] I tend to agree with Murad that the Muslim *Ummah* was afflicted by degradation and humiliation, ignominy and powerlessness because of remaining indifferent to their duty to carry out witness unto Mankind or in other words to carry out their *Da'wah* duty.[28]

Comprehensive secularism is reflected in every sphere of modern society. Religion is thus regarded by many people as a personal affair and is not allowed to occupy the public domain. Modernity heralded a revolution against the Church and Christian beliefs, and embarked on the gradual secularisation of the Church and Christian teachings. However, today it is comprehensive secularism, which is far more dangerous than the initial partial secularism that created the secular modern global society. The secular-religious ideology of modern humans rejects moral responsibility and moral values. Science and technological advance alone guarantee progress and advancement for many people. Morality is seen, by more and more people as relative and subject to the prevailing customs, whims and flings of the society. The entertainment industry controls the life of the people including their dreams. The temples of modern religion are factories, laboratories, cinemas and discos. The Media, which is wielding enormous power, is employed to sell the people all forms of utopias.[29]

Another issue and opportunity facing *Da'wah* work today is a multilingual, multicultural, multi-religious modern global society where a visitor can observe all the ethnicities and religions prevailing in various countries of the Southeast Asia by visiting just one country. For instance, in Malaysia, a Muslim mosque, Chinese

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26. Ibid., p. 100.

27. For some of the theories propounded on the disappearance of Islamic civilisation, see, Muhammad Khalid Masud, Armando Salvatore and Martin van Bruinessen, eds., *Islam and Modernity*: *Key Issues and Debates* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), pp. 1–7.

28. See, Murad, "Foreword" in Mawdudi, *Witnesses unto Mankind*, p. 22.

29. See, Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "Muslims and Contemporary Postmodern Philosophical Issues," *Ife Journal of Religions*, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife, vol. 6, no. 2 (2010), pp. 187–198.

temple, Indian temple and Christian Church can be seen located at a distance of a few hundred meters from each other. The country has an estimated 60.4 percent Muslims; 19.2 percent Buddhists; 9.1 percent Christians; 6.3 percent Hindus; and 2.6 percent traditional Chinese religionists. The remainder is accounted for by other faiths, including traditional worshippers, Folk religionists, and practitioners of Sikhism and other belief systems.[30] Consequently, the long standing prejudices and biases that existed among Muslims and non-Muslims and have created serious barriers towards social interaction and cooperation between them can no longer be allowed to widen the gaps between them in this age of globalisation.

The need for *Da'wah* to close the above gaps has become more pronounced by what Ismā'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī, (1340–1406/1921–1986) has referred to as the emergence of the 'new *muhājirūn*' or emigrant Muslims in the west. This, he believes has opened windows of opportunities for these emigrants to play pivotal roles in promoting *Da'wah* in their adoptive countries in order to bring about a new world order based on the Islamic universal concept of common humanity and justice.[31] To al-Fārūqī, the entire life of a Muslim is a spectrum for *Da'wah* which will attract non-Muslims to the universal message of Islam. Therefore, a Muslim must stand under the obligation of *Da'wah* throughout his/her lifetime, through space and time, to press forward what he terms individual 'Islamicity' or personal growth and assimilation of Islamic values, which will in turn, attract the non-Muslims to join the ranks of those who work for the Divine Will.[32]

This optimism of al-Fārūqī is, however, contrary to the current inability of Muslims to present the message and teachings of Islam as a holistic and encompassing way of life that guide the *Da'wah* experience, the formation of Islamic identity and Muslim non-Muslim relations. It is this inability that is today determining to a

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30. See "Freedom of religion in Malaysia," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_religion_in_ Malaysia>.

31. See, al-Fārūqī, *Islam and other Faiths*, p. 328.

32. See, ibid, pp. 305–310.

considerable extent, the ways in which the understanding of Islam as a religion opposed to global peace is shaping the world. The challenging tests of Islamic identity have been identified by a contemporary scholar of repute, Ahmet Davutoglu (1378– /1959–), as one major issue confronting Muslims in the West in their encounter with other religions.[33]

The greatest global issue confronting *Da'wah* today, in present author's view is Muslim non-Muslim relations. While Muslim non-Muslim interaction has on many occasions been characterised to be antagonistic, bitter and aggressive, it has also witnessed periods of peaceful interfaith coexistence and inter-religious cooperation, starting from the very time of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him). The prototype Islamic state of Madīnah under him was rich with multicultural, multiethnic and multi-religious co-existence and these norms were clearly enshrined in the covenant of Madīnah (*Mīthaq-i Madīnah*).[34] It is therefore clear that the present *Da'wah* concepts, approaches and methods do not appropriate correct understanding of Islam among Muslims and non-Muslims alike, and so, they need to be modified or altered as shown later.

Religious Pluralism is another issue that has serious implications for *Da'wah* in this age of globalisation. Today, the need to promote the culture of peaceful coexistence among multiple religions and their adherents in a society as well as the need to remove religious prejudices, biases and barriers from the way of socio-political, economic, educational and other fields of interaction and cooperation among people belonging to different religions, is staring *Da'wah* and *Du'āt* in the face. It calls *Du'āt* to engage in interfaith and

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33. See, Ahmet Davutoglu, "Civilizational Self-Perception and Pluralistic Coexistence: A Critical Examination of the Image of the 'Other'" in Zafar Ishaq Ansari, ed., *Muslims and the West: Encounter and Dialogue* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 2001), p. 101–122.

34. See, for details, 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, eds., Muṣṭafā al-Saqā, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī and 'Abd al-Ḥafīẓ Shalabī (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī, 1375/1955), vol. 1, pp. 501ff; al-Duktūr Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allāh al-Ḥayderābādī, *Majmū'ah al-Wathā'iq al-Siyāsiyyah li 'l-'Ahd al-Nabawī wa 'l-Khilāfah al-Rāshidah* (Cairo: Maṭba'ah Lajnah al-Ta'līf wa 'l-Tarjumah wa 'l-Nashr, 1376/1956), pp. 15–21; Dr Muhammad Hamidullah, *The First Written Constitution in the World: An Important Document of the Time of the Holy Prophet* (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1968).

intra-faith dialogue. Interfaith Dialogue entails engagement with the *other* in religious interchange, communication and discussion that involve people belonging to different religions e.g. Muslims and Buddhists, Muslims and Christians, Muslim and Hindus or Muslim and African religionists (AFRELISTS). Intra-faith Dialogue entails the interchange, communication and discussion of differing opinions on a religious matter between *Du'āt* and the *others* belonging to various schools of thought within the Islamic faith.

Most of the attempts to build bridges of understanding between Muslim *Sunnī*s and *Shī'ah*s might have come to a total failure as noted by Muṣṭafā b. Ḥasnī al-Sibā'ī (1333–1384/1915–1964), in his introduction to *al-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī 'l-Tashrī' al-Islamī*.[35] This does not in any way, in my view, mean that dialogue between *Sunnī*s and *Shī'ah*s will not succeed in future. The basic reason for the failure of these dialogues, to this author, seems that they are often dominated by political agendas. Secondly, many *Shī'ah* indulge in insulting prominent Companions and Wives of the Prophet (peace be on him). The solution to the above failure seems in making *Sunnī*s and *Shī'ah*s realise that the purpose of the dialogue is not conversion but bridging of the gaps by building the bridges of communication among people of different religions, sects and denominations for creating necessary level of tolerance for peaceful coexistence. Muslims need to collaborate with fellow Muslims regardless of sectarian differences and also with non-Muslims if *Da'wah* has to play a key role in resolving the problems of globalisation.[36]

To achieve the above mentioned objectives, *Da'wah* workers need to offer sound, strong, firm and balanced but critical opinions when dealing with current issues.[37] While dealing with current issues of global concern like poverty, natural disasters and terrorism and finding their best solutions it is acceptable in Islam that one may

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35. See, Muṣṭafā al-Sibā'ī, *al-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī 'l-Tashrī' al-Islamī* (Indonesia, al-Maktab al-Islamī, 2008), Introduction.

36. See, Dato Seri Ahmad Abdullah Badawi, *Islam Hadhari Approach*: *Towards a Progressive Civilization*: *Selected Speeches* (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Islamic Development, (JAKIM), 2007), pp. 43–53.

37. See, for these implications, the Qur'ān 16: 125.

refer, if needed, to the teachings of other religions as long as they do not violate basic Islamic teachings.[38] Despite the prevalence of the culture of peaceful co-existence among *Duʿāt* and the *other*, to a good degree today in Muslim countries like Malaysia, the need to bridge the gaps between Muslims and non-Muslims and Muslim and Muslim on a few burning issues still exists in many countries. According to Alireza Ezzati (1351– /1932–), the openness and dialogical nature of *Daʿwah* is the motif of its vision and mission. To him, *Duʿāt* must embrace open invitation, discussion and dialogue with the other and eschew all forms of conversion by force and coercion.[39]

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1352– /1933–), an Iranian Professor of Islamic studies at George Washington University, notes that this dialogical approach requires studying other people's religions as done by early Muslim scholars in their study of world religions.[40] It is the opinion of this author that the establishment of the Interfaith Committee (IFC) on the pattern of Malaysia, for instance, needs to be replicated in other Muslim countries like Nigeria. The current inter-religious council in Nigeria needs to be given constitutional and legal muscles because it has an important role to play in sustaining and improving upon the religious and social harmony currently missing in almost all walks of life in the country. A vibrant interfaith council is a desideratum for peace in this age of globalisation. The role of Interfaith Committees or councils has become more relevant in today's Age of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) when there is global networking on the internet, facebook and other online resources, which are every now and then being used to blow any religious crisis out of proportions.

How the *Daʿwah* is grasping with the concept of modernity and Islam, especially as it affects Muslim women, is another issue that

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38. See, for these implications, the Qurʾān 3: 64.

39. See, Alireza Ezzati, *The Spread of Islam*: *The Contributing Factors* (London: ICAS, 2002), pp. 76–77.

40. See, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Traditional Islam in the Modern World* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1987), pp. 204–224, cited in Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "Muslims and Science: Contributions of Islamic Universities to professional Ethics," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* vol. 27, no. 1 (2010), pp. 54–73.

needs to be addressed in today's global community.[41] So also, the experience of *Da'wah* and the active engagement of Muslim women who have made their presence felt in virtually all facets—be it religious, economic or political dispensation—of the contemporary society will determine how *Da'wah* and the feminist movement intersect with globalisation, raising critical questions regarding *Da'wah*, gender and religious activism, especially as it affects the role and place of more than half the population of the Muslim world, the Muslim women in the modern society.

Salient Principles of *Da'wah* and the Modern Society

The paper will now focus on some salient principles of *Da'wah* that must guide *Da'wah* activities and practices in the contemporary modern society. It is noteworthy that Muslim scholars have carried out abundant and rich studies on the practice and principles of *Da'wah* and from their analysis of Islamic texts on *Da'wah*, they have deduced some fundamental *Da'wah* principles that must guide the conduct of *Da'wah*, in all times and circumstances. Khurram Murad, for instance, in his work, *Da'wah among non-Muslims in the West*, brought his vast experience in the field of *Da'wah* in Pakistan, Asia, Europe and Africa, in his various capacities: as being an active resource-person in training programmes in UK, as Nā'ib Amīr (Vice-President) of Jamā'at-i Islāmī Pakistan, as a Trustee and former Director General of the Islamic Foundation, Leicester, UK, and as the editor of the monthly *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān*, Lahore, Pakistan (an epoch making journal founded by the renowned Islamic scholar, Sayyid Abū 'l-A'lā Mawdūdī in 1932), and as the editor of quarterly *Muslim World Book Review*, Leicester, UK, to reflect on the principles of *Da'wah* in contemporary society. According to him, *Da'wah* among non-Muslims cannot, and should not, be treated as an isolated phenomenon… It, as a matter of fact, forms an integral part of the total endeavour and struggle (*Jihād*)[42] of a Muslim which must

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41. See, R. K. Khuri, *Freedom, Modernity and Islam: Toward a Creative Synthesis* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1998), p. 6.

42. See, Khurram Murad, *Da'wah among non-Muslims in the West: Some Conceptual and Methodological Aspects* (Leicester, UK: The Islamic Foundation, 1406/ 1986), p. 6, available online at: <http: / /

be undertaken in recognition of the Islamic mission of witnessing to the Truth and Justice (*Shahādah* and *Qist*).[43] In the same vein, to Murad, *Daʿwah* should also be put in its proper place in Islam, and considered holistically from the perspective of the total Muslim situation. In addition, the Qurʼān and the life of *Daʿwah* lived by the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him), and all other Messengers (peace be on them), should provide the best guidance to those involved in *Daʿwah* in formulating *Daʿwah* concepts, approaches and methods.[44]

These three principles mentioned by Murad, especially the first one in respect of the comprehensive endeavour needed for conveying the message of Islam (*daʿwah-jihād*), should form the basis of *Daʿwah* in contemporary society. While several scholars, like Chinedu N. Ubah (1943–), have argued that Islam is difficult to be domesticated and be at peace with non-Muslims because of, as per their view, Islam's peculiar "confrontational or revolutionary nature" which translates into military *Jihād*, except in rare cases where "indigenisation" and or "domestication" of Islam has taken place.[45] Other scholars, like Ayinde Oladosu (1387– /1967–), have explained that despite the popular "revolutionary" teachings of Islam, contrary to the opinion of Ubah and others, Islam is generally peaceful.[46] In fact, Islam commands Muslims to establish an Islamic society that transcends the politics of multicultural consociation and tolerance. By so doing, Islam upholds a society built on justice, unity and accommodation that are in consonance with the Islamic declaration of oneness of Allah and the oneness of humanity irrespective of

webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache: QNDdG4tSw9IJ>; and at: <www.witness-pioneer.org/vil/Books/KM_Dawah/index.htm+Da%27 wah+Among+non-Muslims+in+the+West &hl=en&gl=my&strip=1>.

43. See, ibid.

44. See, ibid.

45. See, Chinedu N. Ubah, "The historical roots of the Shariah question in Nigeria," *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol.11, no. 2 (1990), pp. 321–333; idem, *Islam in African History* (Nigeria: Baraka Press and Publisher, 2001), pp. 1–371.

46. See, Ayinde Oladosu, "Victims, Witnesses and Perpetrators: The Poetics of Violence in Islamic Jurisprudence" in Afis Ayinde Oladosu, ed., *Islam in Contemporary Africa: On Violence, Terrorism and Development* (New Castle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), pp. 1–20.

differences of colour, race, language, ethnicity and region as well as differences in religious and cultural ideologies and beliefs.[47] In such a society, benevolence and reward are measured by performance and not the mundane stratifications of race, religion and lineage etc. A careful reading of Islamic teachings will therefore show that being "confrontational" is against the essence of Islam. The word Islam, in Arabic, means submission, resignation, reconciliation (to the will of Allah), and the Islamic way of life (*al-Dīn al-Islām*).[48] Therefore, Islam is characterised by acceptance of the doctrine of submission, in fact total submission, to Allah and bringing about peace among fellow human beings.[49]

So any Muslim, who truly believes in Allah to be the sole Creator, Sustainer, Administrator and Sovereign of the universe as well as the sole Deity, and in the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him) as the chief, final and the last of Allah's Prophets and Messengers (peace be on them), is liable to take the Qur'ān as the absolute divinely revealed unchangeable and inimitable Word of Allah and the final Book of Divine Guidance and direction for humanity to attain peace, tranquillity and happiness in this world as well as in the life to come. And consequently he is duty bound to consciously put up all possible efforts to convey this message to the rest of the humanity by written /spoken words as well as by translating the Islamic teachings in individual and collective spheres of life, personal, familial, social and political, and in public policies and procedures. As a matter of fact, this is a comprehensive form of struggle (*Jihād*) totally different from the military *Jihād*[50] to which, according to Islamic sources and

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47. See, the Qur'ān 57: 25; also see, Syed Othman al-Habshi and Nik Hassan, eds., *Islam and Tolerance* (Kuala Lumpur: IKIM, 1994).

48. See, Cowan, ed., *Arabic-English Dictionary*: *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, p. 426; also see, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd b. Kathīr b. Ghālib al-Āmilī al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān,* ed., Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, 24 vols. (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 1420/2000), vol. 2, p. 510.

49. Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "*Jihād al-Ta'līmī*–In Search of a United Front in Educational *Jihād* and the Experience of Yoruba Muslims," *Al-Fikr*: *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, vol. 20, (2007), pp. 1–15.

50. For an excellent discussion on various aspects of the comprehensive struggle needed for conveying message of Islam (*da'wah-jihād*), see, Khurram Murad, *Da'wah among non-Muslims in the West*, pp. 5ff.

practice, as shown below, recourse is taken only to fight out the aggression (*muḥarabah*) of the enemy.

As a matter of fact, the notion that Islam enjoins perpetual 'confrontational military *Jihād*' with non-Muslims, as promoted by some Orientalist like, Bernard Lewis (1916–   ) and Samuel P. Huntington (1927–2008),[51] is totally baseless. Their arguments are mainly based on the selective reading of some Muslim scholars, classical and contemporary, and a defective understanding of the age-long maxim that the world is divided into two spaces; the abode of peace (*dār al-salām*) and the abode of war (*dār al-ḥarb*). Taken from the angle that the two said spaces only represent antagonism, the maxim seems to be founded on the historically contingent rivalry that had been perpetrated on the Muslims initially by the polytheists of Makkah and other parts of Arabia and later by the Jews of Madīnah and Khayber, and the Roman and Persian Empires. The binary division of the world embedded in this maxim, however, does neither properly reflect the core Islamic teachings and objectives briefly discussed above,[52] nor comprehensively reflect the opinions of the classical Islamic Jurists (*Fuqahā'*), nor fully represent the practices of the Prophet (peace be on him) and the Muslim rulers down the history.[53] Starting from the Prophet's interaction with Ḥabashah and Najrān, it is clear that there existed at his time,

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51. Bernard Lewis (1916–   ) seems to be the first to coin this thesis in a number of his works, see for example, Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East and the West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967); idem, "The Return of Islam," *Commentary* (January 1976), 39–49; idem, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 266, no. 3 (September 1990), pp. 47–60; idem, *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); idem, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: The Modern Library, 2003); idem, "Muslims about to take over Europe," *Jerusalem Post* (January 29, 2007). Samuel P. Huntington (1927–2008) spelled out this thesis in his article, "The Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer 1993). Huntington later further developed the main ideas of this article into a book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). Huntington reiterated this thesis in his later works also, see, for example, Samuel P. Huntington, "The Age of Muslim Wars," *Special Davos Edition Newsweek* (December 2001–February 2002), pp. 9ff.

52. See, notes 46–50, above.

53. For an excellent thorough treatment of the issue of the abode of peace (*dār al-salām*) and the abode of war (*dār al-ḥarb*), see, Muhammad Mushtaq Ahmad, "The Notions of *Dār al-Ḥarb* and *Dār al-Islām* in Islamic Jurisprudence," *Islamic Studies*, vol. 47, no. 1 (2008), pp. 5–37.

implicitly in the case of Ḥabashah[54] and explicitly in the case of Najrān,[55] a third abode or space, *dār al-Ṣulḥ* or *dār al-'Ahd*, the abode of treaty or the abode of covenant. The classical Islamic Jurists coined various terminologies, like, *dār al-Ṣulḥ*, *dār al-'Ahd*, *dār al-hudnā* and *dār al-Amn*, meticulously representing differences in the minor details of various spaces belonging to this third category.[56] This third division shows that Islam encourage religious cooperation and understanding, which is starkly a different doctrine and behaviour from the doctrine held by different religions at various times, and the attitude shown by their followers both lay individuals and religious leaders, who appropriated upon themselves the authority to kill and slaughter "infidels" in the name of God.[57] Islam does not give licence to its followers to kill any one including the infidels. The "confrontational" military *Jihād* cannot be waged against non-Muslims just because they are not Muslims. In fact, the justification for war ('*illat al-qitāl*) according to the great majority of classical Islamic jurists is *muḥarabah* (aggression) and not mere *kufr*

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54. See, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥākam al-Nīsābūrī, *Mustadrak Ḥākam 'alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, ed., Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1411/1990), vol. 2, p. 679, Kitāb Dhikr Akhbār Sayyid al-Mursalīn wa Khātam al-Nabiyyīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib al-Muṣṭafā Ṣalawāt Allāh 'alayh, Bāb Min Kitāb Hijrah al-Ūlā ilā 'l-Ḥabshah; also see, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad Aḥmad*, Kitāb Musnad Banī Hāshim, Bāb Ḥadīth Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib Raḍī Allāh 'anh wa huw Ḥadīth al-Hijrah. See also, 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 321−341.

55. See, Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Bāb Qiṣṣah Ahl Najrān; Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. Ash'ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, Kitāb al-Khirāj wa 'l-Fay' wa 'l-Imārah, Bāb Fī Akhdh al-Jizyah; 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 1, pp. 574ff; Abū Zayd 'Umar b. Shabah b. 'Ubaydah b. Rīṭah al-Numayrī al-Baṣarī, *Ta'rīkh al-Madīnah li Ibn Shabah*, ed., Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt (Jeddah: al-Sayyid Ḥabīb Maḥmūd Aḥmad, 1399 AH), vol. 2, pp. 580–584; Abū 'l-Fatḥ Muḥammad b. Muḥammad Ibn Sayyid al-Nās al-Ya'murī, *'Uyūn al-Athar fi Funūn al-Maghāzī wa 'l-Shamā'il wa 'l-Siyar*, eds., Muḥammad al-'Īd al-Khaṭarāwī wa Muḥyī 'l-Dīn Mastaw (Al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: Maktabah Dār al-Turāth, 1413/1994), vol. 1, pp. 348–350.

56. In spite of the intensely serious efforts of classical Islamic Jurists to be meticulous in representing the Islamic tradition in coining terminologies for various classifications, like, *dār al-'Ahd* (Abode of Covenant), *dār al-Ṣulḥ* (Abode of Truce), *dār al-Amn* (Abode of Safety), *dār al-salām* (Abode of Peace), *dār al-Bid'ah* (Abode of Heresy), *dār al-'Adl* (Abode of Justice), *dār al-Kufr* (Abode of Infidelity), yet, surprisingly, Western attention prefer to rather focus on the term *Dār al-Ḥarb* (Abode of War).

57. See, Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "*Jihād al-Ta'līmī*-In Search of a United Front in Educational *Jihād* and the Experience of Yoruba Muslims," pp. 1−15.

(infidelity). Taqiy al-Dīn Abū 'l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī (661–728/1263–1328) ascribing this opinion to the majority of classical Islamic jurists including Abū Ḥanīfah Nu'mān b. Thābit (80–150/699–767), Mālik b. Anas b. Mālik b. Abī 'Āmir al-Aṣbaḥī (93–179/711–795), and Abū 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī (780–855/164–241), presented the train of argument supporting this opinion and ably negated all the counter arguments in his excellent work, *Qā'idah fī Qitāl al-Kuffār: Hal Huw min Ajl Kufrihim aw Difā'an 'an al-Islām?*[58] This position taken by majority of classical Islamic jurists is deeply rooted in seismological connotation of Islam as well as in its teachings as ably described and analysed by the classical jurists, and the clear instructions of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him) to Muslims not to initiate war with al-Ḥabashah and al-Turk unless they start it.[59] This stark difference between the Islamic doctrine and Muslim behaviour vis-à-vis the doctrine of different religions and attitude of their followers at various times, has been ably captured by a contemporary German Muslim scholar, Murad Wilfried Hofmann (1350–   /1931–   ):

> Due to its structural tolerance vis-à-vis 'peoples of the book,' the Muslim world has always been multi-religious.[60] [Historically] Islam expanded into formerly Christian

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58. See, Shaykh al-Islam Taqiy al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qā'idah fī Qitāl al-Kuffār: Hal Huw min Ajl Kufrihim aw Difā'an 'an al-Islām*, in al-Shaykh 'Abd Allāh b. Zayd Āl Maḥmūd, *al-Jihād al-Mashrū' fī Islām wa Talīhā Risālah Qā'idah fī Qitāl al-Kuffār li Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah* (Qatar: al-Maḥakam al-Shar'iyyah wa 'l-Shu'ūn al-Dīniyyah, 1393 AH), pp. 99ff; idem, *Qā'idah Mukhtaṣarah fī Qital al-Kuffār wa Muhādanatihim wa Taḥrīm Qatlihim li Mujarrad Kufrihim*, analysis and ed., 'Abd al-'Azīz b. 'Abd Allāh Āl Ḥamad (Riyadh: Maktabah al-Malik Fahad al-Waṭaniyyah, 1425/2004), pp. 87–90; idem, *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* (Riyadh: Dār 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1991), vol. 20, p. 101; Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *Fiqh al-Jihād: Dirāsah Muqāranah li Aḥkāmih wa Falsafatih fī Ḍaw' al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunnah*, 2 vols. (Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 2009), vol. 1, pp. 386–390. Because of the arguments determining that mere *kufr* (infidelity) is not the justification for war ('*illat al-qitāl*) the Ḥanafī School of Law, for instance, insists that the apostate is killed under the Islamic law because of "averting his aggression and not because of his apostasy." See, Wahbah al-Zuḥaylī, *al-fiqh al-Islāmī wa Adilatuhā* (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1996), vol. 6, p. 187.

59. See, Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. Ash'ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, Kitāb al-Malāḥim, Bāb Fī al-Nahyi 'an Tahyīj al-Turk wa 'l-Ḥabashah.

60. See, for tolerance and religious pluralism, the Qur'ān 2: 256; 5: 48; 11: 118; 16: 93; 42: 8.

territories—the Near East, North Africa, Spain, Byzantium, the Balkans-without eliminating the Christian communities. Nowhere is this more evident than in Cairo, Damascus, and Istanbul, and in countries like Greece and Serbia… Coexistence with the large Jewish populations within the Muslim empire— aside from the Near East in Muslim Spain, and subsequently in North Africa and the Ottoman Empire—was [also] facilitated… In the Western world [on other hand], developments were entirely different. Here, religious intolerance became endemic, even between Christian churches; many sects were outlawed (as during the first Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, in 325), massacred (e.g., the Donatists in North Africa in the 5th century and the Albigenses and Cathari in the 13th century), subdued as victims of a 'crusade' (Constantinople in 1205), or deserted (like Orthodox East Rome during the siege by Sultan Fatih in 1453). In Germany, a war lasting for 30 years (1618–1648) between Protestant and Catholic princes decimated the population. Under these circumstances and fueled by the Church dictum *extra ecclesia nullum salus* (no salvation outside the church), even minimal tolerance of Muslims could not be expected. The expulsion of both Muslims and Jews from Spain in the sixteenth century—the first case of 'ethnic cleansing' in modern history—made Europe virtually 'Muslim-free.'[61]

Khurram Murad, Murad Wilfried Hofmann, Tāhā Jābir al-'Alwānī (1354– /1935–), Faysal Mawlawi (1360– /1941–), and several other contemporary Muslim scholars contend that in presence of international peace treaties and the UN charter, it seems more appropriate that present times be regarded as the age of treaty or the covenant on the analogy of the classical category of *dār al-Ṣulḥ* or *dār al-'Ahd*, in today's world scenario, and non-Muslim countries especially the Western countries be taken as the abode of *Da'wah* (*dār al-Da'wah*); as no restrictions exist in availing opportunities to invite the masses to Islam.[62] Tariq Ramadan (1382– /1962–),

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61. See, Dr. Murad Wilfried Hofmann, "Muslims as Co-Citizens in the West – Rights, Duties, Limits, Prospects," a paper presented in the Ninth General Conference held by El Azhar on "Islam And The West: Past – Present – Future," available online at: <http://elazhar.com/conferences_eu/9/3.asp>.

62. See, for example, Ṭaha Jabir al 'Alwānī, "Toward an Islamic Alternative in Thought and Knowledge" *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1989), pp. 6–7; Faysal Mawlawi

presenting a sound analysis of the terminologies coined by the classical Islamic Jurists for classifications of the world and the opinions of contemporary Muslim scholars in this regard, as well as taking in view the geopolitical configuration of the world recurrent after the demise of Soviet Union and the dawn of New World Order and age of Globalisation, considers the whole world as *dār al-Daʻwah*. He argues, in relation to the present state of the world, when we are experiencing a worldwide process of globalization, it seems difficult, to continue to refer to the notion of *dār*, translating it in the sense of "house," rather than considering the whole world as our dwelling. He adds, our world is now, whether we like it or not, *an open world.* Consequently, it seems appropriate not to translate the notion of *dār* in its limited sense of abode but to choose to give it the sense of *space*, which expresses more clearly the idea of being open to the world. And rereading the Islamic sources in a manner faithful to their intention and in the light of the universal message and teachings of Islam (*ʻĀlamiyyat al-Islām*), we might fairly consider the whole world as *dār al-Daʻwah*.[63]

This position seems to conform not only with the letter and spirit as well as the ideals and objectives of Islam but also with the practical steps and the *modus operandi* adopted by the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him) soon after he received the Revelation. His very first and foremost relationship with *the others* was to convey them the message he received from the Creator inviting them to accept Islam (submission to none but the Creator in all affairs). Throughout his lifetime the same remained his practice which was time and again reinforced by the *āyāt* of the Qurʼān revealed to him at numerous occasions and he advised Muslims to practice the same, to which they comply faithfully. The classical Islamic jurists marshalling the

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further employed the analogy of Makkah, where the Prophet (peace be on him) and Muslims, although a minority in a society that rejected the new Revelation, considered themselves responsible for keep inviting masses to Islam. He contends, Makkah was neither *dar al-Islām* nor *dār al-Ḥarb*, but *dār al-Daʻwah*. See, Faysal Mawlawi, *al-Usus al-Sharʻiyyah li ʼl-ʻAlāqāt bayn al-Muslimīn wa Ghayr al-Muslimīn* (Paris: UOIF, 1987), p. 104.

63. For *ʻĀlamiyyat al-Islām*, he refers to, among others, the Qurʼān 2: 143; see, Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 73, 74, 75; 62–101.

arguments from the Qur'ān, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (peace be on him) and practices of his companions, unanimously argue that the first and foremost responsibility of a Muslim towards non-Muslims is conveying the message of Islam and to invite them towards it.[64] This message of submission to none but the Creator in all affairs, has been directed to all mankind determining the universal nature of Islam right from the beginning of the Prophet's mission in Makkah. This Internationalisation of Islam through *Da'wah*, which has been encapsulated in the glorious Qur'ān 16: 125, mentioned above, perfectly synchronises with the spirit of the age of Globalisation. One implication of this *āyah* is that *Da'wah* is universal as it is to be directed at all humans—Muslims, nominal Muslims, hypocrites and non-Muslims. That explains the *modus operandi* of *Da'wah* spelt out in the above *āyah*[65] and to which we shall turn shortly, in this section.

Sayyid Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadvī, is one of the Muslim scholars who have analysed the practice of *Da'wah* and pluralism cum interfaith relations in contemporary society. His analysis of *Da'wah* like that of Sayyid Abū 'l-A'lā Mawdūdī (1321–1390/1903–1979), the renowned Islamic revivalist thinker, is rooted, in the oneness and sovereignty of Allah.[66] They opine that while the application of the sovereignty of Allah is central to the practice of *Da'wah*, the approaches to *Da'wah* must not be rigid but be guided by appropriate strategies in any given circumstance. In one of his works, Nadvī outlines the Qur'ānic model of conducting *Da'wah*, its prerequisites and its challenges. Basing his analysis on the elucidation of the following Qur'ānic passage, he propounds the divine origin of the universal and indeed global dimension of *Da'wah*:

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64. See, for example, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī, *Sharḥ al-Siyar al-Kabīr*, *Imlā' Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Sarakhsī*, ed., Muḥammad Ḥasan Muḥammad Ismā'īl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1417/1997), vol. 1, pp. 57, 60, 71 and vol. 5, pp. 347–350; Shams al-A'immah Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Sahl al-Sarakhsī, *al-Mabsūṭ*, 30 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1414/1993), vol. 10, pp. 30–31; Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs b. al-'Abbās b. 'Uthmān … al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Umm*, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 1410/1990), vol. 4, p. 253.

65. See, Uthman, "The Muslim Ummah," p. 302.

66. See, Syed Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi, *Appreciation and Interpretation of Religion in the Modern Age*, trans., Syed Athar Husain (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1976), pp. 21–22.

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ ٱللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِى ٱلسَّمَآءِ ۞ تُؤْتِىٓ أُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا ۗ وَيَضْرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

> Are you not aware how Allah sets forth the parable of a good
> word? [It is] like a good tree, firmly rooted, [reaching out] with
> its branches towards the sky, yielding its fruit at all times by its
> Sustainer's leave. And [thus it is that] Allah propounds parables
> for the mankind, so that they might be thoughtful [of the
> truth].[67]

Following this divine root, while the ideological contents of *Da'wah*
may vary in its methodological approaches because of its global
dimension, its fixed tenor is the 'establishment of faith.' Nadvī,
basing on this imagery of *Da'wah* depicted in the above mentioned
two *āyah*s, argues that *Da'wah* must be measured by the amount of
good fruits it spreads all over the global space, including the west.
To him, the assertion in the passage that the good tree has branches
that reach up to the sky and fruits that yield all the times is an
allusion to the spatial dimension of *Da'wah*. On this basis, Nadvī was
very optimistic of the establishment of a strong *Da'wah* outpost
capable of engaging with others with its global vision if and when it
follows the Prophetic model and is based on sincerity of purpose.[68]
He, therefore, was strongly critical of all *Da'wah* movements and
organisations that embrace confrontational strategies and approaches
in their relationship with others and based on his independent
interpretation of the Prophetic model of *Da'wah* he avidly supported
the dialogical role of *Da'wah* contributing to global peace.[69]

Similarly, Wahhiduddin Khan (1343– /1925–), an Indian
Muslim scholar and peace activist, insists that inter-religious dialogue

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67. See, the Qur'ān 14: 24–25.

68. See, Syed Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi, *Da'wah in the West: Qur'ānic Paradigm*, trans., Dr. Abdur Raheem Kidwai (UK: Islamic Foundation, 2007), pp. 8–16.

69. See, Syed Abul Hasan 'Ali Nadwi, *Western Civilization, Islam and Muslims*, English trans., Mohammad Asif Kidwai (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1974), pp. 191–192

and collaboration must be embraced by Muslims in their contemporary *Da'wah*. He argues that Muslims in India must interact with Hindus by entering into dialogue on how to protect their faiths. He said that this is the implication of *Lakum Dīnukum wa līy Dīn* meaning "You have your religion and I have mine,"[70] which in his view calls for mutual religious respect, accommodation and pluralism. To him, it is by dialoguing with others that contemporary *Da'wah* can guarantee the very success of witnessing what *Da'wah* represents.[71] This interfaith dialogue between Muslims and fellows of other religions should flow from intra-Muslim interfaith dialogue. This is because the Prophet (peace be on him), on many occasions, entered into dialogue with his companions. For instance, during his dealings with the Arab Polytheists at al-Ḥudaybiyah, when the news came that 'Uthmān b. 'Affān had been killed, the Prophet (peace be on him) consulted with the companions and it was agreed that 'Uthmān b. 'Affān's death should be avenged.[72]

This conducting of interfaith dialogue between Muslims and fellows of other religions, in the present author's view should not be restricted only to some religions rather it must embrace all religions such as Zoroastrianism or even Atheism because the command given to Muslims to uphold mutual religious respect and accommodation in the realm of transactions and manners is not restricted to the People of the Book. Upholding mutual cooperation, transactions and entering into dialogue with fellows of all religions was amply demonstrated by the Prophet (peace be on him) in his dealings with the Arab Polytheists besides giving immunities and protection to the People of the Book who were regarded as Monotheists. It is further noteworthy that many Muslim scholars do consider Zoroastrianism and Hinduism to fall within the category of the People of the Book. For instance, Ismā'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī, argues that when the Islamic

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70. See, the Qur'ān 109: 6.

71. See, Wahhiduddin Khan, *Islam and Peace*, trans., Farida Khanam (New Delhi: Maktaba al-Risala, 1999), pp. 115–120.

72. See, 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, vol. 3, p. 364; Marcel A. Boisard, *Jihād: A Commitment to Universal Peace* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1991), p. 35.

forces conquered Persia Zoroastrians were accorded the same privileges which were given to the People of the Book. Similarly, following the conquest of India in 92/711, Muḥammd b. Qāsim (75–96/695–715), sought the Islamic ruling on the Hindus and Buddhists from Walīd b. 'Abd al-Malik (48–96/668–715), the Ummayad Caliph (r. 85–96/704–715), in Damascus. The Caliph in turn called a council of the *'Ulamā'* and sought their ruling and the council of scholars accorded the Hindus and Buddhists, the status as that of the Jews and Christians.[73]

The first implication of the *modus operandi* of *Da'wah* is that *Da'wah* is universal as stated before and treated elsewhere.[74] This point, in particular, underscores the collective obligatory nature of *Da'wah* in Islam. *Da'wah* despite its importance and significance, has not been made an individual obligation (*farḍ 'ayn*) because its universalistic nature demands comprehensive and holistic understanding of peoples, societies, cultures, concepts, ideologies, systems and religions to mention just a few. This, no doubt, calls for acquiring the kind of universal and sound knowledge, scholarship and expertise, as demonstrated by the classical Islamic scholars, a detailed treatment of which is beyond the scope of this paper and has been treated by the present author elsewhere.[75] Hence, to meet the requirements of the collective obligatory nature of *Da'wah* the contemporary Muslim scholars need to pool their knowledge together to carry out this task. *Du'āt* need to acquire sound knowledge of current issues and meticulously analysing them in correct Islamic Perspective to provide sound answers and explanations to the misperceptions raised about Islam on these issues. *Du'āt* need to learn the use of scientific cybernetic tools in their *Da'wah* endeavours, e.g. webcam, video conferencing, and

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73. See, H. M. Elliot, tr., *al-Kufl's Shah Namah*, in his, *The History of India as Told by its Own Historians* (London: 1867–77), vol. 1, pp. 184–87 cited in Ismā'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī, "Meta-Religion: Towards A Critical World Religion," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1986), p. 55.

74. See, Uthman, "The Muslim Ummah," p. 302.

75. See, Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "Muslims and Science: Contributions of Islamic Universities to Professional Ethics," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, vol. 27, no. 1 (2010), pp. 54–73.

other internet tools. This is an essential principle of *Da'wah* that needs to be fully used to ensure the success of *Da'wah* in this age when the frontiers of knowledge are ever expanding almost at the speed of light.

Another principle is that *Da'wah* requires some training as it is a specialisation. *Da'wah* ought to be based on true and right understanding regarding various Islamic teachings, practices and institutions. This principle is so important that Muslims are commanded in the Qur'ān to make the acquisition of knowledge a collective obligation such that, some of them must stay behind even from the military *Jihād* so that they may deeply learn the knowledge of Islam then pass it on to others through admonishing "the people when they return to them."[76] So, the *Du'āt* need to constantly and seriously keep themselves involved in learning activities such as studying the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* as well as the contemporary sciences to use them as *Da'wah* tools. They need to constantly involve themselves in the process of learning and teaching.

An absolute commitment to the propagation of the message of Islam (submission to none but the Creator in all spheres and affairs of life) is another basic principle of *Da'wah*. It requires from the *Da'wah* workers or *Du'āt* an unconditional commitment to Islamic teachings and consciousness of all of its ideals and contents. Though, there are full and part time *Da'wah* workers, the level of commitment plays pivotal role in producing the quality and amount of *Da'wah* work and the results. This principle entails that *Da'wah* must be based on the good intention of seeking the Pleasure of Allah and not be directed at the praise or support of any organisation or government, nor at seeking personal praise, glory, or securing certain position or posts. This principle further entails that *Da'wah* endeavours must not sacrifice peace, stability and mutual good will. For *Da'wah*, according to the Islamic teachings is directed to convey the message of Islam in a polite and tolerant manner with wisdom and beautiful exhortation avoiding even a reflection of coercion. Coercion,

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76. See, the Qur'ān 9: 122.

according to Islamic teachings, is simply an antithesis of *Da'wah* and a serious violation of the Prophetic method of winning the hearts of people for Allah.[77]

The success of *Da'wah* is not and cannot be measured in terms of conversion, it may, however, be measured by the efforts put forth by the *Du'āt* in propagation of the message of Islam through spoken or written words as well as by personal conduct demonstrating the practice of Islamic teachings and spirituality which play central and important role in formation of a moderate pleasant personality, a manifestation of conducting all affairs of life in a balanced way in submission to none but the Creator Allah the Almighty. *Du'āt* need to be conscious of avoiding authoritarian attitude and passing judgements on people. In this regard they need to take guidance and wisdom from the famous slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood that its members are callers towards the path of Allah not the judges to pass verdicts on the people, that is: *Du'āt lā Quḍāt*.[78]

In line with the need to win the hearts of people, *Du'āt* need to work hard at bridging up the gap between Muslims and non-Muslims by organising talks, forums, seminars, debates and conferences in conjunction with non-Muslim communities. They need to focus their *Da'wah* endeavours on education of both Muslims and non-Muslims imparting the Islamic teachings ensuring true understanding of Islam as the comprehensive system of life. By doing so, contemporary *Da'wah* can fully embrace the interactive dynamism of Islam in the modern world.[79] The most important *Da'wah* Contents and Messages that reflect the comprehensiveness of Islam and this interactive dynamism of *Da'wah* are contained in the principal teachings of Islam; the teachings putting forth the basics of the Islamic faith (*al-Īmān*) along with the supporting arguments and the

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77. See, the Qur'ān 2: 256.

78. See Ḥasan al-Bannā, *Majmū'ah al-Rasā'il* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah, 1984); Ustādh Ḥasan Ismā'īl al-Huḍaybī, *Du'āt Lā Quḍāt* (Cairo: Dār al-Nashr wa 'l-Tawzī' al-Islāmiyah, 1977).

79. See, John Voll, *Islam, Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder: Westernview Press, 1985), p. 4.

teachings containing the fundamentals of morality (*al-Akhlāq*).[80] It is needless to mention that the best way to communicate the Islamic message (*Da'wah*) is to combine the verbal communication of Islamic teachings containing the above mentioned two aspects with the sincere internalisation and thus perpetual practice of these Islamic ideals and deeds.[81]

Another important principle of *Da'wah* is voidance of the sectarian or religious conflicts. For instance, *Da'wah* workers need not to revolve their discussions around over-criticism of the sacred books of other religions, in their endeavours for the propagation of Islam. Similarly, they need to eschew sectarian approaches and beliefs in their *Da'wah* endeavours by avoiding discussions on *fiqh* disputes and argumentations. As according to the clear teachings of the Qur'ān, *Da'wah* discourses need to be respectful and not abusing or antagonistic,[82] gentle and peaceful,[83] piece meal and gradual,[84] strategic and attractive.[85]

Learning to do simple good deeds to improve Muslim relations with others like cleaning the *masjid* along with its neighbourhood, addressing the humanitarian issues by helping the victims of disasters and calamities, for instance, protecting and saving people in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan & Haiti; practising the habit of listening with rapt attention; listening to other people and not to hear their own personal voices alone; avoiding argumentation and confrontation and seeing religious dialogue as an encounter that emphasises common grounds; and to voice for provision of women's rights guaranteed in the primary Islamic sources, the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him), are also crucial *Da'wah* principle which *Da'wah* workers need to internalise

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80. See, for example, the Qur'ān18: 110, 103: 3.

81. See, the Qur'ān 41: 33–35.

82. See, the Qur'ān 6: 108.

83. See, the Qur'ān 20: 44.

84. See, the Qur'ān 17: 106.

85. See, the Qur'ān16: 125–127.

and practice in all circumstances (though extremely adverse) for the success of *Da'wah* endeavours.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study reveal how the practice of *Da'wah* in the contemporary society can be made to return Islam back to its leading position at the dawn of modernity, using the universal principles of *Da'wah* embedded in the core Islamic teachings and sources, and the tools of globalisation. *Da'wah* encounter with other religions of today's global society needs to be well rooted in the Islamic sources, objectives and teachings,[86] as Islam provides solution to all human problems including current issues.[87] These teachings include the need for *Du'āt* to become more engrossed and concerned about Islam, other Muslims, especially those not involved in their *Da'wah* groups, and the non-Muslims. *Du'āt*'s responsibility in promoting Islam, also calls for the Reconstruction of Islamic Thought through Islamisation of the Knowledge, deep and detailed study of modernity and the modernising project, avoiding violent arguments and confrontation, recognising diversity and plurality of laws and collaborating with other civilisations on common grounds while vigilantly preserving the Islamic identity, practices and culture. The flexibility inbuilt in the teachings of Islam needs to be applied in varying circumstances to solve the issues facing the Muslims as was prudently done by the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him) in varying situations and circumstances.

In so doing, *Da'wah* endeavours need to be focused to raise the current low level of tolerance in the world to the level of accommodation as practiced by the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him) with his contemporaries leaving an example to be followed by the Muslims of all times to come. Similarly, the *Da'wah* workers need to look into the resolution of current issues through sound and effective constitutional means e.g. civil reports, the media, the modern education system, research and development in all facets of

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86. See, the Qur'ān 4: 58.

87. See, the Qur'ān 6: 38.

life that can promote the universal message of Islam in its spirit and form, promote human dignity and build bridges between Muslim countries.

Finally, this study suggests the need to make people, Muslims and non-Muslims, the greatest resource and asset by enhancing their human capital through investment in research and development, formal education, training, on job learning and lifelong learning through which *Da'wah* endeavours can make valuable contribution in eradication of religious intolerance and violence and promote peaceful circumstances conducive to the propagation of the message of Islam to the humanity at large leading to realisation of the goal of a peaceful and prosperous global village.

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