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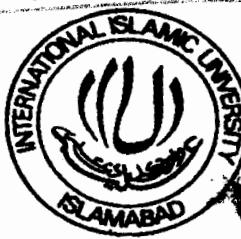
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APPROACH OF DR. ISMAIL RAJI AL-FARUQI TO COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS

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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD

FACULTY OF ISLAMIC STUDIES (USULUDDIN)

DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION

Thesis Presented as partial requirement for the Degree Of M.Phil

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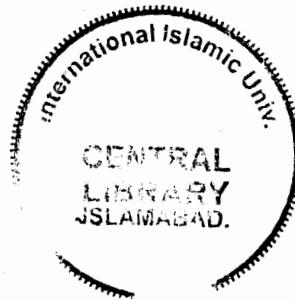
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خلاصة البحث

يدور هذا البحث حول حياة اسماعيل راجي الفاروقى ساعيا نحو استكشاف بعض أفكاره ومنهجه في دراسة الدين في العصر الحاضر، مقارنا ذلك مع بعض آراء مفكري الغرب في هذا المجال، ومتخذًا المنهج التاريخي أساسا في معظم دراساته في علم الأديان.

دراسة الفاروقى للأديان في هذا البحث تعتبر دراسة مقارنة تقييمية، خاصة دراسته للأديان العالم الكبرى. وعلى أساس ذلك توصل إلى أن الدين الإسلامي هو الدين الوحيد الذي بقي على أصوله من غير تحريف ولا تبديل، لذلك احتاز هذا الدين على مكانة أفضل الأديان نظرا للأديان الأخرى الكتابية التي انحرفت وتغيرت بما كانت عليه في بداية ظهورها، كما نجد في الديانة اليهودية والنصرانية. وهو يعتبر كل هذه الأديان سماوية منزلة من عند الله ، ولها أفضلية على غيرها ولكن أفضلية الإسلام تبقى على هذه الأديان الكتابية أيضا.

ويعطي الفاروقى منهج الحوار الديني في دراسته إهتماما بالغا للوصول إلى حقيقة الأديان بشكل علمي أفضل.

ولقد اهتم الجزء الأول من البحث بدراسة حياة الفاروقى وبعض مفاهيمه واتجاهاته الفكرية حول دراسة الأديان.

والجزء الثاني درس بعض إسهاماته في علم الأديان خاصة ما أسهمه في مجال الأديان الكبرى في عالمنا اليوم.

أما الجزء الأخير فقد عني بتحليل مناهجه التي اتخذها لدراسة تلك الأديان والتعامل معها، كالحوار الديني ومنهج النظريات الدينية والدراسة التاريخية، خاصة فيما يتعلق بدراسة الأديان الكبرى في عصرنا الحاضر.

والخاتمة تبين نتائج البحث وما يمكن بحثه لاحقا في هذا المجال من خلال أعمال الفاروقى التي لم تدرس فيما بعد.

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INTRODUCTION

Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi is renowned Palestinian scholar who is widely recognized as an authority on Islam and comparative religion. He spent several years at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, taught at several universities in North America, including McGill University in Montreal. He was Professor of Religion at Temple University, where he founded and chaired the Islamic Studies program.

He was one of those who proposed the idea of Islamization of knowledge and founded the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) together with Sheikh Taha Jabir Al-wani, Dr. Abdul Hamid Abu Suleiman, former Rector of the International Islamic University, Malaysia (IIUM), and Anwar Ibrahim in 1980. He also proposed the idea of Islamization of knowledge in Pakistan but due to some reasons it failed and then he migrated to America. The reasons will be discussed in next chapter.

The study of religion is the study of mankind. "Religions touch the deepest feelings of the human heart and are part of every human society."¹

The religion of Islam is not named after a person or a nation, nor was it decided by later generations of its followers, as in the case of Christianity, which was named after Jesus Christ, Buddhism after Buddha, Confucianism after Confucius, Judaism after the tribe of Judah and Hinduism after the Hindus.

Islam (Submission to the will of Allah) is the religion which was given to Adam (A.S), the first man and the prophet of Allah and it was the religion of all the Prophets sent by Allah to mankind. Further, its name was chosen by Allah Himself and is mentioned clearly in the Glorious Qur'an:

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you and I have chosen Islam as your Religion."^{*}

At another place the Glorious Qur'an mentioned that; "If any one desires a religion other than Islam never will it be accepted of him"^{**}

¹ See: Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam" (United States of America, Amana Publications, 1984), VII
* (Qur'an 5:3), ** (Qur'an 3:85)

Hence, Islam does not claim to be a new religion brought by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to Arabia, in the seventh century, but rather to be a re-impression in its final form of the true religion of Allah for people till the End of the world.

There were certain reasons behind the selection of this topic, it can be briefly described as follow.

Firstly, Al-Faruqi was a Muslim scholar and comparativist. For him the theory of 'religion' posses a salvific value for all the humans. It was one of the reasons to know that the theory of religion have salvific value for all the religions or not? Al-Faruqi was of the view that Islam is unique religion among the world religions. Islam has recognized itself to the most of pre-Islamic religions. The relationship of Islam with other religions of the world reveal the Islamic view. The practice of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and the relationship of Islam with other religions was decided at that time. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) considered Jews and Christians another *Ummah* along with the Muslim *Ummah*. Later the second Caliph of Islam extended it to Zoroastrains at the time of conquest of Persia.

The recognition of Islam with pre-Islamic revealed religions is a basic belief of Islam which regulated the relationship between Muslims and the custodians of other religions from the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) till today.

Secondly, Al-Faruqi concentrated on the religions of Judaism and Christianity. He was of the view that the main objection to the Jews and Christians is not that the God they worship is false God, but that the way they acknowledged and worship God is not the way God himself wants to be acknowledged as, as informed in His last revelation. I wanted to know what were the reasons which lead the religions of God to the avenues of secularization and to know the history of their dogmatic beliefs and changes in their theological ground made by the followers and scholars of the religions.

Thirdly, Al-Faruqi was one of those Muslim scholars, who studied the world religions from Islamic perspective.

Fourthly, Al-Faruqi stressed the need of inter-faith dialogue not to reject them but to affirm them as religion. Al-Faruqi was of the view that without any encounter with religions it is not possible to convince them. So he emphasized on the need of dialogue between these religions. I wanted to know whether the ideas of Al-Faruqi can be implemented or not.

The present study describes the life and some key concepts of Al-Faruqi, which includes his ideas about religion, and history of religions as method and discipline, along with comparison and evaluation with the Western contemporary scholars.

The study brings into light the superiority of Islam among the world religions. It also includes major religions of the world according to Al-Faruqi.

The study makes it clear that the religion of Judaism and Christianity are distorted religions. But it also includes that they are revealed religions and Islam identified them with it self.

The study also brings into light the methodology of dialogue and the theory of religions. The concluding section describes the findings, results of the work, and areas which can be taken as research work from the works of Al-Faruqi.

Personally I was inspired by my respected teacher's contribution in comparative religions. My respected teacher Isa M. Maishanu had written his thesis for PhD about the two best Muslim scholars of comparative religions of the past. So I was looking for some one who has contributed to the study of religions in twentieth century and I found Dr. Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi up-to that level. Al-Faruqi is a well known scholar of religions in both the Muslim world and the West.

When I started my thesis, I came to know that books written by Al-Faruqi are not available in our libraries. I searched each and every place I could, including IRI, IPS, Christian Study Center, but I could not found required material. Anyhow with such a scare helping material and resources I have tried my best to uncover every aspect of Al-Faruqi's contributions to the study of religions in the contemporary age.

Dr Al-Faruqi touches upon a broad spectrum of subjects, drawing into his discussion elements from history, comparative religion, anthropology, philosophy, ethics

archaeology and other disciplines. The methodologies I have used for research includes descriptive method, comparative method and critical evaluation. And I followed the pattern of Islamic Studies Journal published by Islamic research institute, International Islamic University Islamabad.

I will try to write the facts introduced by Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi and it will be tried to get to know some one very special in the study of religions in the twentieth century. And personally I think it is his right to be known by us and we should follow such examples and contribute something to our field as students of religions.

I can not claim that whatever I have tried is perfect. Its not, but it is just a little attempt to contribute to knowledge. *In sha Allah* I hope it will help the students of comparative religion and encourage them to know and follow the Muslims scholars in the field of religions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to pay my gratitude to Dr. Abdul Khaliq Qazi, dean of faculty of Usuluddin (IIUI), with his kind help and supervision I am able to complete my thesis. I would like to thank Madam Drakshan Azam for her thorough review of my work and kind guidance for enhancement of my presentation.. I extend my gratitude to Madam Munazza Batool for long discussion sessions on critical area of my research and Madam Amina for her moral support and helping me a lot in collecting reference books and supporting material. Special thanks to Dr. Khalifa Hassan (ex student of Al-Faruqi), who enlightened my views about certain aspect of Al-Faruqi's conceptions.

I am really gratified to my family members, especially to my loving mother, caring father, my loving sisters Farhat and Salma, my brothers and my dear parents-in-law who helped me when I needed it most and always encouraged me to complete thesis. Words can't express my feelings about my kids, Sara Ali (three years), Muhammad Hassan Ali (one year and eight months) and Shumaeel Ali (four months), who had to suffer and sacrificed the most, in order to let me complete my thesis. Lastly my special thanks to my husband Shahid Mahmood, without his support and care I could not have completed my thesis.

CHAPTER ONE: LIFE AND MAJOR KEY CONCEPTS OF AL-FARUQI

1.1 BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF AL-FARUQI

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION:

Al-Faruqi was born in Jaffa, Palestine, 1st January 1921. His father, Abd al Huda Al-Faruqi, was both a judge and a well known figure in Palestine. Al-Faruqi, grew up in a prosperous and scholarly family.¹

Al-Faruqi received his religious education at home from his father and in a local mosque. He began to attend the French Dominican College Des Freres St. Josephs² and completed his secondary school education from there.

HIGHER EDUCATION:

Al-Faruqi grew up in a prosperous and scholarly family with his education and family background giving him the confidence to play a prominent role in his country. After graduating from the American University of Beirut in 1941, he returned home and eventually became the District Governor of Galilee in the Government of Palestine. In 1948, however, the Partition of Palestine made him and his family refugees. This experience left a deep scar on him, and probably influenced the future direction of his thought. Subsequent writings reflect this tension for he never lost his attachment to Palestine, the land or the people and, therefore, to its history and culture.³

¹See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), "Islam and other Faiths" (Articles by Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, The Islamic Foundation and the International Institute of Islamic Thoughts) P-XI (introduction) and see also Ataullah Siddiqui, "Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century" (Great Britain, Macmillan Press LTD, 1997), 85

² See M Tariq Quraishi, Isma'il Al-Faruqi: An Enduring Legacy (Plain Field, Indiana: Muslim Students Association, 1986) originally found in book and see also John. L. Esposito, John. O. Voll. (ed.) "Makers Of Contemporary Islam", (Oxford, University press 2001), 23

³ See Ataullah Siddiqui, P - XI, XII (introduction), See also John. L. Esposito, John. O. Voll. (ed.) "Makers Of Contemporary Islam" 24, and see also, Mona Abaza, "Debates on Islam and Knowledge in Malaysia and Egypt" (London, Routledge Curzon, 2002) 79

In 1949, he obtained his M.A. in philosophy from Indiana University. He was then accepted for entry into Harvard University, department of philosophy, and was awarded his second M.A. in philosophy. In March 1951 with a thesis entitled "Justifying the Good: Metaphysics and epistemology of value". However he decided to return to Indiana University; there he submitted his thesis to the department of philosophy and received his PhD in September, 1952. By then he had a deep rooted background in classical philosophy and the developing interest of the western tradition. In the beginning of 1953, he and his wife were in Syria. He then moved to Egypt, where he studied at al-Azhar University Cairo (1954-1958) for a postdoctoral research in Islamic studies.⁴

SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE:

According to Al-Faruqi:

"There was a time in my life. When all I cared about was proving to me that I could win my physical and intellectual existence from the west. But when I won it, it became meaningless. I asked myself: who am I? A Palestinian, a philosopher, or a liberal humanist, my answer was: I am a Muslim"⁵

Isma'il Al-Faruqi was indeed a pioneer, one of a select few who blazed the trail for current and future generations. For Al-Faruqi, Islam was an all-encompassing ideology, the primary identity of a world-wide community of believers and the guiding principle for society and culture. This approach, this wholistic Islamic worldview, was embodied in a life and career in which he wrote extensively, lectured and consulted with Islamic movements in both America and internationally.⁶

⁴ See Osama Bakar, Article, "The intellectual impact of American Muslim scholars on the Muslim world with special reference to Southeast Asia", (Center for Muslims – Christians Understanding, Edmund Walsh School of Foreign Service George Town University, June 2003), 3..and see also Ataullah Siddiqui, "Christian-Muslim Dialogue", 85

⁵ See Ataullah Siddiqui P 9, and see also John. L. Esposito, John. O. Voll. (ed.) "Makers Of Contemporary Islam", 24

⁶ *Ibid* VII, VIII (Foreword)

Al-Faruqi became a research associate with the faculty of Divinity at McGill University. There he further investigated Christianity and Judaism for two years. Upon leaving McGill in 1961, he embarked on his teaching career beginning in Karachi.⁷

He received invitation from director Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi to join the newly formed central institute of Islamic Research in Karachi as full professor. He was offered two years contract. He accepted the invitation and saw it as offering a golden opportunity to put into practice his philosophical views about Islamic responses to modernity and the modern societal reconstruction of the ummah along with Fazlur Rehman. He had dreamed in Montreal about making Pakistan the center of “a new Muslim world”.⁸

When Fazlur Rehman became the director of the Institute, he encouraged Al-Faruqi to prepare a new academic curriculum for the institute that would be more in keeping with the two scholars vision for future Muslim intellectual endeavors and scholarship. Al-Faruqi submitted the draft curriculum to Fazlur Rehman on march 16, 1963, and tendered his resignation from the institute on August 5 of the same year disappointed that Fazlur Rehman had not implemented the curriculum. According to Al-Faruqi, Fazlur Rehman was not pursuing the real objectives of the institute, but rather was playing politics just as his predecessor had done. As Al-Faruqi himself once declared the Fazlur Rehman experiment in Islam and modernity had failed.⁹

During a professional life that spanned almost thirty years, Al-Faruqi published more than 25 books and 100 articles, he was a visiting professor at more than 23 universities in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and South East Asia and served on editorial boards of seven major journals.¹⁰

Al-Faruqi returned to the United States in 1963, He managed to secure a one-year teaching contract as a visiting professor in the history of Religions of Chicago's School

⁷ See Osama Bakar, Article, “The intellectual impact of American Muslim scholars on the Muslim world”, with special reference to Southeast Asia, (Center for Muslims – Christians Understanding, Edmund Walsh school of Foreign Service George Town University, June 2003), 3, 4.

⁸ *Ibid* 5, 6.

⁹ *Ibid* 5, 6.

¹⁰ See Ataullah Siddiqui, “Islam and other Faiths” VIII (foreword)

of Divinity. From 1964 to 1968 he was an associate professor in the department of Religion at Syracuse University where he initiated an Islamic Studies program.¹¹

This made him the first Muslim scholar in the United States to dedicate himself to the field of Islamic Studies. He moved to Temple University in September 1968 as professor of religions at the department of religion a position he held on till his death on May 24, 1986. It was during his temple days that Al-Faruqi developed political ties with Southeast Asian Islam, particularly in Malaysia.¹²

In 1980, Al-Faruqi had founded IIIT, in the United States but later moved its head office to Kuala Lumpur¹³, which is now moved back to USA.

Despite all of these academic activities, he managed to establish the Islamic Studies group of the American Academy of religions in 1976 and chaired it for 10 years. He served as the vice president of the inter-religions peace colloquium, the Muslim-Jewish-Christian conference and as the president of the American Islamic College in Chicago. In 1979, these groups of American academy of religions sponsored (along with the Muslim-Jewish- Christian conference) the Trialogue of the Abrahamic Faiths convention, and Al-Faruqi edited the addressed.¹⁴

Al-Faruqi's Palestinian roots, Arab heritage, and Islamic faith are the founding stones on which this great personality developed. Issues of identity, authenticity, and western political and cultural imperialism, so common in recent years, were continuous themes in his writings, though he addressed them differently at different stages in his life. His early emphasis was on Arabism as the vehicles of Islam and Muslim identity. He would draw on these sources intellectually, religiously and aesthetically throughout rest of his life¹⁵.

A major focus of Al-Faruqi's work was the education of a new generation of Muslim schooled in modern methods, but Islamic oriented. Believing that many of the problems

¹¹ *Ibid. VIII (foreword)*

¹² See Osama Bakar, Article, "The intellectual impact of American Muslim scholars on the Muslim world" 6, 7.

¹³ *Ibid. 7*

¹⁴ See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) "Islam and other Faiths" VI, VIII.

¹⁵ See Pervez Manzoor, Article "The Scholar's Pen is Mightier than the Assassin's Blade" (Muslim Journal, Chicago vol: 13, No. 30, June 10, 1988), 6.

of the Muslim world are due to its elites and the bifurcations of education in Muslim societies. He addressed this problem in a variety of ways, combining thought with its institutionalization and implementation. He traveled extensively and regularly to the Muslim world, lecturing to Muslim young groups carefully recruiting students for his program at Temple University.¹⁶

DEATH:

Al-Faruqi and his wife were killed by some Jewish organization and a Muslim writer describes the incident and states. "The Faruqis are dead, brutally murdered in their home. The brilliant scholar of Islam and his spouse are gone, snatched by the icy hands of death. The ink of scholar has mingled with the blood of martyr, triumphing over both hatred and ignorance. Only the grief of the Ummah continues. The changing time demands that Muslims not only cherish their scholars and protect them if they are to discharge satisfactorily their sacred trust to the Ummah. Ideas are sharper than swords. The world has always known that violence kills but does not triumph also belongs to the timeless insight of man's collective wisdom. Not only the ink of scholar is more sacred than the blood of martyr as claimed by the Islamic tradition, but the idea of civilization, culture and learning, so nobly personified by the Al-Faruqi is mightier than all the demons of fanaticism and revenge when it cuts, it reaches the very heart of the things, and it kills not but heals. It is the idea of Islam".¹⁷

Al-Faruqi provided an important intellectual foundation for the scholars – activists of the 1970's and 1980's and the emerging intellectual generation at the beginning of the twenty first century, Isma'il Al-Faruqi was indeed a maker of contemporary Islam.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ See John. L. Esposito, John. O. Voll. (ed.) "Makers Of Contemporary Islam", 38.

1.2 RELIGION

Al-Faruqi viewed religion as part of human nature. He established in his works the concept of *Din Al-Fitrah* which God endowed to all mankind. There is no variation in creation of God that is the true and valuable religion.

“The fact that the object of experience is ultimate implies understanding of it as transcendent in both the theoretical (that is metaphysical and epistemological) and the practical (valuational, ethical) sense. On the metaphysical level, Ultimate Reality is perceived as the first cause, or principle of sufficient reason, which explains all beings and all events on the axiological levels, it is perceived as the last end or principle, which justifies all beings and all events. Its relevance therefore is total. All aspects of reality and history are understood as effects and instruments of the activity of a being perceived in experience as ultimate Reality”.¹⁹

“Religion focuses primarily on the immutable aspects of life and existence. The aspects of life which religion is primarily concerned are as valid today as they were at dawn of humanity and will continue to be so in the future.”²⁰

According to A-Faruqi the idea of religion includes the belief in the creator, ritual actions, ethical actions, and the formation of religious communities, This idea of religion is explained the best in the Qur'an.

THE QUR'ANNIC CONCEPT OF RELIGION:

No scripture in the word teaches such a ‘comparative religion’ as the Qur'an, wrote Staton in his treatise, which is perhaps the first word of a non-Muslim in which the

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 14.

²⁰ See Mehran Kamrava (Ed.), “The New Voices Of Islam: Reforming Politics and Modernity – A Reader”, (Article by Fateh Ullah Galan, “A Comparative Approach To Islam and Democracy”). (I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd. 6 Salem Road, London, W2 4BU 175 Fifth Avenue, New York .2006), 100.

significance of the teaching of the Qur'an on the Subject has been generously acknowledged".²¹

"The Qur'an manually employs three words for the term religion as it is understood in the modern west-din, millah and Ummah". In the Quranic usage each of these terms is too comprehensive and rich in meaning to be adequately expressed by a single word or phrase in English. However, in the light of Qur'an, the term may generally be given the following meanings: din denotes millah roughly signifies what we presently tend to term religion as tradition, and Ummah is used to mean religio-moral and social political community".²²

"It will be noted that all the three terms have been identified with Islam—that is the din, the last millah and the most exemplary Ummah".²³

Among the meaning of the term Din (religion) is obedience, recompense, and a way or path. These meanings are interlinked. The path is the way that leads, through obedience, to God the Almighty, and at the end of life man will be held fully accountable for his good and bad deeds. In a more technical sense, din may be defined as the Divine Law as it guides any person possessed of reason to do good and avoid bad deeds. The vigor and stability of faith depends upon worship and good actions.

"In the Qur'an the word din, with all its construct forms, occurs ninety-five times in its verbal noun form, and twenty six times in its possessive case with pronouns, denoting the sense of "his religion", their religion, 'your religion', and 'my religion', only three times in its verbal form and nowhere it is used in its plural forms i.e. adyan (religions)".²⁴

Islam (submission to the will of Allah) is the religion, which was given to Adam (A.S). the first man and the first prophet of Almighty Allah and it was the religion of all the

²¹ See: Ghulam Haider Aasi, "Muslim Understanding Of Other Religions: A study of Ibne-Hazm's Kitab Al-Fasl Fi-All Milal Wa Al Ahwa- W Al Nihal"(Islamabad: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Islamic Research Institute, 1999), I

²² Ibid. 1, 2

²³ Ibid. 1, 2

²⁴ Ibid. 2

prophets sent by Allah to mankind. Further its name was chosen by Allah Himself and is mentioned clearly in the Glorious Qur'an.

"This day I have perfected your Religion for you, completed my favor upon you and I have chosen for Islam as your Religion." ²⁵

"Religion takes many forms, or perhaps it would be better to say that there are many aspects to religion. They include (e.g.)" the belief in a creator (God), ritual actions (e.g. making offering to God), ethical actions (following God's law), the formation of religious communities and the formation of creeds and doctrinal systems".²⁶

"Religion has established immutable principle related to faith, worship and morality. The main aim of Islam and its unchangeable dimensions affect its rules governing the changeable aspects of our life".²⁷

"Three basic senses seem to be inherent to the use of the word din (a) religion, (b) judgment, retribution or requital (c) custom, cult or law. However, the core of all these is the notion of obedience".²⁸

"Commenting upon the application of the term din, Muhammad Assad refers to the verse 2:256 which rules out all kinds of compulsion in matters of faith. He explains the term din succinctly as follows: - The term 'Din' denotes both the contents of and compliance with a morally binding law consequently, it signifies 'religion' in the widest sense of this term. Extending over all that pertains to its doctrinal contents and their practical implications, as well as to man's attitude toward the object of his worship thus comprising the concept of 'faith' religious law depends on the text in which its term is used".²⁹

²⁵ See: The Glorious Qur'an 5:3

²⁶ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam" VII

²⁷ See Mehran Kamrava (Ed.), "The New Voices Of Islam: Reforming Politics and Modernity – A Reader",¹⁰⁰

²⁸ See: Ghulam Haider Aasi, "Muslim Understanding Of Other Religions".³

²⁹ *Ibid.* 4

Religion is the very essence and core of culture, the content of religion is the lens through which all understanding and thinking take place. The realm of meditation is contemplation of admiration and adoration. It is the sublime aesthetic expression. Finally, religion is the essence and core of civilization in that it is the ground of all decisions and actions, the ultimate, explanation of civilization with all its inventions and artifacts, its social, political, and economic systems, its past and future promise in history. For it constitutes the spirit of which the facets of civilization are the concrete manifestations. Though in an earlier age religious ideas and practices were at the centre of human activities, the realization that religion lies at the centre and civilization is recent".³⁰

SOME WESTERN DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION

The question of the definition of religion has interested scholars from different disciplines during the course of 19th and 20th centuries. In each generation definitions and discussion of religion have been closely related to the understanding of relation between the higher authority and human beings and the influence of the higher authority in human nature. Thus in the 19th century most of the definition and discussions were influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution.

Different scholars defined the religion in view of their special interests the definition of Religions is problematic. Some scholars are of the view that it is impossible to define it and the others define it as:

"A set of belief and practices, belief in High Authority, ethical instructions by that Authority to be followed"

1. Webster's New International Dictionary of the English language defines Religion: "the service and adoration of God or God as expressed in forms of worship, in obedience to define commands, and in pursuit of a way of life regarded as incumbent on true believers".³¹

³⁰ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Meta-Religion: Towards A Critical World Theology" | 4

³¹ See: Lewis M. Hopfe, "Religions Of The World".(New York: Fourth Edition, Macmillan Publishing Company ,1987) 1

2. To define religion, as John Hick himself is aware, is always problematic. In the introduction of book “philosophy of religious”, he wrote, there is no universally accepted definition of religion and quite possibly there never will be”.³²
3. Max Muller (1823-1900), who is considered the founder of this field of religions in the west, defines religions: “The perceptions of the infinite under such manifestation as are able to influence the moral character of man”.³³
4. Emile Durkheim presented a sociological theory of religion that made a practical impact on the modern field of religious studies: According to Durkheim, religion originated in collective state of mind and can be defined as: - “A unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden- belief and practices which unite in to one single moral – community called a church, all those who Adhere to them.”³⁴

AL-FARUQI AND DEFINITION OF RELIGION

“The study of Religion is the study of mankind. Religions touches the deepest feeling of the human heart and is part of every human society, In modern times religion has been studied by sociologists and Anthropologists as a cultural Institution, psychologists see religion as an expression of inner human need, philosopher view it as a system of thought or doctrine. Historians consider religion a part of the intellectual and Institutional development of given era”.³⁵

³² See: John Hick, “Philosophy Of Religions”(New Delhi: Fourth Edition, Prentice-Hall of India Private Ltd. , 1999) Introduction.

³³ See: Eric J Sharp, “Comparative Religions. A History”(New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1975) 39

³⁴ See: Frank Whaling Edinburg, “The Contrast Between The Classical and Contemporary Periods” (Hungry: 1973) 18

³⁵ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, “Islam”(United States of America: Amana Publications, 1984)VII

“In American journal of Islamic Social Sciences Al-Faruqi criticized the definition of Joachim Wach and said. “Religion has been defined as the experience of a reality that is assumed to be ultimate as well as personal, thus making the experience an encounter”.³⁶ “This modern definition is not without merit; for in religion, the object of experience is indeed regarded as ultimate and in most cases as a commanding person. It is inadequate however, because it does not specify the experience. In order to fulfill the meaning of religion, one has to add that the ultimate reality experienced must be apprehended and understood, expressed and proclaimed, its commandments acquiesced and responded to with individual and collective action”.³⁷

“Religion therefore is the most important constituent of man’s humanity. First, it includes the vision of reality and the articulation of that vision, its expression in concepts for the understanding and percepts for the imagination. This vision and its expression have constituted most of man’s subjective conditions and personal values. Third, since the commandments have as their goal the actualization of the highest good, religion includes most or all of man’s action as it relates to himself, to other man, and to nature. Evidently, the study of man’s religion is that of all humans, of their legacies of thought and action of human history”.³⁸,

Al-Faruqi stressed in his book “Islam” that: ‘It must be remembered that religion develops within particular historical and cultural traditions and not in a vacuum. Since a religion is subject to cultural and historical influences, its traditions are always developing relative to particular time and place, for example the form of worship, used in the Buddhist churches of America (founded in the late nineteenth century) has as much or more in common with American protestant worship service than its traditional Japanese from”.³⁹

³⁶ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article “Meta-Religion: Towards A Critical World Theology”(American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, Vol. 3, No.1, 1986) 13

³⁷ *Ibid.* 14

³⁸ *Ibid.* 14.

³⁹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, “Islam” Foreword, VIII.

It will be noticed that religion can be influenced by other religions rather than development. Secondly, influence of other religion is not a plus point of any religion.

It can be noted that one religion might be different in the practices of followers at different places except Islam (because it is complete code of conduct and its followers practice the same Islam at any place in the world). This can be observed in the religion of Buddhism in Pakistan and Thailand. Thailand is basically a Buddhist country and they have specific places in parks, markets and on road sides for worship. Statues, idols, their national hero's statues, elephant's statues etc. they worship the statues of their founding fathers of country and they give much respect to elephants and they offer the idols food, juices, oils, fragrance, flowers, and poem and sometimes just standing in front of them motionless and speechless etc. but in Pakistan every thing is different, they pray at any time and might not pray the whole day and they also call themselves traditional Buddhist*.

EVALUATION OF THE TERM RELIGION

The definition of religion showed two different pictures of Isma'il Al-Faruqi, one of them is that he was just a modern scholar of Religion influenced by the west like many others who spoke and wrote much about the religion only by analyzing or criticizing the work of others. After giving his definition of Religion he pointed out that what is religion according to sociologist, anthropologist, psychologists, philosophers and historians. He was of the view that Islam is superior to other religions because it confirms the revealed status of Judaism and Christianity. He was of the view, that religion is in fitrah of human being and he established the *Din-Al-Fitrah* theory. Secondly, when he discussed the definition of Joachim

* I visited Thailand in September, 2005 and witnessed the rituals and practices of Buddhism religion. I had many discussions with followers of Buddhism during my stay there. Secondly there was a educational trip, organized by the University to visit the worship place of Buddhism, that is Buddhist Temple in Islamabad.

discussed the definition of Joachim Wach he gave his own opinion sharply. He was influenced by the west but his personality was colorful, he was a scholar of religion in the west having both knowledge of Western scholarship and western studies, and he was more brilliant in the field of Islam.

Al-Faruqi gave the definition of religion from a different way by including the definition of sociologists, anthropologists, philosophers, psychologist and historians, the most important thing here to note is that Al-Faruqi said about the study of Religion that. "The Study of Religion is the study of mankind". It will be noted that if the study of Religion is the study of mankind then the study of human history is the study of "history of Religions". At another place he confirmed this and said. "The study of man is that of all humans, of their legacies of thought and action, of human history, but later he himself rejected this idea and introduced a new idea of religion that lies at the centre of civilization and religion is the very essence and core of culture. The new idea was: "Though in an earlier age religious ideas and practices were at the centre of human activities, the realization that religion lies at the centre of civilization is recent.

Al-Faruqi and western scholars both were agreed at the idea of religion. They pointed out that religion takes many forms or aspects. They include the belief in creator i.e. God or god, ritual actions, ethical aspects, the formation of religious communities" etc It will be noted that John Hick was of the view that "it is impossible to give a universally accepted definition of religion". But it is just a saying; nothing is impossible in this world, defining a religion is more easy when a person is religious. But like the philosophy one always creates some unreal problems, it might be one of them. It will be noticed in the definitions of Isma'il Al-Faruqi and Max Muller that 'both defined it with an idea of High Authority God or Infinite Authority and a set of moral principles to be commanded by that Authority'. If we look at the definition of Isma'il Al-Faruqi and Emile Durkheim it will be noted that both were at the same end and agreed that 'religious system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred thing and a community etc'.

The Muslims being guided by the Qur'an in all their endeavors, starts their study as believers in God and Religion and in the Qur'an as authentic, incorruptible and final revelation of Allah to all human beings.⁴⁰ The Din includes certain rules and norms to order our every day life. A believer is required to have approval of God through his dealings with his fellow-men, as well as through formal or informal prayers. Religion is the assemblage of Divine revelations and Divine laws which enable man to know bliss in this world and the next.

Al-Faruqi viewed religion as part of human nature. Al-Faruqi established the idea of *Din al-Fitrah* and he presented it to the people of the book and non believers.

⁴⁰ Numerous verses of Qur'an guided the Muslims, how to study the Religion. (For example Surah al-Baqrah 21-22, 62, 89, 101, 136, 137, Surah Al-e-Imran 59-64, Surah Al-Nisa: 150, 156-159).

1.3 DEFINITION OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

Though ‘History of Religions’ is sometimes used synonymously with ‘religions’ or scientific study of religions i.e. “Religionswissenschaft”, It can be considered more precisely in terms of the specifically historical approach using the tools of historical research to understand a religion or a number of religions in terms of its history in interaction with the wider cultural, historical, political environment in which that religion emerged and developed. This approach emphasizes understanding each religion with its own historical context.

“History is a universal enterprise that seeks to teach the lessons of the past so that we can understand the present and improve the future. To quote the 14th century historian of the Maghreb, Ibne Khaldun, “the science of history is a noble, useful and honorable discipline because it shows us the character and events of previous generations, it throws light on the path of the Prophets(A.S), and informs us of the condition of rules in the context of politics and governance so that if one wants to follow them, one may use history as guidance”.⁴¹

WESTERN DEFINITIONS

1. This method can be identified with most of the founding fathers of “Religionswissenschaft” (scientific study of religion). Max Muller, Cordie.P-Tiele (1830-1902) and Pierre D. Cantepie De La Saussaye (1848-1920) all had a historical interest and were inclined to philosophical interpretations and thought.⁴²
2. As regard the founding father of this method Pierre D. Cantepie, he emphasized the philosophical aspect of religion in order to define ‘history of

⁴¹ See: Dr. Nazeer Ahmed, “Islam In Global History”, Part I(Lahore: Suhail Academy, Lahore, Pakistan, 2002, XIX

⁴² See: Jacques Waardenburg, (Ed.), “Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion”(Paris: Muton – The Hague, 1973) 17

religion'. He believes that the concept of history in which different religions have a historical existence, and the rise of one, unifying philosophical concept of religion.⁴³

3. J-C-Bruer sees this method as, the history of religion deals with material handled also by philosophy of religion, psychology, sociology, anthropology, history and theology. It is a discipline in its own right drawing upon, yet making unique addition to these areas of knowledge.⁴⁴
4. Sharp stated that before 1869, the year Darwin published his 'origin of species', there was a clear lack of methods even though pseudo-scientific approaches or studies by philologist, Archaeologists, Ethnologists were carried out after 1869, the evolutionary method was in vogue.⁴⁵
5. Another place Sharp added that history of religion was the name of the discipline since 1960's as have said the history of religion has been the current term.⁴⁶
6. Kitagawa believed that the history of religion inherited the encyclopedic interest of the age of the Enlightenment. Its pioneers were interested and trained in several disciplines, such as philosophy, history, psychology.⁴⁷
7. Kitagawa even opined that for each of the social scientific approaches to the study of religion like sociology of religion, psychology of religion two types of it do existed, that there are psychologies of religion for instances, one view the data psychologically as part of the discipline of psychologically, while the

⁴³ *Ibid.* 16

⁴⁴ See Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Ed.), "The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology" IX

⁴⁵ See: Eric J Sharp, "Comparative Religions. A History" (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1975) 27

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* XIII

⁴⁷ See: Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Ed.), "The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology", 12

other view the same data religion-scientifically being an aspect of the 'History of Religion'.⁴⁸

8. Ugo Bianchi believes that history of religion, "A science which, using accepted historical method and with the support of psychology, sociology and phenomenology establishes and examines facts in order to identify religion historically".⁴⁹
9. Joachim Wach sees that 'history of religion (the study of religion) cannot answer with the means at its disposal. He saw that they require the help of the philosophy of religion, logic and epistemology, the philosophy of religion should according to him examine and prepare the method of the discipline.⁵⁰
10. C.P. Tiele saw that the influence of philosophy and the historical science cultivated after strict methods and laws of critical research.⁵¹
11. At another place he believed that- the science of religion is not only historical, as understanding and explanation is sought.⁵²
12. One group advocates that 'philosophical study of religion' is essential to the history of religion. It is essentially a philosophical study of religion as it underlines all historical phenomena of various religions.⁵³
13. Joachim Wach, saw the term 'history of religion synonymous to Religionswissenschaft. He states "it may be worthwhile for us to reflect on the nature and the scope of the discipline relating to the research and teaching in

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 21

⁴⁹ See: See: Eric J Sharp, "Comparative Religions. A History" 282

⁵⁰ See: Joachim Wach, "Introduction to the History of Religions" 97, 100

⁵¹ See: Frank Whaling, (Ed.), "Contemporary Approaches To The Study Of Religions", Vol. I, (Berlin: Mountain Publishers, 1983) Introduction

⁵² See: Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitagawa (Ed.), "The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology", 14

⁵³ *Ibid.* 14

the field of the history of religion or Religionswissenschaft (science of Religion) in America.⁵⁴

14. The Encyclopedia of Religion also described it as scientific discipline. This article presents an over view of the history of religion as a scientific discipline.⁵⁵
15. Ugo Bianchi saw it as: the history of religion, as the term suggest, is a science which has as its object the manifestations in universal time and space of that human attitude which we call religion.⁵⁶

DEFINITION ACCORDING TO AL-FARUQI

It will be noted that Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi defined the history of religions like many other scholars. According to him “the historical method depends upon all approaches (the anthropological, the sociological, and the psychological) to provide it with its data, in which it seeks to uncover patterns of change which it can then establish as applicable in other or similar situations. History being a self determining process, its explanation is the uncovering of its earlier stages with as many of its determining factors as possible.”⁵⁷

Al-Faruqi also analyzed the definition of some historians, who described history of religion in terms of “Religionswissenschaft”, he argued that: “the history of religions they claim, is an academic discipline (i.e. the discipline otherwise known as “Religionswissenschaft”). As such it can and ought to do no more than understand and, having understood, to pass on this understanding with the objectivity and non involvement that benefits an academic discipline.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Ibid. 15

⁵⁵ See: Mircea Eliade, (ed) “The Encyclopedia of Religion” Vol.7, (New York and London: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987) 399

⁵⁶ See: UGO Bianchi, “The History of Religions”, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), 2

⁵⁷ See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), (Article, “The Nature Of History Of Religions” by Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi), 167 and See also “Meta-Religion: Towards A Critical World Theology”, 179

⁵⁸ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, “Christian Ethics”, (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1967),15

EVALUATION OF HISTORICAL METHOD

The methods of historical research are used to read and understand religious writings in light of historical origins and to interpret those writings as they would have been understood by their first recipients (the adherents of that religion). In other words, historical research as, what did these text means when they were first written? They seek to understand a text in terms of the historical world behind the text. The study of the history of religions appears to be at a critical point in its development due to different reasons. Some of them can be viewed from these angles.

1. The history of religions can establish it self as a leading discipline of study of religion rather than depending upon other disciplines.
2. History of religions is regarded as the name of the discipline for study of religions.
3. The historic method deals with materials handled by philosophy of religion, psychology of religion, sociology of religion anthropology of religion, theology of religion and history etc. and it can be pointed out that it is rightly called the study of religion.
4. The discipline of history of religions demonstrates its own right, drawing upon, yet making unique additions to all the disciplines in study of religion.
5. The interrelationship of the history of religions to any other discipline both shows the potential of the discipline and might be the weakness of the discipline.

CONCLUSIONS:

When we look at the works of historians of religion, theologians or comparativists one thing can be evident to note that the applied method (history of religion) in the nineteenth century – it is characterized as philosophic, rationalistic, historical and scientific. The concerns of these scholars were:

- Looking for common elements.
- Collection of religious data/ materials.
- History of religion is a method which inherited the encyclopedic interest of the age of Enlightenment.

- Its pioneers were more interested and trained in several methods such as philosophy, history, psychology, etc.
- History of religion was strongly defined as- A science supported by psychology, sociology and phenomenology.
- Some scholars saw history of religion synonymous to “Religionswissenschaft” (scientific study and research in the field of history of religion).
- The data/ material handled by history of religion was also used by other methods.
- Some scholars emphasized the philosophical or rational aspect of religion.
- Some scholars saw it a historical method dealing not with a religion but a number of religions.
- Since 1960's the history of religion has been used as the current term for the study of religion.
- History of religion is a method in its own right, making unique addition to the Philosophy of religion, sociology of religion and anthropology of religion.
- Like many scholars of religion Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi is also of the view that history of Religions depends upon all these methods (anthropology of religions psychology of religions and sociology of religion etc).

1.4 THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS, METHOD AND DISCIPLINE

AL FARUQI AND THE DISCIPLINE OF HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi had great interest in history of religions , all his interest was due to some purposes and reasons. Some times he described them openly and some times covertly but one can reach at the main objective or purposes of his study of history of religions.

- a) The main purpose of Al-Faruqi's study of history of religions, which he stated both openly and covertly in his description of study of religions. Islam is the only true religion of Almighty Allah, among all the religions of the world. He stressed that only Islam confirms that Judaism and Christianity are revealed or divine religions but their custodians or followers misinterpreted them for their selfish objectives and desires. He titled these three divine religions as "Abrahamic faiths" ⁵⁹ and the religion of Islam as "Hanifi" ⁶⁰ religion or path of Ibrahim (A.S) ⁶¹
- b) The second objective of his study was da'wah to the people of Book and non believers⁶². He tried to collect the custodians of these two divine religions Judaism and Christianity under the flag of Islam by da'wah with the notion of din-alfitrah.
- c) The third objective was to bring these religions close to each other. For this he presented meta-religion⁶³ principles as solution of the problem. He advised that we should avoid the differences among these religions, and the similarities, common thing, should be given importance to bring these religions close. According to Al-Faruqi the Islamic treatment of other religions is the most suited to other religions because Islam is the only complete religion of Almighty Allah.

⁵⁹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, (Ed.), "Trialogue of the Abrahamic Faiths" (Herndon: IIT ,1982) Foreword.VI

⁶⁰ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel". Introduction II,III

⁶¹ *Ibid.* 78, 79

⁶² See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), "Islam and other Faths" Introduction, IX

⁶³ *Ibid.* 176

religions is the most suited to other religions because Islam is the only complete religion of Almighty Allah.

AL-FARUQI'S CONCEPTION OF THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi was a modern critic of western scholarship because he described their views and then discussed their work collectively and he was a famous Muslim scholar, who was criticized by the western comparativists. Also Al-Faruqi described how the west gradually lost faith in religion. He described efforts how west they influenced the whole history of religions.

a Reduction in Definition of History of Religion:

Al-Faruqi believed that there were two influences which reduced the Jurisdiction of history of religions.⁶⁴ He was convinced that history of religions must be carried out on rational lines and he explained how the western comparatives misinterpreted the definition of religious datum.

It can be said that it had a link how they changed and misinterpreted their books and great deal of misleading selfish interests that were brought to explain the religious datum in narrow sense.

The second most important reduction was that they tried to isolate the three revealed religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

b Narrow definition of religious datum:

According to Al-Faruqi, the theories developed by that narrow definition of religious datum like "the holy" "the sacred", "the religious" were effecting the scope of investigation in history of religions.⁶⁵

c Branches of the Discipline:

Al-Faruqi divided the history of religions into three branches. He stated that History of religions is an academic pursuit composed of three disciplines:

⁶⁴ Ibid. 162

⁶⁵ Ibid. 162

Reportage or the collection of data; construction of meaning wholes, or the systematization of data; and Judgment or Evaluation of meaning wholes”⁶⁶

It can be said that rational person can not refuse that the discipline consists of three branches; Reportage, construction of meaning wholes and Judgment but these areas of the discipline or method are interconnected and cannot be separated.

1. Collection of Data/materials:

- a. Al-Faruqi viewed that history of religions is fortunate that the collection of its data are collected over a whole century.⁶⁷ It can be said that the most part which Al-Faruqi called the data of history of religious was done by Christian authors (orientalists). Secondly, it would be more appropriate that the task of collecting the data of history is not a matter of one or two centuries but it is task of whole religious history of mankind which started when the religion started.
- b. Al-Faruqi stressed that this subject matter is the great mass of human knowledge ever assembled.⁶⁸ But the subject matter and valid criticism will be the subject matter because a statement about a religion is not valid until and unless it is approved by the custodians of that religion. So it is not a matter of great compilation but it is a matter of what is valid and accepted as subject matter of history of religions.
Al-Faruqi also predicted that the sufficient knowledge has enabled the history of religions to make a start in second stage of systematization.⁶⁹
- c. Al-Faruqi was convinced that the comparativists are bolder to collect the data of ancient religions, systematize, generalize and judge their data than the living religions. According to Al-Faruqi the comparativist seems to have shied away in awe (respect or in panic) from handling the data of living religions.

⁶⁶ See: Attaullah Siddiqui (This lecture was delivered by Faruqi to the faculty of the Divinity, School of the University of Chicago on 30th April, 1964, during his residence as guest researcher at the institution.), 162

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 163,164

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 164

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 164

It can be said that they collect the data of ancient religions to show that they have concern for all religions. Secondly, no body may question them about anything they describe from their own mind. The comparativists do not handle the data of living religions due to the definite character of those religions. no one can add something from his mind to these great religions. one can claim that at this point Al-Faruqi was rational, that due to respect the comparativist shied away but he wrote due to panic is not a rational approach. A comparativist cannot be panic because if the comparativist is a panic person then he will not do justice with the data or materials handled by him and he will influence that data completely.

SOME OTHER ASPECTS OF CONCEPTION OF AL-FARUQI IN HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

1. History of Divine Religions in 19th Century:

In the first branch of history of religions, Reportage, Al-Faruqi elaborates the history of three Divine/revealed religions; Islam, Judaism and Christianity. It will be noted that in his description he selected only 19th Century and he described the history of Islam⁷⁰ first due to the superiority of Islam on other religions. It confirms the Divine status of these two Semitic religions (Judaism and Christianity). As a Muslim he was convinced that only Islam is the right path to be followed and the other two Semitic religions are distorted by their custodians for their selfish desires.

While describing the history of these religions he showed how Christianity tried to influence the history of Islam and Judaism.

2. The Interrelationship of History of Religions and Phenomenology of Religions According to Al-Faruqi :

Al-Faruqi was a modern scholar of religion, who had a great interest both in history of religions and phenomenology of religions. He was convinced that

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 164, 165, and see also "American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences", 21,22

there is a relation between the history of religions and phenomenology of religions. As we can see that both sciences collaborates each other very closely. The inter relationship between the two disciplines can be viewed from these angles.

First: In Al-Faruqi's conception, the first notable similarity which he expressed while explaining the branches of history of religions and phenomenology of religions. He was convinced that "History of Religion is an academic pursuit composed of three branches. Reportage or collection of data, construction of meaning wholes or the systematizations, Evaluation of meaning Wholes.⁷¹ At another place he defined the phenomenology of Religion. He stated that the phenomenological study of religion however is not without limitations it consists of two branches. Reportage or collection of data, and construction of meaning wholes or the systematization of data.⁷²

While studying the two definitions it is clear that he was convinced that there is a close relationship between the history of religions and phenomenology of religions these are the same as we can see that he described three branches for history of religions and the same first two branches are the integral part of phenomenology of religion.

Second: The same issue is discussed by many modern scholars⁷³ but Al-Faruqi saw these disciplines as having same aims and objectives. It can be

⁷¹ *Ibid.* 162

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Van Der Leeuw uses it as method natural science work with the description of observations and the arrangements under types. Phenomenological theology; Phenomenology of religion and history of religions, Van Der Leeuw states that it also be called 'Psychological', he wants to call it 'Phenomenological' only in the broad sense of word, as it is used in modern Psychiatry, consequently in the Psychological sphere. It is in this sense that Van Der Leeuw developed a methodology for the understanding of religious phenomena. 57, 406, 420

William Brede Kristensen though less clearly expressed. The historical research; mutual relation and fruition bringing a mutual fruition between Phenomenological and Philosophical research. The relationship between history and Phenomenology thus become clear. The one assumes the presence of the other, and vice versa. Phenomenology's way of working (the grouping of characteristic data) and its task (the illustration of man's religious disposition) make it a systematic discipline. But if we must group the phenomena according to characteristics which corresponds as far as possible to the essential and typical elements of religion. 56, 392, 393

Gaston Berger; Importance of the discipline and to take the right attitude and understand religious life. Enabling to take the right attitude for understanding religious life. 73, 665

noticed that he viewed the phenomenology of religion and history of religions as one science dealing with different religions according to their datum and phenomena.

In my opinion these sciences have similar qualities and both.

- Have same objectives.
- Collaborates with each other mutually.
- One assumes the presence of the other.
- Phenomenology of religions is necessary for the study of history of religions to provide it with its data.
- History of religions is a necessary element of phenomenology of religions
- Both help the student of religions by giving him insight in to the essence and structure of religion.
- Both sciences sharpen the view of student of religions for the specific nature of religion and for its function in cultural and social life.

AL-FARUQI'S METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES IN HISTORY OF RELIGION

Al-Faruqi was a modern student of religion who pinpointed some guiding principles that protect the investigator (student of religion) from missing the important issues in his study of history of religions. Al-Faruqi's methodological principles can be viewed from these angles.

1. According to Al-Faruqi while collecting the data of a religion it should be kept in mind that what ever the investigator describes must be valid and

Raffaele Pettazzoni, He described 'History' and 'Phenomenology' in science of religion. He pleads for a closer relationship between the 'Phenomenology' and the 'History' of religion, as two forms of a science of religion which is one. There is even some reason to ask if at bottom this dualistic system does not connect some how with another and much older dualism, which goes back to vary beginnings of the science of the religion and has never ceased to exert its influence, a negative one, in the sphere of our studies. I mean the dualism of its sources, one from theology and the other from the humanistic science, of which we can not say that there waters have quite overflowed the various obstacles which prevent them from mingling entirely in the great stream of religious history. 639, 642

See also Jacques Warden Burg, (ed.), "Classical Approaches To The Study of Religion"

accepted by the custodians of that religion otherwise it will be rejected and will not be objective study of religion.⁷⁴

2. It is worth noticing that Al-Faruqi used the descriptive method in systematization of data. Al-Faruqi was convinced that the data should be classified in an organized way which answers a modern enquiry. He also stressed the need of headings and relevant data should be analyzed and related to one another.⁷⁵
3. Al-Faruqi was of the view that development of an idea, institution of evaluations and discoveries of human attitudes have to be projected against the background of the historical facts. The datum in question must have been meant either to serve or combat that development.⁷⁶ This point of Al-Faruqi can be taken as scientific systematization of data which do not ignore the social and cultural aspect of human life. The aim of which is to describe the social background and its structure to ascertain the sociologically relevant implications of the religious movements and institutions. One must have a careful observation of the internal consistency of the various aspects of religious community in systematization of data.*
4. According to Al-Faruqi the religious data thus classified and systematized ought to be distilled for their meanings.⁷⁷ The religious datum may never be grasped for what it really is. For the better understanding of this point we can take an example from Al-Faruqi's study of Christianity. The idea of "fall" or 'original sin'⁷⁸ is a datum of Christian religion. We have to understand what their meanings are by reading the definition and the idea of original sin in Old

⁷⁴ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics", 16, 17 and see also Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 176

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 17

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 17, 18

* However, it must be remembered that this is the guaranty of validity of whether or not the adherents believe what they said to believe, not whether a given religion is claim to be. In the eleventh century, Ibni Hazm, the comparativist of religions and the greatest Muslim comparativist, wrote a critical analysis of the Old Testament. Unfortunately for both the Christian and the Jews, his analysis was rejected by them for three quarters of a millennium. Today after Old Testament criticism has passed through almost a century of life, struggle, and splendid discipline and discovery, some Christians have come to acknowledge Ibni Hazm's analysis as true. Alfred Guillaume pointed out that Ibni Hazm's criticism of the Old Testament anticipated in many respects and details the criticism of the last century. And matter of fact, there is hardly a criticism, Ibni Hazm directed to the Old Testament which can not be read today in any Christian Old Testament study. See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics", 17, 18

⁷⁷ See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 170

⁷⁸ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics" 193, 220

Testament then in Paul's teaching, then in New Testament and according to the Christian theologians till 19th century. Then we can relate it to the development of Christian religion.

5. The most important thing in methodology of historic discipline Al-Faruqi described the qualities of investigator.⁷⁹ He was convinced that the investigator would put his own presuppositions in brackets while he beholds the given religious datum.*

In my opinion we are not able to understand the internal consistencies of religions of others and Al-Faruqi is right that the investigator should write his own presuppositions in brackets. In my opinion the history of religions who tries to understand other religions of various places and areas must observe them as investigator and observer.

According to Al-Faruqi the historian of religion must be a capable person intellectually to determine the meaning from the given data and can move from one context to another from the given data.⁸⁰

It may be said that the historian of religions must be very intelligent. He will not be considered an intelligent person unless he had a complete knowledge and hold of all the religions so that when he tries to construct some meaning from the data he can give examples to prove or disprove anything present. Al-Faruqi was also convinced that the historian must describe according to the custodians of a religion and he can have his own personal decision also. He should not influence any religion. The investigator must be impersonal while handling the data. He should not try to influence it in any way.

⁷⁹See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), "Islam and other Faiths" 176

* The perception of value is impossible unless the human behavior is able to move the observer. Similarly the observer can not be affected, and unless he has empathy with the object of his experience. The subject's attitude towards the data studied determines the outcome of the study. See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Social and Natural Sciences; the Islamic Perspective." (Jeddah: Hodder and Stoughton, King Abdul-Aziz University) 12

⁸⁰See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed), "Islam and other Faiths" 176

AL-FARUQI'S UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES IN HISTORIC METHOD

Every scholar or researcher, who studies a religious issue, has his own presuppositions and underlying principles, which he tends to apply. Some times they are applied covertly and are stated openly. This is natural to man he can not deny the influence of his inner feelings of being religious and the choice of his mind, his environment, training by parents and teachers etc.

Al-Faruqi was a modern scholar of religion and he introduced some guiding principles for the study history of religions.

1. Descriptive Approach:

According to Al-Faruqi the basic approach is careful observations and through description of religions. Al-Faruqi himself used this method in his study of history of religions. He used this method in his book *Islam* and in many of his articles.

2. Bracketing:

Al-Faruqi was of the view that understanding of a religious history requires a bracketing or setting the religions researchers view in order to empathetically enter in to the view point of the religious believer or custodians of a religion, one seeks to understand the meaning of these beliefs for the believer*.⁸¹ He used this method in his book *Christian Ethics*.

3. Comparison:

Al-Faruqi was of the view that Empathetic description (while bracketing one's own preconceptions of reality) in a scientific research becomes the basis for comparative studies of religion. He used this method in his book *Christian Ethics*

⁸¹ *Ibid*

* In case of some measures of personal involvement is inevitable, the historian of religion ought to become aware of the predicament under which he labors, declares it on the opening pages of his book so that he as well his readers, may be constantly aware of it. In this case, we would suppose that the historian of religion will seek to keep his predicament in check by the agency of his academic desire to know the truth.
See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics" 15

4. Meta-religion Principles:

Al-Faruqi presented meta-religion principles for judgment or evaluation of data. The basic theme of these principles is to bring the religions of the world close. In order to do so, meta-religion principles looks upon the differences among religions as belonging to the surface and upon their common agreements as belonging to the essence.⁸²

When Al-Faruqi presented his meta religion principles as solution for the Judgment or Evaluation, he also criticized Friedrich Heiler (1892-1967) who presented the theory that all the religions teach the same God and same ethics. Al-Faruqi stressed that the theory is not even true to the theory of empirical generalization. Then Al-Faruqi stressed that Heiler has compared the imagery with reality because for him Jehwah, Ahura Mazda, Allah, Buddha, Kali have same status.⁸³ Secondly Al-Faruqi criticized that Friedrich Heiler stated that “God is Love”⁸⁴. In Al-Faruqi’s opinion he is trying to see other religions with hopeless Christian eyes.

5. Judgment and Evaluation:

Al-Faruqi introduced a third branch in study of history of religions. He not only introduced it but he stressed the presence of this third branch in history of religions. He was convinced that the first two branches only describes the specialized disciplines of different religions but not the history of religions as self governing discipline so this third branch of study is necessary, namely judgment or Evaluation and he suggested the meta-religion principles for Evaluation.⁸⁵

⁸² See Ataullah Siddiqui(ed), “Islam and other Faiths” (introduction) 177

⁸³ *Ibid*

⁸⁴ *Ibid*

⁸⁵ *Ibid* . 162

ASSESSMENT OF AL-FARUQI'S HISTORY OF RELIGION

Al-Faruqi can be considered as an original comparativist in the field of study of Religion. His contributions to the understanding of religions are outstanding. He was interested in cultural aspect of religion and he offered a lot of insights regarding the religious sentiments and aspirations of people.

When we look at the works of Al-Faruqi in the history of religions we can conclude his whole methodology in two points:

1. He was a great Muslim comparativist and contemporary scholar of Islam.
2. He was influenced by his environment also; it will be clear when his view will be studied in this.

1. **Branches in Historic Method:**

Al-Faruqi divided the discipline of history of ⁸⁶ religion in to three branches.

- i. Reportage or collection of data.
- ii. Systematization of data.
- iii. Judgment or Evaluation of meaning – wholes.

Al-Faruqi divided the discipline into three branches but these areas of the method are interconnected and can not be separated.

Al-Faruqi stated that the first two branches only justify the specialized disciplines of some popular religions and not the history of religions as self governing discipline.⁸⁷ It will be evident that when we say history of religion then there is no exception of any religion; it's about all the religions of past, present, popular and non popular. In my opinion it is a self governing discipline in the sense that it includes all the religions and has its own rules about their histories.

Al-Faruqi was convinced that the third branch is the most significant part of history of religions. According to him the whole discipline of history of religions will stand or fall with the establishment or rejection of this third branch.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 77

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 164

Al-Faruqi wanted to establish the fact of Judgment or Evaluation of data at the end of process. It will be most appropriate that he tried to show the scientific character of history of religions as he was convinced that history of religions is a science.

2. Neutral Method:

Al-Faruqi wanted to be neutral at a point while writing about different religions in reportage or collection of data. He was convinced that no one can claim that the data of one religion is richer or superior than the other.*⁸⁹

- a. It will be noted that the study of religion is not neutral in itself. It helps the student to prove or disprove (a religious thing or concept) intellectually. It can be worth noticing that he was convinced that history of religions is a science. He introduced the judgment or evaluation of data and he was also convinced that religion is a natural thing. So it is also natural that whatever is present in this world some thing is better and superior than the other. Even Allah Almighty chose humans as the best in his creation. So how Al-Faruqi denied this fact that the data of one religion is not better than the other. It can be said that superiority can be due to the rationality and effectiveness of truth above all others present.
- b. If we agree with this neutral method of Al-Faruqi then it means that we agree that all the religions of the world, without having a difference of extinct, primitive, living and revealed religions, are of same level and importance and no one is superior than the other. They have same material of same status, no material is more important than the other. If you observe his view you will find that even the religions of extint (no longer active) and the ancient religions are not equal in status because of time

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 164

* In history of religions, the question is first whether or not, with the best academic conscience (principles/ethics), the historian of religion is capable of understanding a religion and so passing his understanding. Thereof to his fellow men without willy-nilly, being affected by this personal involvement. See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics" 15

difference, availability of materials, limitation of language and non availability of their practice in their custodians. Secondly, the religions of primitive and living religion are not same in any sense. The same could be said about living and divine religions because most of the living religions are either man made or distorted by man and the divine religions are given by Allah Almighty.

3. Influence of Orientalism on Al-Faruqi

Al-Faruqi was a scholar of modern time so some times his selections were not according to the true vision of Islam. It will be right to point out that he was a human and some times he was influenced from the environment around him. One can easily point out that Al-Faruqi was influenced by orientalists works.⁹⁰ He included the orientalists in explorers and compilers of history of religions which is not a correct approach. He not only included their works but he was influenced by them. For example see his work “The Cultural Atlas of Islam and see his views about tasawwuf , philosophy and music.

4. Religious Assertion:

Al-Faruqi was convinced that one should be firm in what he believes. He stated that the custodians of a religion should be convinced that his religion is the true religion and what he believes is truth.⁹¹

According to Al-Faruqi religious assertion is necessarily unique and exclusive and its nature is imperative. But it will be noted that after this description he suggested the neutral method of the religious assertion that one should not claim that his religious assertion is better or truer than the alternative content

* The orientalist was a notion un-accepted by the western scholarship also who contributed to knowledge like. “The new book of knowledge” describes; “the coming of British rule in 18th and 19th century had a bad effect on Indian culture. Very few novels and epics were produced”. So one can understand what was the situation in reality at that time. No doubt that there were orientalists who worked positively and for sake of knowledge. Their contributions can not be denied.

See: “The New Book of Knowledge”, Vol. 14, (Cann: Grolier incorporated Danbury 1983), 220e

⁹⁰ See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), “Islam and other Faiths” 163

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

of another assertion.⁹² It's a bit contradictory description. He was convinced that one must believe that his religion is the true religion and what he believes is right and at second place he rejected it.

We know when something is right nothing can stop it to be accepted by wise men. So Al-Faruqi was also of the view that if there is a change to come that will be the success of Islam as the true revealed religion of Islam. No body can stop the victory of Islam at world Religions because it is complete in all aspects.

“Islamic assertion, a new phase of Islamic consciousness, the requirement of any new value must be unknown, but in relation to Islam Al-Faruqi finds that this is not so because no value can be new to Islam as such since this is the collective name of all values”.⁹³ To Al-Faruqi, the Islamicness of value is no more than its value-ness, and if in Urubah new values are to be discovered, then the logical conclusions in Al-Faruqi’s view is that the discovered value should be Islamic”.⁹⁴

Islam has deep effects on minds and hearts which cannot be changed in any kind of circumstances and any right and logical conclusion regarding the religion can be except Islam. Islam is religion of firm faith and every one gets its taste according to the level they are at.

Faruqi’s call for Christians and Muslims to join together in producing a new theology often seemed a call to jettison much of belief and tradition and accept Islam’s corrective vision of religious history. He maintained that a second reformation was required, which, though not rejecting all of the past, liberated itself from the authority and ambiguities of the cumulative tradition, from the Gospels and St. Paul to Barth and Tillich. Many Jews and Christians would wonder what is left.⁹⁵

⁹² *Ibid*.163

⁹³ See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) , “Islam and other Faiths” introduction XVIII.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*. XVIII

⁹⁵ See: John. L. Esposito, John. O. Vol. (ed.) “Makers Of Contemporary Islam”, 36

5. Reductive Aspect:

According to Al-Faruqi history of religions depends upon all other disciplines. So historical method can be reduced to the data collected from different disciplines such as psychological, anthropological or other categories. Historical method tries to capture the uniquely historic dimensions of religion within religious phenomena and other disciplines.

So it can be regarded as the reductive aspect in the study of religions .

CHAPTER TWO: CONTRIBUTIONS OF AL-FARUQI TO THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

2.1 RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD ACCORDING TO AL-FARUQI

In contemporary Islam we find very few examples like Al-Faruqi who studied the religion of Islam along with the world religions. Commenting about the diversity or variety of religion in history Al-Faruqi believed that “there is a legitimate ground for the religious variety. In His mercy, God has taken due account of the particular conditions of each people. He has revealed to them all a message that is the same in essence; but he has conveyed to each one of them his law in a prescriptive form relevant to their particular conditions to their own grade of development on the human scale and we may conclude that such differences are de jure because they do not affect the essence”.¹⁰² This diversity of religions sometimes with conflicting and contradicting claims will face a lot of problems.

Al-Faruqi studied most of the major religions present in the world. But it can be said that he only touched them, and his basic focus was on the revealed religions. My focus in the study is how he dealt with the religions of the world and the study briefly describes his works. He was convinced that all the religions are God revealed and they are distorted due to certain reasons and the call of Islam is for each and every religion present in world. Only if the history of a religion proves that it is man made then it will be considered as man made but he believed that the capacity to understand God is same in human nature.

Some of the major religions studied by Al-Faruqi are:

First:	Hanifism
Second:	Sabians
Third:	Judaism
Fourth:	Christianity
Fifth:	Zoroastrianism.
Sixth:	Buddhism and Hinduism

¹⁰² See Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; “Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology”, 40, See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 191

HANIFISM

Al-Faruqi called it "Mesopotamian-Abrahamic tradition" this tradition was in peninsula Arabia which came to be known as Hanifiyyah. Its adherents the Hanifs, resisted association of other Gods with God, refused to participate in pagan rituals, and maintained a life of ethical purity above reproach. It was common knowledge that the Hanif was a strict 'monotheist who paid no tribute to tribal religion. Every body knew of their presence since they belong to nearly all tribes. Long before the prophet's age, a call for an Abrahamic monotheistic reform arose in the peninsula tribes of Ad (N. Hadramaut), Thamud and Shuy'ab (Hijar) at the hands of Prophet Hood, Salih and Shuy'ab. The memory of their calls remained; but their movement toward reinstating Abrahamic monotheism did not succeed and some of them were drowned in Arab shirk or associationism.¹⁰³

SABIANS

The second religion which Al-Faruqi mentioned in his study of religion is Sabians. The word Sabians occurs three times in the Qur'an and that along with the Jews and Christians pointing out that they belong to the 'Ahlal Kitab' category.¹⁰⁴ The primordial base of all religions was also identical to Sabeanism.*¹⁰⁵

As the Glorious Qur'an states:

"Those who have attained to faith (in this divine write) those who follow the Jewish (scripture), and the Sabians and the Christians... all those who believe in the Day of Judgment and have done good work will receive their due reward from God. They have no cause to fear, nor shall they grieve"¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰³ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 61, 62 Under the heading "Religion and Culture"

¹⁰⁴ See: The Glorious Qur'an 2:62; 5:69; 22:17

¹⁰⁵ See Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology", 40. See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 191
Sabians: People living in the kingdom of 'Saba' in pre-Islamic Southwest Arabia or those who are also called 'Mandeans' living to this day in South Iraq. See: Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, "Islam" 17

¹⁰⁶ See: The Glorious Qur'an 5:69

Ibne-Hazm also described the Sabians and he believed that they were star worshippers, but they were praying five times like Muslims and they face towards Kabah. They offer animal sacrifices, they observe fasting in Ramadan. They put their pictorial representation, pictures or images in their temples. They altered their religious laws and code of life then Allah sent Ibrahim (A.S) to them with the religion of Islam.¹⁰⁷

JUDAISM

The main third religion which was described by Al-Faruqi is the religion of Judaism. He was convinced that Judaism is the revealed religion of almighty Allah but the Jews distorted the religion and changed and misinterpreted the teachings of their prophet Moses (A.S). The religion of Judaism which is the earliest of the existing revealed and prophetic religions was not a religion of an area but the Jews were scattered all over the world. The Jews have the idea of one God but later they started anthropomorphism, God having the qualities of man.

Al-Faruqi rejected the idea of God, Ethnocentrism of the Jews; he stated that “the areas where Judaism itself compromised transcendence – namely ‘Elohim’ as a class of divine beings intermarrying with men, exclusivist ethnocentrism, and racist election.”¹⁰⁸

Al-Faruqi’s characterization of Jews as falling into two categories. On the one hand, there are those who rejected understanding Hebrew scriptures in racial terms, whom he calls “un-Jewish,” or truly Mosaic, Jews. They “stand fundamentally, in our camp from which that which is called Hebrew Scripture is regarded as a heavily edited, oftchanged version of that divine Torah which God had entrusted to Moses.” And on the other hand are the Jews who “are regarded as those who gave up that divinely inspired pattern for the sake of tribalist self-seeking and assertion and preservation of their race”.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ See: Ibne-al Hazm, “Kitab al-Fasl” 34-35, 113-116. Originally found in Ghulam Haider Aasi, “Muslim Understanding Of Other Religions: A study of Ibne-Hazm’s Kitab Al-Fasl Fi-All Milal Wa Al Ahwa- W Al Nihal” 189, 190

¹⁰⁸ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 51, 88

¹⁰⁹ See: John. L. Esposito, John. O. Voll. (ed.) “Makers Of Contemporary Islam” 36

Al-Faruqi was a Palestinian so his life was directly affected by the Jew; despite hatred he was very pragmatic about them. In order to invite them for dialogue he chose the rational way. He was a real Muslim, who forgets his personal pains for the betterment of humanity as directed by Islam. He practically proved that he rejects the idea of Nationalism. If he was up to that idea then he must have worked against the Jews at every possible platform. Being a true Muslim he had strong desire to create mutual understanding between the Jews and Muslims. He even urged to forget the most crucial planes of Judaism against Islam, like Zionism, the state of Israel and ethnocentrism of Jews. He urged for dialogue between them. He can be considered real elite for Islamic humanism.

CHRISTIANITY

is one of the
Christianity was the fourth major religion discussed by Al-Faruqi. If one looks at the works of Al-Faruqi he will conclude that he has been writing much about Christians and inviting them for dialogue.

According to Al-Faruqi Christianity was a revealed but distorted religion. The custodians of Christianity not only changed the teaching of Jesus but they changed it completely. They introduced the idea of divinity of Jesus, concept of Trinity, the concept of original sin, the concept of Redemption etc. Al-Faruqi introduced new ideas for dialogue between the religion of Christianity and Islam, based not only on revelation but without contradicting the reason.¹¹⁰

Faruqi's judgment that Jesus' revolution was betrayed by Christianity, and thus his distinction between Christianity and true Christianity, struck many Christians as resulting from an analysis that used reason to arrive at Muslim conclusions rooted in Islamic revelation and belief. While his methodology may be different, missionary diatribe having been replaced by a sophisticated rationalist polemic, the results were the same.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics", 50, 193, 223 See also Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 55, 56 See also, Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 44

¹¹¹ See: John. L. Esposito, John. O. Voll. (ed.) "Makers Of Contemporary Islam", 36

Religion of the Christianity was the religion about which Al-Faruqi was very serious, to call them for dialogue. Although, he rejected the idea of Prophet Jesus (A.S) as Christian perceives it. The dogmatic beliefs and practices such as concept of trinity, original sin, redemption etc. were strongly rejected by the Al-Faruqi. He analyzed almost all the dogmatic concepts as Christians believe them without reason. He presented the whole history of those ideas and rejected them from their own sources (revelations or inspirations). He also offered them that they can be saved if they act the way Allah chose for them i.e. Islam.

ZOROASTRIANS

In description of other religions Al-Faruqi mentioned Zoroastrians. According to him Persian's incursion into Arabia had left behind it some, though very few, Arab converts to the Zoroastrians faith. A large number of these lived in the buffer deserts one between Persia and Byzantium, and in Shatt al Arab, the lower region of the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, where Arabia and Persia overlapped. Notable among the Persian Zoroastrians in Arabia was Selman al Farsi, who converted to Islam before the Hijrah and became one of the illustrious companions of the prophet.¹¹² According to some traditions it was the prophet himself who in the year of delegations (8-9/630-631), the year that witnessed the tribes and regions of Arabia sending delegations to Madina to pledge their fealty to the Islamic state, recognized the Zoroastrians as an other Ummah within the Islamic state very soon afterward, the Islamic state conquered Persia and included all its millions within its citizenry. Those who converted to Islam joined the ummah of Muslims; the millions of other who chose to remain Zoroastrians were accorded the same privileges and duties accorded to the Jews. It was extended to apply to Zoroastrians in 14 / 636, following the conquest of Persia by the Prophet's companions.¹¹³

¹¹² See Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology", 54. 55. See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 198

¹¹³ Ibid

BUDDHISM AND HINDUISM

In the description of other religions Al-Faruqi mentioned two religions of India. He described "Following the conquest of India by Muhammad bin Qasim in 91 / 711, the Muslims came in contact with new religions, Buddhism and Hinduism. Both religions co-existed in Sindh and Punjab, the regions conquered by Muslims and joined to the Islamic state. Muhammad bin Qasim sought instructions from the Caliph in Damascus on how to treat Hindus and Buddhists. They appear to worship idols, and their doctrines were the farthest removed from Islam. Their founders were unheard of by Muslims.¹¹⁴

"The beliefs, practices, and socio religious institutions of the people known as Hindu that has evolved from 'Vedaism', the religion of the ancient Indo-European people who settled in India during the second millennium B.C.¹¹⁵

Hinduism is the religion followed by about 70% of the people of India. Elsewhere, with the exception of the Indonesian Island of Bali, Hindus represent only minority population.¹¹⁶ Al-Faruqi is silent about the ancient Hindu Indonesian Kingdoms which were cosmopolitan coastal trade centres such as the kingdom of Srivijaya which existed around the seventh century AD, Kingdoms based on peasantry, like the Kingdom of Javanese and Mataram¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*: 23, see also: 198, 199

¹¹⁵ See: "The Encyclopedia of Britannica", Vol. 2, Under the heading Hinduism.

¹¹⁶ See: Mircea Eliade, (ed.), "The Encyclopedia of Religion" Volume. 06, Under the heading of Hinduism,

¹¹⁷ Mona Abaza, "Debates on Islam and Knowledge in Malaysia and Islam" 85

2.2 THE RELIGION OF JUDAISM

The oldest of the major global religions, which developed in the West, is Judaism. Its first great patriarch, Abraham, is thought to have lived some time between 1700 and 1900 B.C.E. The spiritual traditions traced back to him now have three large branches. Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Together, they account for over half of the world believers.¹¹⁸

A large part of the history of the Western and central European Jew in the nineteenth century, we have noted, revolves around his struggle to secure the political emancipation and civic equality first promised him in the wake of the French revolution. By the 1870's victory in this struggle had apparently been achieved; for the Jews of England, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and Austria full rights of citizenship had been confirmed by governmental action.¹¹⁹

The religion of Judaism is the earliest of the existing prophetic and revealed religions. The Jews were living in almost every place in the world before the colonial mind of the Christians planned to use them as a force against the Muslims. As the Jews were scattered all over the world the British government and some western countries planned to use their hatred and arrogance against Islam and Muslims. This idea can not be taken as it is, because Qura'an which is the most valid and authentic book of Allah describes the enmity of Jews against Islam and Muslims, and describes the love and mercy of Christians towards Muslims. So it can be concluded that he was against the Christians in USA, may be due to some personal experiences urged him to criticize the Christians more. They planned to settle the Jews in the Arab city of Jerusalem, Palestine the Jewish history shows that they were always conspiring and were setting plans against Islam and Muslims despite the fact that it was the Muslim rule who saved their religious identity and they were developed under the Muslim rule and the attitude of Islam towards the religion of Judaism and Jews was always tolerating as Al-Faruqi mentioned in the

¹¹⁸ See: Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century". Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.), (Great Britain: 1999) 49

¹¹⁹ See: Bernard Martin (ed.) "A History of Judaism", Vol. 2, P 319, (New York: Europe and new world. Basic books, Inc. Publishers. 1974) and See also "The New book of Knowledge". Vol. 10. 109,110

manifestation of history of meta-religion that the Jews were the one who break the covenant of Madina, and they invited and promised help for the invader to the state of Madina but that matter was taken as individual effort and the Jews were forgiven by Muslim and Islam regarded them as an Ummah and they were enjoying the same rights like the Muslims in the state of Madina. Al-Faruqi stated that: "The attitude of Islam to Judaism is governed by the first Islamic principle of *Din Al-Fitrah* (religio naturalize) under which the Jews, being human, are endowed by God with true religion like other humans. The nature of this innate religiosity is the capacity to recognize God as God i.e. Creator, as Lord and recognize His will as ought to be of human endeavor. This principle imposes upon the Muslims to honor and respect the Jews as carrier of God's religion, no matter how different his conduct may be from that of the Muslims, or his culture from that of Islam.¹²⁰

Al-Faruqi mentioned that there was no basic difference about the Oneness of Allah or Tawhid between Islam and Judaism but there were two different strands in Judaism and we find one strand that had right beliefs that is universalistic strand and the other ethnocentric strand which have false beliefs. They don't believe on Tawhid, they even regarded their prophets committing sins and adultery. They do not believe on Last day and they believe that they are elected people and God is only their God etc.

NAME OF THE RELIGION

One of the most perplexing problems that arises in any discussion of Judaism is its definition.¹²¹

It is stated that Judaism* is faith and practice of the Jewish people. It is customary to date its beginning at the time of the Babylonian Exile in 586 BCE, when the

¹²⁰ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel". 73

¹²¹ See: Lewis M. Hopfe, "Religions Of The World", (NewYork: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 286

*Judaism can be defined in terms of a Jew, who adheres to a certain set of Jewish religious beliefs or practices but it cannot be defined primarily in terms of religions beliefs because there are some people who are called Jews but consider themselves atheists. See: Lewis M. Hopfe, "Religions of the World", 286 and See also "The New book of Knowledge" Vol. 10. 102

experience of living in a foreign land caused the Jews to re-examine their faith and practices (without a temple). Fuller development of the faith took place between 70 CE, when Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews were dispersed, and 500CE by which time the Talmud had been compiled.¹²²

STATISTICS OF JUDAISM

The main reason to show the statistics of Judaism is to know the popularity of the religion of Judaism today*. "Recent statistics estimate that there are 17,000,000 Jews in the world. Three million are in Israel, 2,620,000 are in Russia, and 5,870,000 are in United States. The largest concentration of Jews anywhere in the world is in New York City with 1,836,000".¹²³

BELIEF IN GOD

Al-Faruqi believed and he was convinced that it is only the Muslims (Islam) who remain as true and absolute monotheists, because all other religions, including Judaism and Christianity are not free from holding wrong concepts and beliefs regarding the almighty Allah.¹²⁴

Al-Faruqi mentioned about the idea of God in Judaism** and he believed that "The Jews have fallen into anthropomorphism (al-Tajsim)"¹²⁵ and when we study the encyclopedia

¹²² See : Arthur A-Johns (ed.) "Illustrated Dictionary of World Religions" (Great Britain: the Religious Education Press, 1982), 122

* Jews themselves are not numerically significant today; only a quarter of one percent of the world's people are Jewish, and may people of Jewish ethnic background do not practice the religion. See: Lewis M. Hofe "Religions of the world", See also Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century". Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.) 49, See also "The New Bok of Knowledge" vol. 10 . 102

¹²³ *Ibid*: 313

¹²⁴ See: Ismail Raji al Faruqi "The cultural Atlas of Islam, 50-52, See also Ismail Raji al Fruqi "Islam and the problem of Israel", 38,39

** Despite its historical difficulties, for thousands of years Jewish spirituality has always upheld certain principles. Judaism is strictly monotheistic, insisting upon the Oneness of God, Who created every thing and is present every where. See: Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century". Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.), 51, 52

¹²⁵ See: Islam and the problem of Israel. 38, 39

of religion about the concept of Jews we find that it confirms the interpretation of Al-Faruqi as it is stated "The Jews have fallen into anthropomorphism or the style of thought and language that ascribes to the deity human form and attributes".¹²⁶

The Muslim scholar Ibne Hazm also writes (while commenting about the theological objections in Torah) about the belief of Jews regarding the concept of God. He stated: "The idea of God in Torah can be said that it implies theomorphism, anthropomorphism and obvious polytheism in Judaism**.¹²⁷ Monotheism is usually understood as the belief in one God, but behind this overtly simple definition lies a host of complexities. In the course of its long history, Judaism has always felt itself committed to belief in one deity, but the meaning of this belief and theology which surrounded it has differed markedly from period to period.¹²⁸

While elaborating the idea of God, Al-Faruqi mentioned that about there are two kinds of opinions in Judaism.

First: Universalist strand in the idea of God.

Second: The Ethnocentrist strand in the idea of God.

First: According to the universalist strand, God is one and transcendent. He is creator of heaven and earth, Lord and Master, Sustainer and Judge of the universe. He is

¹²⁶ See: M.A. Canney, "An Encyclopedia of Religions", (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1921), 24

* According to Al-Faruqi the semitic family of nations in which Islam was born, Jews have admirably preserved the revealed teaching that God is transcendent and One. However, Islam charged them with misunderstanding divine transcendence on two counts; first, when their scripture spoke of God in the plural form – Elohim - and reported "them" as marrying "the daughters of men". (Genesis, 6:24) Second; when they thought of God as related to themselves in a way other than He is related to all other creatures, namely, as their father. See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam", 11

¹²⁷ See: Ghulam Haider Aasi, "Muslim Understanding Of Other Religions: A study of Ibne-Hazm's Kitab Al-Fasl Fi-All Milal Wa Al Ahwa- W Al Nihal", 117, 118

** The religion of Judaism have the idea of God imply Anthropomorphism, Transcendentalism, Pan-en-Theism, Particularism and Universalism. Anthropomorphism: to talk of God as father, or a king, as angry or happy, as creating a world and being disappointed with his creation etc. Transcendentalism: the emphasis on the otherness of God and His essential difference from the created world. Pan-en-Theism: God is in every thing, though He is not to be identified with the totality of the created world and certainly not with any part of it. Particularism : God is the God of Israel. The Bible depicts God as having centered in to a special covenantal relationship with the people of Israel. Universalism: God is the Creator of heaven and earth, the God of human history. See: Alan Unterman, Department of Comparative Religions, University of Manchester, "Jews, Their Religious Beliefs and Practices", 19

¹²⁸ See: Alan Unterman, Department of Comparative Religions, University of Manchester, "Jews, Their Religious Beliefs and Practices" . 19

Omniscient and Omnipotent, Loving and Merciful to all this creatures. This is amply supported by dispersed texts running from Genesis to Malachi.

Second: According to Al-Faruqi the ethnocentric strand does not deny the belief in universalist strand and they acknowledge that as true. But in addition to that, other contradictory predicates with the universalist conception of deity, are ascribed. It is maintained that God may be addressed as Elohim, plural of "God" that the Elohim or many Gods, have come to earth and copulated with the daughters of men, (Genesis 6:2) that "the Gods" belong to someone in such a way that Jacob could steal them away from Laban (Genesis 31:30) and Leah could cover them with her skirts and sit on them (Genesis 31:34 – 35).¹²⁹

Another form of anthropomorphism here is more prominent in ethnocentrist strand, according to Al-Faruqi "that God wrestled physically with a human and lost the battle (Genesis 32:24-30) that God is subject to passion and to piety (Genesis 9:21) that he acts unjustly and is biased in favor of a tiny segment of humanity, the Jews."

In the end Al-Faruqi mentioned that: That is why Biblical scholars have reserved the name Judaism and Jewish religion to the later, post-Exilic manifestation, and "Hebrew religion" to the religion of the patriarchs as expressed in the Old Testament.¹³⁰

It can be said that those who ascribe the concept of God in immoral, indecent and having humanly qualities equal to human strength, qualities is wrong and irrational description of the Almighty Allah. It will be noted that Al-Faruqi described that, under the influence of Christianity and Islam which continues to the present day, Judaism made further strikes towards divine transcendence. The rabbis of Palestine and Iraq in the early Christian centuries of the Muslim world, especially Spain, North Africa and Egypt, have written treatises in which God is a transcendent as the best Christian and Islamic legacy has conceived him to be In this regard, the writings of Musa Ibn Maimun* (1135-1204),

¹²⁹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam and the problem of Israel", 38, 39 See also Ataullah Siddiqui (ed) 27-36

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

* He was born in Spain in 1135. Studied Jewish theology and medicine there. After that he traveled to Egypt and established a school for teaching *Torah*. He wrote many books in philosophy and died in 1204. see: Muhammad Ghalab, 'Al-Falsafah Al-Islamiya Fil Maghrib' (Egypt, 1948). 132

Ibn Gibrol* (1021-1070)¹³¹ and many others who produced in the contemporary scene, and have continued the medieval tradition presenting divine transcendence in an idiom comprehensible to modern man.¹³²

BELIEF IN TORAH

The first five books of old-testament are called Torah** and it is attributed to the prophet Musa (A.S),which is the most sacred part in their religious books.

Torah is a revealed book of Jews, which was revealed to Musa (A.S). After the destruction of Jews for centuries and their slavery, 'the original Torah' was lost by the Jews, due to their denial of prophets, committing their murders, and because they forgot the teachings of Torah. They not only forgot Torah, but they even forgot the original language of Torah. The present Torah is not the original Torah but it is written by the Jewish Scholars.¹³³ This work was undertaken and still continues, through rabbis.

However the word 'Torah' is taken in its more comprehensive meaning and includes the style of Jewish society, Ethics, the way of worship, and Shariah all are included in it. "Torah is about three and half thousand years old. Whatever the system of preservation of book was possible was used by the Jews. Mostly it was written on stones and wood was used to preserve Torah. But those parts were also destroyed when the city of Jerusalem was conquered, the preserved parts were fired. Although Jews tried their hard to preserve Torah but they lost it. The most absorbing thing was that the ethical distortion was spread

¹³¹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, 28. and See also James. N. Jordan, "A History of medieval philosophy' Antiquity to the Middle ages"(New York: Queens College, the City University of New York, Macmillan Publishing Company) 126-147

¹³² See: Ataullah Siddiqui, "Islam and other Faiths" 28

¹³³ See: S. M. Shahid, "Ta'aruf Mazahibe Alam - Taqabale Adyan" (Lahore: Ever New Book Palace, Circular Road, Urdu Bazar) 558, 559. and See also, Alan Unterman, Department of Comparative Religions, University of Manchester, "Jews, Their Religious Beliefs and Practices", 37-50. See also Fouzi Muhammad Hameed, "Alimul Adyan Bainal Al-astora wal-haqiqa", (Jamayat-ud- Daw'ah Al-islamia Al-alimya, 1991) 343

*He was born in 1021. not much is known about his life. He was a famous Jewish figure esp in Philosophy and poetry. His books were written in Hebrew and Latin. He died in 1070. see: Muhammad Ghalab, 'Al-Falsafah Al-Islamiya Fil Maghrib' (Egypt, 1948) 21-23

** It is full of guidance, it is the Sunnah for Jews, and Musa (A.S) got his Shariah at the 'mountain of Sina'. This book of Torah includes revelations, Shariah and teachings of Musa (A.S). See: *Ibid*

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Torah but they lost it. The most absorbing thing was that the ethical distortion was spread in religious community also. Due to the limited sources of publications and circulation Torah was in the hands of those people who not only distorted and misinterpreted it but changed the basic teachings of Torah.¹³⁴

Al-Faruqi clarifies the fact that Muslims acknowledge the divine origin of the Torah, but also points out this does not imply that the book that today is called the Torah is the exact and veritable Torah revealed to Moses.¹³⁵

One: Distortion in Torah

Al-Faruqi elaborated that it was the Glorious Qur'an which first questioned the variety, not of the Torah as such, but of the Torahic text. By its persistent questioning it was the Glorious Qur'an according to Al-Faruqi which cleared that the rabbis were even then and there, still "reforming" and "rewriting" the Torah to suit their needs and wishes. Al-Faruqi was of the view that al-Qur'an has initiated a new discipline textual criticism and a new science – scientific study of religion. He mentioned further that practically every Muslim thinker thereafter participated in the new intellectual endeavor, which was then given the title of Al-Milal wa Al-Nihal (Studies of religions and Para-religions). In time discipline produced a number of giants like Ibn Hazm*, about whom the Orientalist Alfred Guillaume said that he anticipated western Biblical criticism of the Torahic text.¹³⁶

Two: Western Biblical Criticism

According to Al-Faruqi western Biblical criticism began with Wellhausen. Kuhn and Graf, who were all Islamicists.¹³⁷ It may be pointed out that their methodologies are different than Muslims, but in the end they took the results like

¹³⁴ See: Khursheed Ahmad, "Islami-Nazriya-e-Hayat", (Karachi University Press Karachi, 2001), 60,61. See also Dr. Mahmood bin Sharif, Dean Faculty of Usuluddin, "Al-Adyan fil Qur'an", (Cairo: Al-Azhar University) 101,102

¹³⁵ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel". 37

¹³⁶ *Ibid*

¹³⁷ *Ibid* and see also Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi "Usul al Sahyuniyah fi al Din al Yahudi", (Cairo: Institute of Higher Arabic Studies, 1964), 7

* He was born in Spain(373-454 *hijri*) was a poet, and philosopher of ethics. worked in politics but left it later on and stayed committed to education. Wrote many books in Islamic law, ethical philosophy, and comparative religions. See: Muhammad Ali Abu Rayyan. 'Tarikh Al-Fikr Al-Falsafi Fil Islam' (Egypt: 1996) 490-491

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the Qura'anic revelation. Their methodology is not Islamic so they can not be called Islamists.

Three: Divine Source of Torah

According to Al-Faruqi Islam not only confirms the prophethood in all the prophets of Almighty Allah but it also confirms the revelations to them and there is no doubt that 'Torah' is God's revelation to Moses but he further explains that this acknowledgement does not assert that the book currently known as the "Torah" is the exact and veritable text of the Torah revealed to Moses. For this, historical proof is needed; and critical history tells a complete different tale. It tells that the Torah was re-formed and re-written by scribes and priests under King Josiah in the seventh century B.C. that it was recast by the Jewish priesthood over many centuries that it was lost or destroyed during the Exile in the sixth century: that it was rewritten by Ezra, the scribe, in the fifth etc.¹³⁸

Four: View of Rabbi about Torah

Al-Faruqi elaborated that "any objective historian's examination of the Torah reveals that it is a text composed of many strata deriving from periods separated by hundreds of years: that its compilation must have been the work of centuries, thus repudiating once and for all the Jewish claim that the text of the Torah is verbatim revelation, as well as the Rabbinic claim, that text is integrally the one given by Moses as revelation".¹³⁹

THE UNIVERSALIST AND ETHNOCENTRIC STRANDS IN JUDAISM

According to Al-Faruqi any unbiased reading of the text would also reveal that two main traditions have intertwined themselves in it, inter relating their percepts within its lines. Almost every Torahic narrative or exhortation speaks, as it were, with two mouths. These traditions can best be described as "Universalist" and "Ethnocentrist". According to Al-Faruqi they have characterized almost every passage of the Torah as well as of the

¹³⁸ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel". 36

¹³⁹ *Ibid* and see also, Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi "Usul al Sahyuniyah fi al Din al Yahudi" 7-15

other books of the Old Testament. This observation casts doubt upon the theory that the whole Old Testament is verbatim revelation. But it does not disprove that a fair part of it is in fact revelation. Indeed, such a distinction saves the revealed part and places it beyond attack thus providing a first advantage.¹⁴⁰ Secondly, distinction accommodates the critical historian's view that the scripture is the body of writing which came to be regarded by the adherent-interpreters as reflecting the living religious reality of their age, and hence was edited, rearranged and refined under the influence of that reality. Thirdly, the distinction is wide enough to sustain the religious faith that working with a traditional text that is unquestionably revealed, reinterpretation and edition by later prophets and scribes constitutes revelation, no less than the earlier phenomenon. This last advantage accommodates the most conservative view, which cannot escape the evidence of change in widely speaking – the total absence of change. Finally, the distinction between the Jewish and Islamic views. Where as Judaism claims revelation status for the earlier as well as the later texts, Islam affirms the earlier and rejects only the latter.¹⁴¹

Al-Faruqi described the areas where the two strands differ. According to Al-Faruqi the universalist strand differs substantially from the ethnocentric in their conception of divinity of revelation, of the people or nation, of the day of judgment, of the place of Jerusalem and Palestine in the religion.¹⁴²

BELIEF IN REVELATION

Belief in revelation is the most important belief in the revealed religions. A religion is not considered a divine or revealed religion unless it possesses revelation of its own tradition or prophecy which describes the revelation in that religion. When we look at belief in revelation in Judaism we find that they have this belief but there is difference of opinions about this idea of revelation. We can view their idea into two following angles.

i. The revelation according to the universalist strand.

¹⁴⁰ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel", 38 and See also Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics" 50

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*

¹⁴² *Ibid*

ii. The revelation according to the ethnocentrist strand.

i. **The Revelation According to the Universalist Strand:**

According to Al-Faruqi they maintain that God reveals his will to human kind that they obey revelation and that revelation is the law of God equal for every one as the unity of God and truth are same. The idea of revelation is also same in essence and the change in revelation from period to period and place to place always pertain to application rather than spirit of the law. Revelation is holy because it is from God. Respect belongs to its spirit and letter, both of which are always public.¹⁴³

It is evident that according to the universalists strand that:

Firstly: The nature of the revelation is to proclaim it and universalize it. The truth of the revelation is evident and no one can reach it by mere exegesis.

Secondly: The text must be preserved along with the categories with which its meaning could be comprehended.

ii. **The Revelation According to Ethnocentrist Strand:**

According to Al-Faruqi they view the revelation of God by the advantage it provides to the ethnic entity. They do not recognize the revelation in its broad spectrum but they say that it is only for them. The later ethnocentrism holds that it is possible to have revelation for them only as they have their own God or gods. They also have the idea that God is the God of Israel, of Abraham, Issae, Jacob and of their descendants. If he reaches out to the others, he does so not for their own sake but in order to vindicate defense or avenge.¹⁴⁴

Meaning of Piety:

According to Al-Faruqi the necessary relationship to the ethnic identity affects the meaning of piety whereas the universalist view devotes all piety, all worship and all

¹⁴³ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel", 39

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 40

majesty to God alone and so orders human life as to make it possessed by the divine presence at every one of its moments, the ethnocentric view raises the ethnic entity to the point of sharing the majesty of God, and the piety and worship of man. Thus the religion itself is defined in terms of God, law or Torah, devotion to the people becomes devotion to God.¹⁴⁵

It is evident that the revelation to Ethnocentrism is:

Firstly: They have God or gods of their own so they have revelations for themselves from them due to their ethnic entity.

Secondly: They say that God send revelation to other prophets also like Abraham, Issae and Jacob but it was due to defend or take revenge from them.

Thirdly: They believe in the worship of man and say that it becomes the worship of God. Such an illogical view the ethnocentric strand holds.

BELIEF OF COVENANT OR ELECTION OF JEWS

The belief of elected nation is considered the key belief of Judaism and the religion of Judaism is often recognized by this belief.* The covenant can be regarded into two views.

- i. Covenant according to Universalist strand.
- ii. Covenant according to the Ethnocentrist strand.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 41

* Their teaching of a doctrine of divine election or “chosen people”, which put them ahead of all people in receiving God’s favors, Islam found objectionable. Jews held themselves to be God’s children and elect. regardless of their deeds. The Jewish people were repeatedly told that God had made a special covenant with them: “I will be your God and you shall be my people.” God is believed to have intervened in history in the time of Moses (approximately 12th century B.C.E) to free the Israelites’ from slavery in Egypt etc. See: Mary Pat Fisher, “The Religion in the Twenty-First Century”, Ninian Smart, “Religion of the World”, Series (ed.), 50

¹⁴⁶ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, “Islam And The Problem Of Israel”, 41

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i. Covenant According to the Universalist Strand:

They believed that the covenant expresses the moral purpose of creation, the essence of human morality. It asserts that man, being created for obeying God and fulfilling his will in creation, is free and capable to do so. Whether he does or does not obey is the criterion of his moral merit. They believe that obedience to the divine imperatives will issue in success in this world and blessedness in the next and disobedience in failure and damnation in this and in the next world. God's covenant being moral is universal and applies to all humans. The covenant of universalism is always a "two way street". Mans moral obligation to God and the pattern of God's disposal of man's affairs.¹⁴⁷

ii. Covenant According to the Ethnocentrist Strand:

According to Al-Faruqi they believe that the covenant has lost its universal nature and consequently its moral character. It has become "the promise" by which God has bound himself to favor his people, and to continue to favor them regardless of their moral performance (Deuteronomy 7: 6 – 8 Hosea 4:12).

They believe that he chooses them and proffers his blessing upon them, vindicates and averages them, defends and gives them victory, not for their morality but simply because he has bound himself to them and so because they alone are his people.¹⁴⁸

a) The Doctrine of Remnant:

The Ethnocentrist strand invented the doctrine of Remnant (Isaiah 37:32). being God is continued election and favoritism to the Jewish people on the claim that a small remnant of Jews have kept their loyalty and morality and thus justified the necessary favoritism (Zechariah 8:12). Infact the theory also holds that the remnant can not go wrong, that its virtue is always necessary (II Kings 21:14 Zephaniah 3:13) and Al-Faruqi

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 42

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*

mentioned that its purpose is hence to provide another leg on which the doctrine of election stands, in case of difficulty.¹⁴⁹

b) The Interpretation of Covenant in Material:

They interpreted the covenant in material, biological and hence racist terms and spoke of it as being in the flesh". Its symbol is circumcision (Genesis 17:9 – 14).¹⁵⁰

c) A Jew is Bani Berith:

According to Al-Faruqi the whole moral struggle is irrelevant to it because a Jew is a bani berith (son of the covenant) even if he apostasies. As such, he remains entitled to God's favor, to elect status. It is on this basis that the state of Israel regards every Jew in the world as its citizen, regardless of whether he has decided to join or not. The obvious racial diversity of male parents during two millennia of ghetto existence and persecution has caused the government of Israel to define Jewishness in terms of biological maternal descendence.¹⁵¹

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT IN JUDAISM

Judaism, unlike other revealed religions, does not present signs of the Day of Judgment. It deals more with this world, and laws for it. When we study the text of Torah we find this concept of the "Day of Judgment in Judaism". It is written there that the time before the day, presence of heaven and hell fire in the Old Testament. Al-Faruqi mentioned the belief of the Day of Judgment according to the views of both universalist strand and ethnocentric strand. So the idea will be viewed from the two angles.

First: The Day of Judgment according to universalist strand.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 42

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.* 42, 43

Second: The Day of Judgment according to ethnocentric strand.¹⁵²

First: The Day of Judgment according to universalist strand, is the day on which God would reckon with every human his past deeds, and judge mankind on a standard of absolute justice. Judgment is the keystone of morality, the logical consequence of freedom and responsibility.¹⁵³

Second: The Day of Judgment according to ethnocentric strand: Being ethnic, the entity is necessarily earth bound and regards itself as eternal in time. It is not impressed by the Day of Judgment or hereafter. It interprets the day on which God reckons will all men their moral and immoral works and poses a judgment or reward or punishment to each on the basis of his or her own works.¹⁵⁴

“When we study Torah present today and try to find things related to “Last Day. Resurrection, accountability, reward, heaven and hell it concentrates on the life in this world only”¹⁵⁵

The same writer further elaborates that: In Torah the description about the reward and punishment in this world is according to what he does right or wrong. If one is doing right and good actions then Allah will give him wealth, long life and good health and the one who is doing wrong and bad deeds then Allah will reward him with misery, illness and a short life. This shows that they will see the reward of their deed in this world.¹⁵⁶

It may be added that this concept is a bit close to the Islamic concept regarding the reward of good deed in this world like its is said that the one who is good with his blood relatives he will be rewarded with long life and prosperity in this world and the one who does not do that will be in misery and short life. Any way Islam has a very clean concept of the Day of Judgment.

¹⁵² *Ibid*, 43

¹⁵³ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁵ See: Dr. Aud Ullah Jaad Hijazi, “Mukarna Tul Adyan Bain Al Yahudia Wal Islam”, (Cairo: Mahmoodia Publishers Al Azhar, 1977), 118

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 118

The Day of Judgment in Different Sects

i. Rabbi's

They deny resurrection, hereafter, accountability, heaven and hell and believe that one gets his reward in this world.¹⁵⁷

ii. Freesees:

They believe on resurrection and resurrection of all dead.¹⁵⁸

iii. Fanatics:

They believe like the Rabbi and they were the people who asked that "Allah choose them in all creations.

iv. Samaritans:

They were Jews who were living on mountains they were strictly following Judaism; they were living life of purity. They were divided into two sects.

One: The layer sect.

Two: The righteous sect. This sect confirmed the prophet Esa when he came (according to the teachings of Torah). They believed in life hereafter, reward and punishment but the first sect denied all the above mentioned beliefs.¹⁵⁹

"The doctrine that this life is not all but that after here on earth there is another state of existence is a basic principle of the Jewish faith".¹⁶⁰

According to this view one can understand that there are some Jews till today who believe in hereafter but one thing is very evident that "There are variations on this theme as represented by the Jews in old testament which describes that: "the last Judgment and emerging kingdom of God are said to occur on the earth."¹⁶¹ On the other hand when we see this thing in Islam and Christianity or most rightly in Qur'an and New Testament we find that "The earth will be destroyed and the redeemed will live in heaven.

¹⁵⁷ See: Ahmed Shalbi, "Al Yahudia", (Al Nehda tul Misria, 1978), 230

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 227, 233

¹⁵⁹ See: Dr. Aud Ullah Jaad Hijazi, "Mukarna Tul Adyan Bain Al Yahudia Wal Islam", 130, 131

¹⁶⁰ See: Louis Jacob's Darton, "A Jewish Theology", (US. Longman and Todo, London) 23

¹⁶¹ See "World Scriptures: A comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts", (Delhi: Motilal Babnasiess Publishers Private Limited), 780

PLACE OF JERUSALEM, PALESTINE IN JUDAISM:

The place of Jerusalem, Palestine can be viewed from two kinds of stand points.

- i. The place of Jerusalem according to Universalist strand.
- ii. The place of Jerusalem according to Ethnocentrist strand.

i. The Place of Jerusalem According to Universalist Strand:

The universalist strand regards Jerusalem and Palestine as accidental to revelation. It acknowledges the previous revelations of God to the prophets inhabiting that spot of earth and keeps a memory of joy and gratitude to God for having made the inhabitants of that spot of earth the recipients, or first audience, of revelation.

According to universalist strand, it knows that God might have placed his revelation anywhere else and that had he done so, his revelation would be as normative and binding and excellent as before. When we see the idea of Jerusalem in accordance with universalist strand it can be felt that they are on a right way as they are happy to be living at a place, whose inhabitants were the first recipients of revelation. Secondly, they do not consider that the revelation they have in their hands is the only true revelation of Allah but they say that there might be any other place where Allah has sent his last message and that is excellent from all that has been send down on earth. This also shows their love for the revelation not for the place. They like the place due to the reason that inhabitant's place were the first recipient of revelation.¹⁶²

ii. The Place of Jerusalem and Palestine According to Ethnocentrist Strand :

According to Al-Faruqi as the ethnocentrist strand demands that they are elected nation of God, so their view about the Jerusalem and Palestine is different and according to them Jerusalem and Palestine are pieces of real estate whose religious value is intrinsic to the physical aspect of their being, in addition to the spiritual

¹⁶² See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel", 43, 44

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memorial being recognized by universalists strand.¹⁶³ Halvy, who is also considered as a medieval predecessor, saw a casual relationship between the physical earth, air and water of Palestine and the divine dispensation. Actually, it should no come as a surprise that God who has chosen a people in the flesh to be his favorite through their biological generation, that he chose a piece of real estate to be his “dwelling place” forever. Al-Faruqi mentioned that the ethnocentrist strand was of the view that the God is present in Jerusalem and according to a tradition present in them they believed that it was a revelation to one of the prophets, viz it laid down the law that God could not be reached except in Jerusalem, that the Jew cannot worship him unless he stands on Jerusalem’s soil. (II Samuel 7:4ff; 1 Kings 5: 17: 08: 27ff)¹⁶⁴

CONCLUSION:

It will be noted that this idea can be viewed from these angles.

- i. The idea about the place of Jerusalem* differs in the two strands. The place of Jerusalem according to ethnocentrism includes their beliefs that they are elected nation of God.
- ii. They can have a desirable connection with God in the Jerusalem so they have ethnic entity and an ethnic God who is according to them associated with their ethnic entity and they also believe that he can’t come to any other place in the world except Jerusalem. For them Jerusalem is like the Davidic Kingdom which is a physical, political, social, unilatory and economic kingdom reestablished on its own land.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 44, 45

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 45

*The ethical dimension, it was considered a duty to fight to regain the holy places of the faith from the infidel Muslims. This depiction of the taking of the Jerusalem in 1099 during the First crusade was included in a French, mid fourteen century edition of million of tyre’s history. See Ninian Smart, “The World Religions” (Cambridge: University Press 1998), 253

- iii. According to the universalist formula that Judaism consist of God and his revelation. And the ethnic entity includes in it "the chosen people" and "the physical land".
- iv. According to the ethnocentrist strand the place of Jerusalem has mysterious connections of timeless proportion.
- v. Their God is ethnocentric God. He is not only the God of a tribe but the God is equally the God of the land. His nature is also mysterious which passes understanding. Such is logic of ethnocentrism of the Jewish people.

2.4 THE MODERN JUDAISM:

In start of 18th and 19th century, the medieval Judaism was continued and till that time the Jews were living far places from the cities which were called Ghettos. They were always under some one's slavery. They were scattered every where in the world. All those factors effected the mind of Jews and It can b that it was due to the conspiracy of Christian who helped them to develop hatred against their enemy i.e. Islam. They left their strict teaching regarding the religion of Judaism and there were three main developments regarding the religion of Judaism. "Over the millennia, Jewish spirituality has continued to evolve in various directions. Today Judaism is responding modernization, globalization, and rational secularism by forms ranging from ultra-orthodoxy to liberal reform movements. In areas where Jews are a minority in mostly secular populations, many have abandoned Jews religious practice and are Jewish only in the sense of ethnicity. Observant Jews themselves have the chance to choose from varieties of Judaism since they are no longer constrained by tight-knit unified cultures."¹⁶⁵

First: The Reform Judaism.

Second: Zionism.

Third: The state of Israel.

FIRST DEVELOPMENT: THE REFORM JUDAISM*

Reforms (changes), in the early part of 19th century, influenced by the spread of scientific spirit and by freer aces of Jews to the culture of the West, new movement arose that sought to change the traditional Jewish way of life. German Jews for example were allowed to move out their ghettos. They were permitted to attend German schools and to

¹⁶⁵ See: Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century", Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.), 52

* Reform Judaism began in 18th century in Germany as an attempt to help Jews understand their religion in modern terms rather than rejecting it as old-fashioned. See: Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century", Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.), 52

take occupations formerly forbidden to them. Some became dissatisfied with the traditional ritual and observance and lost interest in Judaism. Others wanted to make reform* (changes) that they felt would improve the synagogue services and home observances. Reform congregations are popular in the United States, where rabbis explain Judaism in universal terms and encourage creative new ideas and ways of worship.¹⁶⁶

The Jews entered in European society on all levels and the demand for reforms in Judaism became apparent. If Jews were to be a part of the western civilization, many felt, some of the historical practices of Judaism were out of place. In 1843 a group of German Jewish leaders met and made the following declaration.

- a) There is a continuation in the development of Judaism.
- b) The Talmud has no authority for the modern Jew.
- c) We seek no Messiah and we know no homeland but the land of our birth.¹⁶⁷

This declaration became the basis for Reform Judaism*. Reform Jews began to use more vernacular and less Hebrew in their worship, their synagogues were called temples. Kosher food laws were not stressed, choirs and organs were introduced. Indeed Reform worship in nineteenth century was in many respects like Christian worship. The Jewish immigrants to the United States in the early nineteenth century were reform Jews.¹⁶⁸

* There are many movements which arose with the beginning of reform Judaism but the orthodox Judaism rejected them all. Conservative Judaism : which arose later in the 19th century in Europe and United States, is more oriented toward the traditional rabbinical model, and yet it is engaged in modern critical textual analysis as part of what it sees as a continual process of reconstructing the faith in contemporary terms. Reconstruction Judaism: was developed in the United States in the 20th century as a rational movement, denying such articles of faith as the supernatural revelation of the Torah, God's supernatural intervention on behalf of Jews, and the belief that Jews are God's specially chosen people.

Orthodox Jews reject all these movements as assimilation to secular society and instead respond strictly to authoritarian historical tradition. See: Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century", Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.), 52

¹⁶⁶ See: Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century", Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.), 52

¹⁶⁷ See: Lewis M. Hopfe, "Religions Of The World", Fourth Edition, 308 and See also Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam and the Problem of Israel", 18. *To help worshipers understand the prayers, many of them were translated into German, and rabbis began preaching their sermons in German. New hymns were introduced in the musical services, which often included a choir and organ. Men did not have to wear hats or prayer shawls. Women were permitted to sit with men. See "The New Book of Knowledge" under the heading, Reforms in Judaism, Vol-10. 118

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*

Al-Faruqi explains that the thing which was the reason that the Jews got equality in western European society was the French revolution then the assimilation of Jews in Europe and the birth of reform Judaism as a liberated sect of Judaism.¹⁶⁹

SECOND DEVELOPMENT: ZIONISM IN JUDAISM

Western Europe at the end of the 19th century that provided the immediate impetus for the launching of an organized Zionist movement, dedicated to the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This movement which was to be of the profoundest historical significance in the life of the Jewish people had, of course, much more ancient and deeper roots¹⁷⁰.

Zionism is basically a secular movement which started under the influence of nationalism and it got training under the influence of nationalism. In fact this movement was the result of the struggle of the Jews living in the big countries and cities, who were unable to get their rights in those societies. Those who initiated it were basically of the following views.

- a)** Jews are a nation like other nations of the world who are able to spend their life on national and international levels.
- b)** The workers of this movement rejected the idea of Israel that they are elected and loved one of God, and they said only that their worldly nation can give them the right to rule as the other nations of the world.
- c)** They were not concerned with the beliefs like elected nation, covenant with God, obedience to the Shariah, God's qualities etc.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 07-22

¹⁷⁰ Zionism was rooted, in an intense religious bond to the land of Palestine which had been fostered for centuries. See: Bernard Martin (ed.) "A History of Judaism", Vol. 2. (Europe and new world. Basic books. Inc. Publishers, New York. 1974) 325. 326

¹⁷¹ See: Lewis M. Hopfe, "Religions Of The World", 309. and see also S. M. Shahid, "Ta'aruf Mazahibe Alam - Taqabale Adyan" 608

Al-Faruqi has given a very comprehensive insight in the movement of Zionism. I would like to comment only few points about it.

1. As we all know that Al-Faruqi was against the Zionist occupation of Palestine, reasons for this hatred can be many but the most significant is that he was not only a Palestinian, but he was a true Muslim and who was much aware of the conspiracies and plans of Zionists movement of hatred against Islam so he not only disliked the Zionists occupation on Israel but he tried to show the whole Islamic Ummah the ugly face and double cross strategy of the Christian and Jewish scholars against Islam in the shape of Zionism. He wrote about it, he discussed it as an element which is a constant hindrance between the dialogue process of Islam and Judaism.
2. One can easily feel the anger and hatred of Al-Faruqi against the Zionist movement wherever he explained their motives. Al-Faruqi called for the dismantling of Israel and pleaded for the Ummah to launch a Jihad.
3. He was of the view that the injustice caused by the Zionism is so complex, compounded and grave that there are practically no means of stopping or undoing it, sort of a violent war that would destroy Israel and all of its public institutions.
4. Al-Faruqi very angrily elaborated the opinion of Islam that: Islam cannot and will not compromise with Zionism and therefore, all Zionists who like to live in Muslim world would have to de-Zionise themselves.
5. To Al-Faruqi, Zionism is a crime against religion for it debases the ethical, monotheistic and universal religion of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and other prophets to an immoral and idolatrous ethnic tribal religion. From the standpoint of Islam, he said that, Zionism represents apostasy against Judaism, the religion of God and revelation.

THIRD DEVELOPMENT: THE STATE OF ISRAEL

The Jews claim that it is written in the religious books of Jews that there will be a Jewish state with the name of Israel in the Palestine. Discussing about the argument of the state of Israel Huston Smith writes: Beyond the powerful religions pull toward return, the chief contributing motives can be catalogued as four.

a) The Argument from Security

The savage anti-semitism of the Nazi in which 6000, 000 Jews, one third of total number at the time were obliterated, convinced many Jews that their security in the face of latest anti Semitism in other lands was more apparent than real, and complete safety could be realized only in a land of their own.

b) The Psychological Argument

Some were convinced that it was psychologically unhealthy for the Jews to be everywhere in minority status, that this was breeding in them subservience and self repudiation which only the having of a nation of their own would outre.

c) The Cultural Argument

The staff of Judaism was running thin and its tradition was blending to death. Somewhere in the world there needed to be a place where Judaism would be the primary culture of the Jews.

d) The Argument from Idealism

Somewhere in the world there ought to be a nation dedicated to the complete historical realization of prophetic ideals and ethics.¹⁷²

The development of the state of Israel came quickly after World War II; it was obvious that the Britain could no longer control Palestine and its two warring factions. Zionists were determined to build a home for the thousands of displaced Jews. In 1947 United Nation voted to partition

¹⁷² See: Huston Smith, "The Religions of Man" (Lahore: Sohail Academy, 1999), 246. and See also, Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam and the Problem of Israel" 52-72

Palestine into a Jewish and Arab state. The British left the Palestine in 1948 and immediately, Israel proclaimed statehood.¹⁷³

CONCLUSION:

The first two developments can be regarded as the first two steps in secularization of the religion of Judaism. Three main things to be noted.

First: Reform Judaism changed the revealed religion of Judaism completely and hence led to its secularization process.

Second: Zionism was a hatred plan of Christians against Muslims same like colonialism but the Christians were aware that the colonialism will not be possible in future so they launched the plan of Zionism.

Third: The state of Israel was taken at the name of Judaism but we feel that it is more for Zionism than for Judaism. Zionism had changed the basic beliefs in Judaism and helped in the secularization of Judaism.

¹⁷³ *Ibid* 312, also 52-72

3.3 THE RELIGION OF CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is centered on the life, teachings, and even death of its founder, Jesus (C.4B.C.E-30.C.E). With its 21,000 different denomination Christianity is the subject of many contemporary variation on the mission begun by Jesus. As Christianity has spread, it became multicultural and today individual cultures are developing their own special expressions of the faith. For instance, in contrast to European models of worship, twentieth century African Christian churches introduced drumming and dancing into their services. After centuries of being embarrassed about their subjugation by European colonizer, African Christian theologians began to value African inspiration from Christian faith. Since the 1960s theologian in Africa and Latin America have been developing liberation theology emphasizing social action to help liberate the poor from, social and political injustices.¹⁷⁴

It can be noted that there was hold of Christianity on the medieval Europe and it was considered the only supreme religion of the world. Christianity was a strong force and then slowly and steadily it started loosing its mighty status and today its role which one known to make and destroy lives has been minimized to a “Private matter”. Modern religion tends hence forth to be highly individual, “Privatized”, in a jargon of the sociologists, “a private affair” of “Personal Choice”.¹⁷⁵

According to Al-Faruqi it is obvious that the religious situation of the Jews at the time immediately preceding the advent of Jesus called for a Prophet to reform it. The time was ripe for a movement to break the domination of ethnocentric particularism on Jewish minds and to re-affirm their equality with all other humans, to purge their theology of its anthropomorphisms and restore divine transcendence to its rightful place at the cue of the faith; to liberate the Jews from the tyranny of the Law which kept its letter but had lost its spirit. A divine dispensation was certainly due to bring the internalizing and spiritualizing tendency in Judaism to full development, if the moral decay of the ancient world was to

¹⁷⁴ See: Mary Pat Fisher, “The Religion in the Twenty-First Century”, Ninian Smart, “Religion of the World”, Series (ed.), 59, 60

¹⁷⁵ See: William James, “The varieties of religious experience” edited with an introduction by Martin. E. Marty. (The Penguin American Library, 3rd Edition 1982) XX

be arrested and humanity reoriented to religious felicity. To fulfill this great task, God sent Jesus, the son of Mary, Born and raised in the midst of these problems, he dedicated the last three years of his life to teach and exemplify the new faith. His call was shaped by the situation of his contemporaries, Jews and gentiles.¹⁷⁶

Christianity was fundamentally social, and was based on the congregation of the Lord. Christianity was the body of the Christ, the new people of God. Islam made much of the "Ummah" the submissive community. In modern times, however relation is becoming a matter of choice in a world that was being minced and differentiated, until it offered competing spiritual projects for various human needs. Religion is now becoming a consumer item for a nation of spiritual window shoppers. But the act is there to stay and by not looking at it, will not make it disappear; rather this act will only indicate our intellectual carelessness and lack of consideration of the actual and serious matters regarding religion.

The scientific notion by the west has changed lot of things regarding spirituality and religion; there is a big change and distortion in the beliefs of the Christian community. All that happened to Christianity once the ruling force became the least discussed topic in the western Christian life, what were the reason which drove such an attitude for religion so strong once in common man's mind and what is the after math of all this happening? Christianity was religion of ethics now it lost the real spirit of religiosity to reach the crux of the problem. It will be suitable to go through its beliefs and teachings.

NAME OF THE RELIGION CHRISTIANITY

The name "Christianity*" as the name of the religion of Christianity had no divine origin or approval. It was not until long after his departure that the name Christianity was given to the religion.

¹⁷⁶ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 55

Christianity: "Religion of the followers of Jesus Christ. The name 'Christian' was first used at Antioch about 40 ce (Acts 11:26) and the designation 'Christian' was current in Rome during Neronic persecution of 64. At that time it was regarded as a quasi – political movement. It is now applied to the faith of all churches or denominations which acknowledge Jesus Christ as son of God, Lord and Savior."¹⁷⁷

Although Al-Faruqi did not discuss this matter that the name of the religion of Christianity did not have any origin, it is only to prove that the teachings of Christianity in their revelations are not much authentic. They are less religious in the sense that the name of the religions is a very important thing in a religion and it should be according to the revelations of that religion but the "Christians" do not have any divine connections regarding the name of the religion.

What, then, was Jesus's, religion in actual fact as distinct from its name?

According to the teachings of Islam, his religion was reflected in his teachings in which he urged his followers to accept Islam as guiding principle in their relationship with God. Jesus is a prophet sent by Allah and his Arabic name is Esa (A.S). Like the prophets before him, he called upon the people to surrender their will to the will of God (which is actually what Islam stands for).

GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY TODAY:

At the beginning of 1980's Christians of all kind numbered 1, 432, 686, 500, this was 32.8% of the world population. This percentage has increased rapidly during the great century from 1815 – 1914 at the rate of 1.2% per decade, then after 1914 reverted to a catastrophic decline of 0.4% per decade which by 1980 had worsened to 1.0% per decade. Despite this the absolute number of Christians increased at 21.6 million a year. It shows that the Christianity has surged ahead in the world's less developed countries from

* To name Christianity after Christ they say, is fitting for Christian belief that Christ was God. See: Huston Smith, "The Religions of Man" (Published by Sohail Academy Lahore, 1999),266. and see also Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century", Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.),55

¹⁷⁷ See: Illustrated Dictionary of World Religions by ARTNUR. A. JONES (The Religious Education Press, A Division of Pergamon Press First Edition 1982),51

83 million in 1900 to 643 million by 1980. During the 20th century, in fact, Christianity has become the most intensive and universal religion in history there are today Christians and organized Christian churches in every inhabited country of the world.¹⁷⁸

The basic idea to show these statistical calculations about the religion of Christianity is that there is no doubt that Christianity is the religion of God that is why it has so many followers but one can see there is a variety of groups and sects in Christianity. Nearly two thousand years of history have brought an astonishing diversity to this religion. The most important among them are two:

- i. The Catholics
- ii. The Protestants¹⁷⁹

But most regretful it is stated that none of the sect in the sects of Christianity are on the teaching of the Jesus Christ. If only we discuss the matter of essence in the religion we find not even a single sect completely believes at the oneness of God. They either claim about the divinity of their prophet (Jesus) or God in human or concept of trinity. So Christianity is not only misinterpreting religion but is the most corrupt form of a religion by the hands of its custodians. Today even the teachings of their prophet are not present in them and the religion has become a matter of "individual matter" or "private matter".

In the next part of chapter we will see what the real teachings of the religion of Christianity were, and what the beliefs of its custodians today are? We will not see it according to their own creed, scholars or theologians but we will see it a revealed but distorted religion according to Al-Faruqi and in the light of the Glorious Qur'an, and the call of Islam to this religion and what are the basis on which one can call the custodians of Christianity to the true religion of Islam.

The main purpose of the study of Christianity and its beliefs is to solve the problems between Islam and Christianity, to give Christianity a message of love and respect from Islam to the Christian world and with the aim and objectivity of removing the

¹⁷⁸ See: David B. Barret, (ed.) "World Christian Encyclopedia" (Oxford University Press Edition, 1982), 03

¹⁷⁹ See: Huston Smith, "The Religions of Man" (Lahore: Sohail Academy, 1999), 266

misconceptions which Christians generally entertain against Islam and with the hope that all honest and fair minded Christians will see it rationally and will undertake an inquiry in to the merits of Islam and Christianity not with hopeless Christian eye nor even as the critical eyes of orientalists who looks at things in order to bring something not actual but with an intention to mislead the opinions and change or influence the right conceptions.

AUTHENTIC CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING TO AL-FARUQI

There were always discussions about who preserved the authentic Christianity. There were many groups in Christianity who claimed that they are the followers and custodians of the most authentic form of Christianity. But from the revelation of Qur'an one can judge, which is the most authentic form of Christianity present in contemporary age. Although every one knows that the Christianity which was revealed to Esa (A.S) is distorted, the teachings of Jesus are not present today. According to Al-Faruqi the Jesus Christ was the only perfect Christian. The authentic Christianity was in fact preserved, but not in the 'orthodox' version which claimed that name for itself. Al-Faruqi held that early groups such as the Ebioniteis, later to be branded as heretical, infect reflected a more original understanding of Jesus and his teaching, and thus they stood within the stream of Arab consciousness.¹⁸⁰ Although submerged for centuries, this authentic Christianity was recovered. Thus 'Semitic Christianity had itself developed in to Islam. Meanwhile, Christians from the 'unorthodox' traditions welcomed Muhammad's teachings and some of them became Muslims.¹⁸¹

When one see views of Al-Faruqi about the most authentic form of Christianity there are certain things to be noted in this regard and the view of Al-Faruqi can be viewed from these angles.

¹⁸⁰ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 55-60 See also Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, Article " Islam and Christianity: Diatribe or Dialogue", (Muslims in Dialogue: The Evolution of Dialogue, L. Swidler, ed, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, NY, The article is available on Web address <http://global-dialogue.com/swidlerbooks/muslim.htm>.) See also" Ataullah Siddiqui(ed) 244, 245

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*

First: There are many groups and sects in Christianity who claim that they are the carrier of most authentic form of Christianity.

Second: Those who call themselves as “orthodox” Christians and claim that they are the custodians of the most authentic form of Christianity, they are wrong in their claim because what they present as the religion of Christ is not in any form as compared to the religion which was revealed according to the Glorious Qur'an.

Third: Al-Faruqi claimed that only Arab Christians who were living in Arab region were the followers of the most authentic form of Christianity and most of them accepted Islam after the advent of Islam.

Fourth: Al-Faruqi regarded even the Arab Christians of today to be closer to the ethos of Islam than to west, although they are regrettably indoctrinated by western Christianity.¹⁸²

Fifth: Al-Faruqi also claimed that there was a group in Christianity called Ebionites and later it was branded heretical by the orthodox Christianity were more close to the vision of Jesus Christ than the other groups in Christianity.

Sixth: It is evident that the religion of Christianity is distorted and the misinterpreted form of the religion brought by Jesus Christ. When we looked at the beliefs and concepts like the Divinity of Christ, concept of trinity, the concept of original sin, redemption¹⁸³ etc. we have a very clear vision about the religion of Christianity shown in the teaching of the Glorious Qur'an Al-Faruqi proved the authentic form of Christianity from the history also. Some of the western theologians who object the “Arab consciousness” of Al-Faruqi and say that he is influenced by that very much, but one can see the reality when Islam came to the Arab Christians

¹⁸² *Ibid*

¹⁸³ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 59-60

of Najran and other areas, which also had very wrong concept like the Christianity today but they accepted Islam when it knocked at their doors. Al-Faruqi was convinced that the true teachings were preserved in Arab consciousness but it was also influenced by the corrupt forms of Christianity.¹⁸⁴

THE PROPHET JESUS

The prophet Jesus was a Jew, he referred often to Torah. Some Jews recognized him as their long awaited Messiah but many did not. He traveled only within a limited area of Judea and Galilee no more than 100 miles long spreading his message. He taught for perhaps only three years, and then was crucified. Nothing appears about him in historical record of times nonetheless, the new movement which developed in his name 'Christianity' now has the most followers of many religions in the world. As the twenty first century begins, over one third people call themselves Christians.¹⁸⁵

According to Al-Faruqi Jesus was born in their spirit, their consciousness and their ethic. He conceived of himself primarily as a person endowed with a mission whose starting point on earth was the Jewish family.¹⁸⁶ This fact the Qur'an proclaimed. "And when Esa, Son of Mary, said 'O people' of Israel, I am God's prophet sent to you, confirming the Torah"¹⁸⁷ At another place Qur'an states: "The son of Mary for he is but a servant blessed by us and sent by us as an example to the people of Israel".¹⁸⁸

When we tried to pin down the biographical details of Jesus life, we are immediately struck and disappointed by how little definitive information is available. We don't know

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁸⁵ See: Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century", Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.) 55, and see also W. Owen Cole, "Six Religions in the Twentieth Century" (Great Britain, Holton Educational publications 1984) 35,36

¹⁸⁶ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics", 50, 74 and see also Ulfat Aziz-us-Samad, University of Peshawar, "A Comparative Study of Christianity and Islam", (Lahore, Ashraf Printing Press, 1976) 37 and see also, Mary Pat Fisher, "The Religion in the Twenty-First Century", Ninian Smart, "Religion of the World", Series (ed.) 55

¹⁸⁷ See: The Glorious Qur'an 61: 06

¹⁸⁸ See: The Glorious Qur'an 43: 57 – 65

what he looked like, for though the New Testament is about Jesus, no where in it is there a physical description of him.¹⁸⁹

According to Al-Faruqi: the prophet Jesus, although a Jew stood against “the chronic perversion of the Hebrews”¹⁹⁰ He reiterated the true message about God, and sought to realize God’s law through an interiorized, subjectivised ethic.¹⁹¹ As a prophet, Jesus was a vehicle for the divine message; in him God made contact with the world.¹⁹²

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

False religious traditions all have in common one basic concept with regard to God. they claim that all men are Gods, or that specific men were God, or that nature is God. Or that God is a figment of man’s imagination. It may be stated that the basic message of such religions is that God may be worshipped in the form of his creation. These religions invite man to the worship of creation by calling the some aspect of it God. For example, Prophet Jesus invited his followers to worship God, but those who claim to be Jesus followers today call people to worship Jesus claiming that he was God. The custodians of Christianity claimed that divinity of Jesus Christ.

Al-Faruqi considered Christian claims to Jesus divinity to be wholly unfounded. He was thus quite at home with the type of biblical/historical criticism which refutes any notion of an inherent concept of divinity within the mind of Jesus. Authentic Christianity must be based on the authentic Christ Jesus was the first and only perfect Christian. Only his teaching, his example, his life constitute Christianity.

The same idea was reflected in John Busch (c 1480) who confessed:

“I reflect how our founder Augustine and the other fathers, who had lived nearly 4000 years after Christ, had written and preached that Jesus was God and thought how strange

¹⁸⁹ See: Huston Smith, “The Religions of Man” 267S

¹⁹⁰ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 55 and see also, Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, “Christian Ethics” 50-74

¹⁹¹ *Ibid* 55, 56, and 50

¹⁹² *Ibid*

it was that such learned men should forget their reason to the extent of asserting the divinity of a man they had never seen.”

Many people in the later middle ages also had doubts about the doctrine of Transubstantiation.¹⁹³

“The Rev. Dr. A. B. Bruce D.D, in his article on Jesus in the Encyclopedia Biblica points out that, while in the gospels of St. Luke Jesus is called “The Lord” about a dozen times, the earlier Gospels of St. Mathew and St. Mark refer to him simply as “Jesus” – a fact which seems to indicate the gradual evolution of the belief in his divinity”.¹⁹⁴

There are many Christian scholars who claimed about the divinity of Jesus Christ. “the example comes from Friedrich Schleiermacher’s Christology. He tries to follow the intent, if not the language of Chalcedon, according to which Jesus is one with God and yet fully human, both at once without separation or confusion. He recognizes first of all, that the exceptional character of Jesus divinity, Jesus is exceptional because of the Character of the relation to God found in Jesus, his unity or oneness with God. Schleiermacher affirms as a modern man identifying the divinity of Jesus with any particular empirical aspect of his life and experience would also mean making some exception to the claim of the full humanity of Christ.”¹⁹⁵

Islam rejects the worship of creation, which is the essence of idolatry, is the only unforgivable sin. One, who dies in this state of idolatry, has sealed his fate in the next life. This is not an opinion but a revealed fact stated by God in his Glorious Qur'an. It states “Verily Allah will not forgive the joining of partners with him, but he may forgive (sins) less than that for whosoever he wishes.”¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ See: Bernard Hamilton, “Religion in the medieval west”(Great Britain: Edward Arnold, 1986) 96, 104

¹⁹⁴ See: Dr. F. R. Ansari M. A. B. Th, Ph.D, “Islam and Christianity In the Modern World” Karachi, Trade and Industry publications Ltd 14. West Wharf Road Karachi-2 Pakistan 2nd Edition) 14

¹⁹⁵ See: Colin. E. Gunton (ed.), “The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine”(United Kingdom: the University Press Cambridge Reprinted ,1998) 255

¹⁹⁶ See: The glorious Qur'an 04: 48

There are many reports in the Gospels which show that Jesus made it clear to his followers that he was not the one true God. For example John Hick was one of them who wrote about the idea of “divinity of Jesus” he brought some names of contemporary Christian biblical scholars who wrote about it he stated: conservative new testament scholar in Britain, Professor Charles Moule of Cambridge university wrote ‘Any case for high Christology [that is one affirming Jesus divinity] that depended on the authenticity of the alleged claims of Jesus about himself, especially in the Fourth Gospel, would indeed be precarious (The origin of Christology, 1977, 13). Then a former Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey, who was also a distinguished New Testament scholar, wrote quite bluntly, ‘Jesus does not claim deity for himself’ (Jesus and living past, 1980, 39).

John Hick described: And one of the leading generally conservative British New Testament Scholar today. Professor James Dunn of Durham University says that there was no real evidence in the earliest Jesus tradition of what could fairly be called a consciousness of divinity (Christology in the making 1980, 60). Indeed in the earliest Gospel, that of Mark, Jesus is reported as saying, why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone’ (Mark 10: 18).¹⁹⁷

THE CONCEPT OF TRINITY*

The concept of trinity, which Al-Faruqi finds confusing and illogical at best, is a prime example of how Christian theology undermines the true doctrine of God.¹⁹⁸ Even though, the doctrine of ‘Holy Trinity’ is not considered today as a central doctrine of the Christian religion.¹⁹⁹ The Christian church declares the doctrine of the trinity to be a

¹⁹⁷ See: John Hick, Article “Islam and Christianity”, this article is available at (http://www.Johnhink.org.uk/article_12, the web address is searched using Google search site, which is www.google.com.) 5

¹⁹⁸ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article “ Devine Transcendence and its Expressions” Published in Henry O. Thompson (ed.), The Global Congress of the World’s Religions (Proceedings of 1980-82 Conference. Washington, DC; The Global Congress of the World’s Religions, Inc., 1982. 267-316. See also, Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 44

* The Trinity; The doctrine of Trinity is that there are three separate and distinct Devine persons in the Godhead, God the Father, God the Sun and God the Holy Ghost. Ulfat Aziz-us-Samad, University of Peshawar. “A Comparative Study of Christianity and Islam”, 68, 69

mystery, in which a person must have blind faith. The doctrine of trinity was coined by the Christians about three hundred years after Jesus.²⁰⁰

Al-Faruqi was on the view that the Christians got the idea of ‘Trinity’ from the mystery religions. There are no verses both in Old Testament and New Testament which clearly show ‘the doctrine of Trinity’ as integral part of Christianity. Al-Faruqi stated that: the use of Christian theologians of Hebrew scripture to justify the notion of the trinity and thus establish the divinity of Jesus. The book “De Trinitate” gives evidence that practically every quotation St. Augustine (d. 604) took from Hebrew scripture in support of the trinity was misunderstood by his Hellenistic mind. As a Christian Hellene, Augustine was incapable of understanding the semetic way of talking about God.²⁰¹ Al-Faruqi also mentioned the view of Barth regarding Christian claim of trinity. Barth was convinced about trinity and he stated God is Trinitarian; the relationship between the divine persons of trinity is that of ‘begetting’ and bearing children.²⁰²

“The Christian faith had found itself in strange position in regard to Jesus. From both the practical and the theoretical point of view, it wanted to affirm the divinity of Christ, but it was, after all, a movement which had come out of the Jewish tradition. It had suffered persecution because of its unwillingness to compromise with pagan polytheism. It was firmly committed to belief in one God. From the practice angle, it was involved in a central ritual, the Eucharist, which involved the worship o Christ. It was blasphemous to worship anyone except God, so Christ must be God. This was the practical part of their affirmation of Jesus’ Divinity”.²⁰³

One can also determine the same kind of conclusion that in the ancient copy of Bible there was no verse which indicated the Trinity doctrine or foundation of the trinity doctrine as John Davenport says:

¹⁹⁹ See: M.P, Fisher, “An Encyclopedia of the worlds Faiths” (London: I.B Taurus, 1997),307-308

²⁰⁰ See: Ulfat Aziz-us-Samad, University of Peshawar, “A Comparative Study of Christianity and Islam” 69

²⁰¹ Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) 40, 41

²⁰² *Ibid*

²⁰³ See: Ninian Smart, “The World’s Religions”, under the heading of “Classical and medieval Christianity and Judaism” 259, 260

“The celebrated text of three witness (John, I.V.7)”, which is the foundation of the doctrine of Trinity, has been proved, by the labors of Newton, Gibbon, Porson and others to have been and interpolation; and claimed himself acknowledges that this verse is not found in any ancient copy of the Bible. Jesus taught the belief in one God, but Paul, with the Apostle John, who was a Platonist, despoiled Christ religion of all its Unity and simplicity, by introducing the incomprehensive Trinity of Plato or Triad of the East and also by deifying two of God’s attributes, namely, Holy spirit or the Agion Pneuma of Plato and His Divine intelligence, called by Plato the logos (word), and applied under this form to Jesus (John I).²⁰⁴

There are some western theologians who still claim that the concept of Trinity will be understood if one understand the logic of New Testament. In my opinion thing or concept which is illogical how it can be understood logically and what will one give status or merit to New Testament which gives explanation of this illogical idea. Bruce D. Marshall who is a Christian teacher and theologian as well writes about ‘Trinity’ the same idea which was discussed. He stated that: “As the logic of the New Testament’s talk of God is incarnational it is also pneumatological, and so Trinitarian. Christians think God is the ‘Trinity’ and Jews do not”.²⁰⁵

John Hick is one of the contemporary Christian theologians who are at some extent rational. John Hick idea about Jesus is to a certain extent in accord with the Qur’anic account of Jesus having said this it is very important that a Muslim cannot digest his Christology as an integral part of his entire philosophy of religion. He rejects the doctrine of Incarnation and he further claims that “this doctrine involved the further doctrine of trinity, with Jesus as God the son, the Second Person of a divine trinity, incarnate”.²⁰⁶

If we see from Muslims side, contemporary Muslims who wrote about this idea of ‘Trinity’ and rejected it logically is Maulana Taqi Usmani in his book what is Christianity? The example of past muslim scholars, Ibne Hazm described the sects of

²⁰⁴ See: Dr. F. R. Ansari M. A. B. Th, Ph.D, “Islam and Christianity In the Modern World” 14, 15

²⁰⁵ See: Colin. E. Gunton (ed.), “The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine” 95-98

²⁰⁶ See: John Hick, Article “Islam and Christianity”,(this article is available at http://www.Johnhink.org.uk/article_12, the web address is searched using Google search site, which is www.google.com.) 05

Christians and he had some knowledge of the history of the development of Christian creeds, of the Christian councils, of the controversies in which these sects engaged and their philosophical and theological differences regarding the doctrine of Trinity: He believed that despite the differences among these sects, there was general agreement among them as to the doctrine of the Trinity and incarnation, which are the essence of Christianity Ibne Hazm described in his book²⁰⁷ that he does not find any direct or clear statement in the Christian scriptures that might support the doctrine of the Trinity.²⁰⁸

THE IDEA OF ORIGINAL SIN

The idea of “original sin” is also in chain of the dogmatic Christianity. This idea was not in the teaching of the Christianity but the Christians took this idea from the Jewish idea of the Fall. Al-Faruqi gave the history of the idea and he was convinced that this idea is an example of the Christian transvaluation of the Jewish idea of the fall.

According to Al-Faruqi “the story of Adam in genesis 3: 1 – 24 that it contains no evidence for peccatism Adam, After Eve committed a transgression and both of them were punished therefore, they disobeyed a divine command. Al-Faruqi rejected the idea with many reasons he stated that it is impossible that the punishment of a person is applicable to all men. The whole story is clearly described by the Glorious Qur'an according to the Islamic point of view. It was not a fall but it was a discovery that good's possible to confuse with the evil. Al-Faruqi elaborated the idea of sin in Paul's teaching, teachings of Apostolic Fathers, sin before Augustine and Augustine the exemplar of peccatism in order to know who was in favor or not in favor of this idea of “original sin”.

According to Al-Faruqi:

- i. Paul was strongly in favor of the idea and he described it is a kind of heredity disease which is transmitted to the whole of mankind by virtue of father of all mankind.

²⁰⁷ See: Ghulam Haider Aasi , “Muslim Understanding of other Religions” 50
²⁰⁸ *Ibid* 122, 123

- ii. Sin according to apostolic fathers is not innate. Neither is new born baby a fallen creature. By nature man is created good. This we have already discovered to have been their understanding of the *imago dei*. The Apostolic fathers rejected the idea of sin and about “The Fall” they conclude for granted must come to him after his birth when he is grown and consciously chooses evil. Sin, they therefore concluded, it is not original, but acquired. Al-Faruqi mentioned Augustine as the exemplar of peccatism and he described the original sin of Adam passed to all mankind and the means of transmission, are biological heredity. In the end Al-Faruqi mentioned the idea of Sin in reformation. It gave a new vitality and power to peccatism as well as a new seriousness. Calvin and Luther differed little. Luther was on the view of fall of the human race, but nevertheless has not altogether lost all goodness relating to divine and spiritual things and Calvin was also in favor of the idea of ‘original sin’.²⁰⁹

The Christians takes Adam’s disobedience to be the real and actual sin of mankind. Adam’s tasting of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is declared to be man’s necessary will to assert himself, to have his own way. Man’s knowing, to be his pride and confidence in his own capacity.²¹⁰

John Hick also described the doctrine of ‘original sin’ he compared it with the idea of Islam that we are weak and fallible creature, needing God’s forgiveness, which comes purely by God’s grace. John Hick is on the view that “However not all Christians today affirm ‘original sin’ and the need for a vicarious atonement. He is also convinced that Christianity took the idea of ‘original sin’ from Jewish tradition. He elaborates: There is an important theological difference between Islam and orthodox Christianity. This is the Jewish – Christian doctrine of the primal fall of humanity resulting in ‘original sin’ from which redemption is

²⁰⁹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, “Christian Ethics” 113-217

²¹⁰ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article “ A comparison of the Islamic and Christian Approaches to Hebrew scripture”, Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.),118

needed by the blood of Christ, verses the Islamic idea that we are weak and we need God's forgiveness, which can be purely by God's grace.²¹¹

THE IDEA OF REDEMPTION

The concept of Redemption is a key concept in the religion of Christianity as Al-Faruqi mentioned that "Christianity has been appropriately called "the religion of redemption". This is a title well earned. For no religion has emphasized the need for redemption nor satisfied that need more than Christianity.

According to Al-Faruqi "the overall meaning, therefore, of Christianity being called the religion of redemption, is that it holds as absolute truth, the following two premises:

First, in the Christ event, God has reconciled and therefore redeemed man and the world to Himself, from whom they were alienated by man's sin; and that all is necessary for the reconciliation and redemption of man and the world has been completed.

Second, now that redemption a fait accompli, the normally imperative is that men live as redeemed fellows in continuous communion and fellowship with the God head, until God decides to put an end to this temporary interlude of man in the realm of real existence.²¹²

Al-Faruqi was a very brilliant scholar who tried to bring the religions of the world close and teach them slowly and steadily the lesson of Islam. For this he had gone to the extent he could. He wrote about the idea of 'Redemption' in order to bring harmony among the religion of Christianity and Islam he said: that the idea of redemption is present in every religion in any form he brought about example from Islam also.

²¹¹ See: John Hick, Article "Islam and Christianity", (this article is available at http://www.Johnhink.org.uk/article_12, the web address is searched using Google search site, which is www.google.com.) 07

²¹² See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Christian Ethics" 223-236

THE SCRIPTURE

When we look at the religion of Christianity we find that the base of Christianity is not completely on the scripture. Their doctrine are mostly influenced from Judaism, Hellenism and mystery religions but one can say that the real power of a religion lies in its scripture or revelation from almighty Allah. It is evident in the religion of Christianity that most of the Ideas and concepts of Christianity do not have any scriptural base. For example the “doctrine of trinity” we have evidence both from Christian and Muslim scholarship that there were no verse in the early Bible about the “doctrine of Trinity”.

According to Al-Faruqi Christian scripture, the, while containing divine revelations in the words of Jesus, it is a record which was tempered with human hands in all the periods of Christianity. Although he believed that it contains some truths in it but the unholy designs are also more evident than them. So, one may say that the scripture of the Christian contains both types of teachings in them.²¹³

²¹³ *Ibid* 55

2.1 THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

Islam's potential contribution to world order, to inter-religious dialogue, understanding and living, to global religious interdependence can be very significant.

Islam has 1400 years of experience in inter-religious intercourse between the widest variety of ethnic and religious entities.²¹⁴ Islam rather than skepticism, doubt, secularism or materialism which would tolerate the religions of the world out of contempt and unconcern, Islam has based itself and its interaction with other religions on respect for them and concern for their adherents.²¹⁵

Islam manages to create an atmosphere of mutual dependence and love between the adherents of various religions, and to secure their cooperation in the building of a universal Islamic civilization, where humanism, world affirmation and piety remained dominant.²¹⁶ The Islamic state is a world order in which numerous religious communities, national or transnational, co-exist in peace. It is a universal religion, which recognizes the legitimacy of every religious community, and grants it the right to order its life in accordance with its own religious genius. It is superior to the League of Nations and United Nations because, instead of nations sovereignty as the principle of membership, it has taken the principle of religious identity. Its constitution is divine law valid for all, and may be invoked in any Muslim court by anyone, Muslim and non-Muslim.²¹⁷

The superiority of Islam can be viewed from the followings angles.

- Al-Faruqi, was of the view that all the religions of the world are different in practice, for example when they are in ruling power tried to prevent other religions in their territory but it was the truth of Islam that when it was in power it

²¹⁴ See: Attaullah Siddiqui (Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, Article "The Role of Islam in Global Inter-Religious Dependence", This article was published in Lewis and Barry Town (eds.), Toward a Global Congress of the world's Religions ,New York , Unification Theological Seminary, 1980. PP 19-30), 91

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, 92

²¹⁶ *Ibid*, 92

²¹⁷ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" (New York:, Macmillan Publishing Company. 1986). 200

not only allowed them to live freely according to their beliefs but those were the golden ages for both Christians and Jews in which they developed and nourished.²¹⁸ Islam is the primordial base of all the religions. It nourishes the idea of *Din Al-Fitrah* that every one has the ability to recognize God.²¹⁹

- Al-Faruqi was of the view that Islam does not call its custodians to believe dogmatically or irrationally but rather it proves that there is no contradiction between reason and revelation in Islam. According to Al-Faruqi without falling into dogmatism, Islam has laid its claim rationality and critically to seeking to convince the others in freedom and responsibility. It did not dilute its claim, nor renounce the exclusivist of religious truth while ever maintaining its esteem for other religions claims.²²⁰
- He was also of the view that “Islam holds that the message of all prophets had but one essence and core composed of two element; first is Tawhid, or acknowledgment that God alone is God and that all worship, service and obedience due to Him alone”.²²¹ Islam is the only true religion which calls its custodians to the one and only God and Lord of the universe and the Day of Judgment. As we can see, the idea of many gods and god with human qualities in the religion of Judaism and divinity of prophet, trinity in the religion of Christianity and the idea of many gods and goddesses in case of Hinduism and concept of dualism in Zoroastrians. We find that the sacred book of Islam the Glorious Qur'an is the most authentic revealed book; no body had changed even a single verse of Qur'an it is like as it was revealed. The sacred books of Judaism and Christianity are either lost or distorted with the human hand. According to Al-Faruqi they contain both kinds of teachings in them; some are truth and most are false.

²¹⁸ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 198

²¹⁹ See: Attaullah Siddiqui (ed.), “Islam and other Faiths” 92

²²⁰ See: Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, Article “Defining Islamic Traditionalism : First Principles in the Islamization of Thought, (Reference Web Address <http://www.ispi-usa.org/archives/islamictraditionalism.html>) Under the heading “The Unity of Truth and The Unity of Knowledge”

²²¹ See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed) , “Islam and other Faiths” , 92

- He was of the view that no religion of the world acknowledges the religious truth of other religions but Islam. “Islam pursues this acknowledgment of religious truth in Judaism and Christianity to its logical conclusions, namely, self identification with them. Identity of God, the source of revelation in the three religions. Islam does not see itself as coming to religious scene *ex nihilo*, but as reaffirmation of the same truth presented by all preceding prophets of Judaism and Christianity”.²²²
- Al-Faruqi was of the view that Islam calls the custodians of other religion for dialogue, not to reject them but to show them what is right, on rational basis.²²³ Islam does not reject any religion but it confirms that as the Creator of this universe is one there is one religion and the diversity of religion is due to the phenomenon of prophecy. It gives a religion the maximum and confirms them a religion revealed by God unless it is proved historically that this is a man made religion. According to Al-Faruqi “Islam has given the maximum that can be given to another religion. It has acknowledged as true the other religion’s prophets and founder, its scripture and teaching. Islam has declared its God and the God of that religion as One and the Same. It has declared that Muslims the assistants, friends and supporters of the adherents of the other religions under God”.²²⁴
- He was of the view that Islam rejects the idea of “Elected nation” in Judaism and idea of “original sin” in Christianity but it call all the humans on equal basis that no one is superior except those who are more virtuous.²²⁵
So, Islam calls for humanity and Islam is worried about the salvation of the custodians of all faiths.

There are certain elements in the religion of Islam which were discussed by Al-Faruqi. We analyze it in the following angles.

²²² *Ibid. 75*

²²³ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi , “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 188

²²⁴ See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), “Islam and other Faiths” 77

²²⁵ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 110

- A. Islam the religion before God²²⁶
- B. Islamic stand toward other faiths
 - First: Tolerance²²⁷
 - Second: *Din Al-Fitrah*²²⁸
 - Third: Islamic Humanism²²⁹
- C. Unique theology of Islam
 - i. Universality of Revelation and diversity of religions²³⁰
 - ii. Salvation
 - iii. Reason and Rationality in Islam²³¹
 - iv. The unity of Truth²³²

ISLAM THE RELIGION BEFORE GOD

Al-Faruqi is convinced that the “religion before God is Islam” and Al-Faruqi stressed in his theory of Religions that it is only Islam, which not only gives the right approach to religion but it establishes its relationship with other religions on the basis of Glorious Qur'an. Infact this idea depicts “the unity of faith” that is Islam accepts the diversity of religions.

Al-Faruqi's interpretation about Islam is very significant that Islam is not a new religion but it is the primordial religion which was the base of Judaism and Christianity. It was the religion of Islam which was revealed to all the prophets of God. For this he established the idea of *Din-al Fitrah* that every human being is born with the religious inclination which recognizes God as God and Lord of the universe.”²³³

²²⁶ See: Ataullah Siddiqui, “Islam and other Faiths”, 75, 92

²²⁷ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 79, 198

²²⁸ See: Ataullah Siddiqui, 137

²²⁹ *Ibid*, 81

²³⁰ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, 189

²³¹ *Ibid*, 188

²³² See: Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, Article “Defining Islamic Traditionalism : First Principles in the Islamization of Thought (<http://www.ispi-usa.org/archives/islamictraditionalism.html>)17

²³³ See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed), 75,79 (Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, Article “The Role of Islam in Global Inter-Religious Dependence”, This article was published in Lewis and Barry Town (eds.), Toward a Global Congress of the world's Religions (New York : Unification Theological Seminary, 1980. 19-30

As the Glorious Qur'an states:

"If any one desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah) never will it be accepted of him; in the here after he will be in the ranks of those who have lost (all spiritual good).

As we all are well aware that "Islam in essence is the will of Allah". Islam affirms the religious truth of other religion. Islam does not force any one to accept it but it gives the rational argument ground to handle with reason.²³⁴

There is no coercion in Islam. The example comes from the time of prophet (PBUH) after the conquest of Makkah, the Jews and Christians were free to practice their religion under Islamic state.

1. Islamic Stand toward other faiths

According to Al-Faruqi the Islamic stand toward other faiths can be viewed from these three angles.

Firstly: Tolerance

Second: Din al-Fitrah

Third: Islamic Humanism

First: Tolerance

As methodological principle, tolerance is the acceptance of the presence of others.

As methodological principle with in the essence of Islamic civilization, tolerance is the conviction that God did not leave people without sending them a messenger from among themselves to teach them that there is no God but God and that they owe him worship and service, to warn them against evil and its causes. Tolerance is the conviction that the diversity of the religions is due to history with all its affecting factors, its diverse conditions of space and time, its prejudices, passions, and vested interests.²³⁵ The most crucial distinction which depicts the superiority of Islam to other religions is the Islamic stand of tolerance towards other faiths.

²³⁴ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi. "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 73

²³⁵ Ibid. 79

According to Al-Faruqi “it is not only tolerant, but assumes the holy of the other religions to be holy, their prophets to be the prophets of God and their revelations to come from the God”.²³⁶

a) Relations with Judaism and Christianity

According to Al-Faruqi Islam identifies itself with Judaism and Christianity. He further mentioned “that no religion preserved the shrines of another in its own base, and indeed enable them to prosper in its midst, except Islam”. He stressed that no tolerance whatever has been ever reached the point of enforcing the other religious laws in its own territory except in Islam. Only in Muslim world and under an Islamic government would it be true to say that neither Jew nor Christian is free to de-Judaize or de-Christianize himself in rebellion against or in defense of his own faith.²³⁷

b) Islam's relation to Minorities and non Muslims

Al-Faruqi described “The Islamic Shariah is otherwise known as the millah or millet system (meaning “religious communities”) or the dhimmah or zimmi system (meaning the covenant of peace whose dhimmah or guarantor is God).²³⁸

Al-Faruqi brings the example from the history of Islam and the time of Muhammad (PBUH) about the covenant or constitution. The prophet (PBUH) said “whoever oppresses any dhimmi, I shall be his prosecutor on the day of judgment.” No other religion or societal system has ever regarded the religious minority in a better light, integrated it into the stream of the majority with as little damage to either party, or treated it without justice or fairness as Islam did. Indeed, none could. Islam succeeded in a field where all other religions failed”.²³⁹

²³⁶ See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 153

²³⁷ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam”, 191

²³⁸ *Ibid.* 193

²³⁹ *Ibid.* 200

Second: *Din Al-Fitrah*

This was the best interpretation by Al-Faruqi which stressed the Islamic stand toward the other faiths, having brought all faiths and religions of the world under a single roof of *Din Al-Fitrah* which satisfies the condition for constructive dialogue and inter relation, with its all differences between the religions seen as domestic family squabbles.²⁴⁰ Al-Faruqi was of the view that Islam succeeded in the field where all other religions failed because of theology of *Din Al-Fitrah* which recognized the true, one and only religion of God to be innate in every person, identical with the Hanifi tradition with Sabeanism, Judaism and Christianity.²⁴¹

According to Al-Faruqi Islam introduced the concept of *Din Al-Fitrah* to express its judgment that all men are endowed at birth by God with a religion that is true, genuine and valid for all time. He further explains that criticism, argument and counter – argument mutually affect all the members on account of this organic relationship in which Islam has bound them to one another. Such criticism across the lines of various religions is brought forth by constituent members concerned about the total system which houses, includes and unites them. Islam motivates them to reform their faiths. In *Al-Fitrah* or the first presuppositions of human religiosity, any religious tradition should be able to face the strongest criticism without fear. For its ultimate concerns, namely God, the purpose of existence, the real possibility of salvation.²⁴²

Third: Islamic Humanism

The third thing which is not only crucial but is a necessary element in the relation of Islam with other religions and one can rightly predict that Islamic humanism is base of all the relationship between Islam and other faiths because Islamic humanism is infact the unity of Humanity. Islamic Humanism is different than the philosophy of Humanism.

²⁴⁰ See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 153

²⁴¹ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 200

²⁴² See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 154

Humanism, or the doctrine, first, that all humans are born innocent, there being neither original sin nor guilt; second, that they are free to determine their individual destinies since neither matter nor social order can or should restrict their movement or efforts to order their lives in accordance with the best dictates of their own consciences; third, that they are equal before God and law since no discrimination is legitimate that bases itself upon race, color, language, inherited culture, religion, or inherited social position; forth, that they are all by nature capable of making judgments of truth and falsehood, of good and evil, of desirableness and its opposite, since without such capacity for judgment and action, neither humanity nor moral merit nor demerit or possible; fifth, that they are all responsible, certain to be accountable and will receive from their Creator, whether this world or the next, exactly what their deeds have earned for them.²⁴³ The third stand towards the world religions from the side of Islam will be viewed from these angles.

- i. Oneness of Allah
- ii. Universalism of Islam
- iii. Qur'an and Islamic Humanism
- iv. Islam condemns Ethnocentrism, Nationalism and Racism

i. **Oneness of Allah**

The oneness of Allah (SWT) and the necessary unity of his created manifestation means that creator (SWT), from the ontological perspective, must stand in absolutely the same creator relationship to all humans.²⁴⁴

It is evident with this view that no religion of the world gives such an idea that their religion is true without any rational grounds.

²⁴³ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 110, 193

²⁴⁴ See: Isma'il Ragi Al-Faruqi, Article "Defining Islamic Traditionalism : First Principles in the Islamic Tradition", 2000, 2, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 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ii. **Universalism of Islam**

According to Al-Faruqi all humans are one and same on this ground. The universalism of Islam is based on the principle that all humans are one in the eyes of Allah (SWT) except as their deeds might distinguish them in moral virtues and in cultural or civilization achievement.²⁴⁵

iii. **Qur'an and Islamic Humanism**

According to Al-Faruqi the reason for Islamic humanism is the divine statement in the Qur'an "O people, we have created you (all) of a single pair, a male and female (namely, Adam and Eve) and we have constituted you in tribes and nations that you may know one another. Nobler among you in estimate of Allah is the more virtuous."²⁴⁶

It is evident that there is no discrimination between human beings according to the Glorious Qur'an but it is man who does so. Allah made the tribes and nations so that human being can recognize each other.

iv. **Islam Rejects Ethnocentrism, Nationalism and Racism**

According to Al-Faruqi the judgment does take place on the basis of one's own or others immutable characteristics is ethnocentrism and it is a crime and the implications of such a crime are ominous. The unity of humanity is violated and divine oneness is violated as well Al-Faruqi considers the ethnocentrism equal to shirk.²⁴⁷

THEOLOGY OF ISLAM

Theology as intellectual expression of religion must be able to make the future of all the religions present in the world. Islam is the only religion which presents such a theology

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*

²⁴⁶ The Glorious Qur'an 49:13

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*

which gives the answers to the present day problems between the religions.. This unique theology can be viewed from these angles.

i. **Universality of Revelation and Diversity of Religions**

According to Al-Faruqi Islam, not only established the revelation of God but it affirmed the universality of God's revelation which plays an important and significant role in the understanding of other religions. The following points clear the idea of universality and diversity of religions.²⁴⁸

- a) Islam confirms the revelations of Judaism and Christianity.
- b) Islam confirms the revelations before Judaism to different prophets in different times and places

When Islam confirms the universality of revelations then it also confirms the diversity or variety of religions present in the world as religions of God.²⁴⁹

According to Al-Faruqi Islam confirms the revelation in Judaism Christianity and others but it is also evident that they have distorted and misinterpreted the verses of their religious books. So the custodians of all those faiths should be invited to the religion of Islam to the common agreement between them.

ii. **Salvation**

The Islamic idea of salvation is very simple it confirms that humans were born sinless. They have innate religiosity (*Al-Fitrah*). Allah has sent many prophets for the guidance of human being in every tribe and nation. Who so ever live in this world according to the will of Allah in this world will be rewarded heaven and who will go against his will, will go to hell. According to Al-Faruqi Islam affirms the salvation outside the borders of Islam. He mentioned that the Jews, Christians and Sabians can also attain

²⁴⁸ See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.), 79, 80

²⁴⁹ *Ibid*

salvation.²⁵⁰ It can be said that the word salvation of non-Muslims is not a right word to be used here infact Islam is the essence of the will of Allah and as Al-Faruqi himself said that Islam was not a new religion brought by Muhammad (PBUH) but it was a reaffirmation of Allah's will so the followers of other religions who were on the right way will be called Muslims because they were on the right way but today they can't get salvation until and unless they believe the religion of Islam.

iii. Reason and Rationality in Islam

When we see the present religions in the world, The most significant thing in Islam is that Islam accords with the reason and there is nothing irrational in Islam. As we can see mostly, illogical and irrational beliefs present in both Judaism and Christianity.

According to Al-Faruqi, in Islam faith is never irrational in its role and contribution, unlike other religions which tend to be dogmatic through and through Islam does not stand above reason, just as the reason does not stand above faith. The perception of reason and faith as diametrical opposites, and of man having to choose between them, is not Islamic.²⁵¹

iv. The Unity of Truth*

Islam has the idea of the unity of truth. This unity devolves from God's ones and is convertible with it. Al Haqq or the "truth" is the name of Allah (SWT). Allah is one and the truth can't be many. Allah (SWT) knows the truth and, in his revelation, he tells it as it is what he conveys in the revelation cannot be different from reality.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "The Essence of Religious Experience in Islam", Philadelphia: Temple University, Penn. "Numen, Vol. XX, Fasc. 3) 198,199

²⁵¹ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi. "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 109

²⁵² See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Defining Islamic Traditionalism : First Principles in the Islamization of Thought"(Web Address <http://www.ispi-usa.org/archives/islamictraditionalism.htm>) 18-19

* The most distinctive characteristic of Islamic methodology is the principle of 'the unity of the truth', this principle holds that truth is a modality of God and is inseparable from Him, the truth is one as the God is One. See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Social and Natural Sciences, The Islamic Perspective." 13

3.6 CONCLUSION, EVALUATION AND CRITIQUE

Al-Faruqi was a modern scholar and comparativist of Islam, who had knowledge of both traditions, he had complete knowledge of religion tradition and he also had grip over the western tradition. He was a real Muslim and scholar of Islam, his agenda in the world was only to collect all the human being under the flag *Din-Al-Fitrah*, the primordial base of all the religions. Some times he used neutral method in his study.

Islam is the only religion which not only claims that it is the true faith and primordial base of all the religions but it provides evidence regarding its claims. Al-Faruqi was of the right approach when he mentioned that Islam is the true religion and he brought example from the history to show the practice of Islam. He said that when Islam was in ruling power it never tried to prevent the existence of other religions. Al-Faruqi was on the view that Islam is the only true religion, which calls its custodians to the one and only God. He was convinced that Islam is the only religion which tolerated the existence of other religions and permitted their custodians to live and practice their faith freely within the Islamic territory. Islam not only gives them right to live freely but it protects their religious places. Al-Faruqi said that history proves that the Jews enjoyed best time under Islamic rule. They developed rapidly under Islamic rule and that period can be called the 'golden age' for the religion of Judaism. He argued that Islam does not ask its custodians to believe dogmatically, but Islam proves itself the reason and rationality when necessary.

Al-Faruqi was of the view that Islam convey the message of Allah to each and every person present in this world. He believed on the theory of *Din-Al-Fitrah*. He also had firm faith that Allah has endowed 'Tawhid' in the nature of all mankind so they can accept the religion of Islam. He was convinced that it is needed to remind them the truth hidden in their nature. According to him the innate capacity to recognize God as God, will help the Muslims the convey the message of Allah to all mankind, which is obligatory to all the Muslims. He believed that Allah made tribes and nations for recognition not to discriminate among them. Islam rejects the idea of 'Nationalism' and 'Election' of people (as present in religion of Judaism) Islam also rejects the idea of 'original sin'.

Al-Faruqi was on the view that Islam has identified itself with the religions of Judaism and Christianity. Islam believes that they are revealed religions and for this reason Islam calls them 'people of the book'. Islam believes their prophets as the prophets of Islam. Al-Faruqi was convinced that the diversity of religions is due to diversity of revelation. Allah sent prophet or Warner for every nation and tribe to remind them the message of Almighty Allah. He was convinced that Allah gave the same message to every nation but some teachings were changed according to the need of the people of specific time. Allah completed his message in form of 'Islam'. Al-Faruqi was of the view that Islam does not reject any religion's divine status except it is proved by historical facts that the religion is man made.

The relation of Islam with other religions made it special because no religion of the world has yet acknowledged the truth of other religion as necessary condition of its own faith. Al-Faruqi was of the view that if there is a new value to be discovered, it will be Islamic-value because no other religion has the potential to meet the challenges of the modern age except Islam. So the final end will be Islam. The idea of the superiority of Islam as religion in the religions of world is cleared with the idea of Islam, its teachings, scripture, concept of Tawhid, dialogue, *Din Al-Fitrah*, Islamic humanism, no coercion in Islam reason and rationality according to Al-Faruqi.

The second thing to be noted is that Al-Faruqi was interested in the study of different religions. He was keen to know the history of religions and how Islam treated other religions of the world when it was in rule. Al-Faruqi studied almost every religion present in the world, in the sense that he presented the direct solution of the all the problems of religion regarding the faith and practice(in the form of the theory of Meta-Religion). Al-Faruqi discussed the religion of 'Hanifism' according to him they were on the right path. Al-Faruqi elaborated their history and he was of the view that they refused any kind of association with God, they refused to participate in pagan rituals. They lived before the prophet Ibrahim (A.S).

He discussed religion of Sabeans. He was of the view that they were on the right path. the same issue was discussed by Ibn-e-Hazam, according to him they have some similarities with the faith of Islam. They were praying five times, fasting in the month of Ramadan, they were facing toward Ka'bah while praying. And they were also offering sacrifice. He considers them as Ahl-al-Kitab*. The third religion discussed by Al-Faruqi was Judaism. He believed that the religion of Judaism was distorted by its followers. He described that the religion of Judaism was distorted completely. the idea of God was changed and they had the idea of anthropomorphism and particularism. And they changed the teachings of 'Torah'. The fourth religion discussed by Al-Faruqi was the religion of Christianity. He was of the view that the religion of Christianity was distorted. The custodians of Christianity not only changed the teachings of their prophet but they changed the spirit of the religion of Christianity. They described the prophet of God as the son of God and in terms of Trinity and divinity of Christ etc. They had dogmatic and illogical beliefs. they left the real teachings of Christianity. The fifth religion discussed by Al-Faruqi was Zoroastrians. He did not mention their beliefs and practices. He only described them in the theory of Meta-Religion, when Prophet(PBUH) recognized them as another Ummah within the Islamic Ummah. They paid jizya or due tax and were allowed to live freely according to their faith and those who accepted Islam were included in Muslim Ummah. The next two religions which were discussed by Al-Faruqi were Buddhism and Hinduism. These two religions were also discussed in theory of Religions. Al-Faruqi described that they were idol worshippers. who were co-existed in Sindh and Punjab. Al-Faruqi was silent about the Hindu kingdoms in Malaysia. It will be noted that Al-Faruqi focused on the revealed religions and only touched the rest of religions.

The dogmatic beliefs and illogical argument, distortion of sacred books and escape from the reason and rationality, non existence of tolerance, concept of God and gods, divinity of prophet, God with human qualities, concept of trinity, idea of elected nation, original sin in the religions of Judaism Christianity, idol worship and idea of many gods in case of Hinduism, and Buddhism. idea of dualism in Zoroastrians etc. were discussed by Al-Faruqi in study of religions.

Al-Faruqi discussed the religion of Judaism according to its beliefs and practices he mentioned that Islam identified the religion of Judaism with it. He discussed the idea of God, in Judaism and stated that they were the followers of 'Monotheism' but they changed the basic 'Torah' and misinterpreted it completely. They introduced anthropomorphism, pan-en-theism, particularism and universalism regarding the concept of God. He mentioned that the Jews changed 'Torah' and introduced the idea of elected nation. They described Judaism in terms of elected nations and they were even on the view that God is only God of Jews. Al-Faruqi described that the Jews were much involved in this world and they left the idea of day of judgment and interpreted it in terms of this world. He described two main strands in the religion of Judaism (the Ethnocentric strand and universalist strand), they differ each other completely. Al-Faruqi also discussed the idea of place of Jerusalem and Palestine in Judaism, according to this idea the Jews believed that it is a holy place for them and they have right to get the land from others who lived there. Lastly, the new developments in the religion of Judaism were discussed. The Jews were scattered in the world but due to the conspiracy of Christians the Jews launched some new ideas in Judaism the more important were three developments in the religion of Judaism. The first development was the 'Reform Judaism', there were many movements which arose with the beginning of 'Reform Judaism' but the 'orthodox Judaism' rejected them all. The 'Reform Judaism' was a chapter which opened 'Secular thinking in Judaism'. There was an idea of Jew by birth and of elected nation. the Jews were calling a non-Jew 'goy'. They allowed preaching also, and started use of choir in their temples (synagogues in Judaism). The second development in Judaism was the start of 'Zionism', it was basically a secular movement than religious. Behind the plantation of Zionism was Christian mind. Zionism can be considered as new form of colonialism. Al-Faruqi was a Palestinian and he was against the Zionist occupation of Palestine. He tried to show the whole Ummah the realities above the movement of the Zionism. The third development was the 'State of Israel', the Jews had the concept of land of their own and they think that Israel is their place which was given by God.

The religion of Christianity was also a major religion discussed by Al-Faruqi. If one sees the works of Al-Faruqi, it will be noted that he wrote much about the religion of

Christianity and he was on the view that Christians changed the teachings of their religion. They have some dogmatic beliefs, about which they have blind faith. And religion of Christianity is the worst form of a distorted religion. They were convinced of the divinity of Christ and they also had the doctrine of Trinity about which they say one must have blind faith in it. Al-Faruqi rejected these beliefs by describing the history of those beliefs he rejected the idea of 'Original Sin'. He was on the view that the Christian mind took this idea from the Jewish idea of 'The Fall'. Al-Faruqi analyzed the idea from different angles, and periods. He refuted this idea and claimed that punishment of a person is not applicable to all men. He elaborated 'The idea of Sin' in Paul's teachings, teachings of Apostolic Fathers, sin in and before Augustine and, Augustine the exemplar of Pietism in order to know who was in favor of not in favor of this idea of 'Original Sin'.

Al-Faruqi elaborated the corruption of original teachings of Jesus Christ, which was preserved fully by Islam in the teachings of Glorious Qur'an. Al-Faruqi elaborated the dogmatic and irrational way of describing the beliefs of Christianity. He included some of the Western scholars as Islamists. But this idea can not be accepted as it is, because their methodology is different than the Islamic methodology.

He is mostly anti Christian in his views. But Islamic scripture favored Christians as people of book due to their love and mercy for Muslims.

The main objections to Jews and Christians is not that the God whom they worship is a false God, but that the way they acknowledged and worship him is not the way that God himself wants to be acknowledged or worshipped as he informed us in his last revelation. In other words, Muslims claim that the Qur'an came down not to deny and ignore but to reaffirm the messages of Moses and Jesus.

The Qur'an not only identifies Jews and Christians as the people of the Book distinct from Muslims but also issues the rules which regulate Muslims attitude towards Christians and Jews.

Al-Faruqi rejected the Judeo – Christian culture because of his Muslim view, which sees Judaism and Christianity originated from Islam the primordial religion and from Jesus, a

Muslim Prophet who preached Islam like the Prophet Muhammad. This view was by Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi. As he stated Islam does not see itself as coming to the religious scene ex. nihilo but as reaffirmation of the same truth presented by all the preceding prophets of Judaism and Christianity it regards them all as Muslims, and their revelations as one and the same as its own. It can be said that from Adam(A.S) till Muhammad(PBUH), all the prophets(A.S) were coming with the same religion i.e. Islam. The basic teachings were same, only some instructions were changed according to the need of people and time.

CHAPTER THREE: THE METHODOLOGY OF DIALOGUE AND THE THEORY OF RELIGION

3.1 DIALOGUE ACCORDING TO AL-FARUQI

INTRODUCTION:

Al-Faruqi stands out as one of the few Muslim scholars who earnestly attempted to interact with 'the people of book' (Judaism and Christianity) and articulated the theoretical foundations of such interaction. There is no doubt that Al-Faruqi was far ahead of his contemporaries, particularly in the realm of inter-religious dialogue. Many of the ideas which he articulated in his books as regards how to deal with the custodians of other faiths are certainly new and refreshing. They are also of vital relevance to the present day problem faced by the custodians of other faiths regarding inter-religious dialogue infact the followers of the "Abrahamic faiths" (Islam, Judaism and Christianity) in great need of such a basis of dialogues because they have direct interaction with each other. The ideas which were articulated by Al-Faruqi help them a lot to interact each other on the matters of faith.

According to Al-Faruqi dialogue is education at its widest and noblest. It is the fulfillment of the command of reality to become known, to be compared and contrasted with other claims, to be acquiesced in if true, amended if inadequate, and rejected if false. Dialogue is the removal of all barriers between men for a free intercourse of ideas where the categorical imperative is to let the sounder claim to the truth win. Dialogue disciplines our consciousness to recognize the truth inherent in realities and figurization of realities beyond our usual ken and reach. If we are not fanatics, the consequences cannot be anything but to all concerned.²⁵⁵.

²⁵⁵ Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Islam and Christianity: Diatribe or Dialogue", (Muslims in Dialogue: The Evolution of Dialogue, L. Swidler, ed, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, NY, The article is available on Web address <http://global-dialogue.com/swidlerbooks/muslim.htm>)
See also Ataullah Siddiqui(ed) 248 and see also Ataullah Siddiqui, "Christian-Muslim Dialogue" 89

3.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF AL-FARUQI TO DIALOGUE:

Throughout his professional career and life, Al-Faruqi involved himself either writing or inviting for dialogue between the three Abrahamic faiths (Islam, Judaism and Christianity). In Chicago he conveyed his view of the “History of Religions discipline in a lecture to the Divinity school faculty”.²⁵⁶

His major works include his definitive treatise on Muslim Christian relations: *Islam and Christianity: Diatribe or Dialogue* and “On the Nature of Islamic Da’wah”. Al-Faruqi’s contribution to a 1978 dialogue conference in New York was an analyst’s of the differing concepts of divine transcendence in Christianity and Islam.²⁵⁷ He was also a member of the committee which organized the Global congress of the world’s Regions and he presented a major address at its third conference in 1979.²⁵⁸ Meanwhile, Al-Faruqi was an active member of the American Academy of Religion. After Several years of lobbying, he helped to convince the leadership to establish the Islamic studies Group in 1976 as a program unit of AAR, which he chaired until 1982.²⁵⁹ In 1979, this Group sponsored along with the Muslim, Jewish, Christian conference) the Trialogue of the Abrahamic Faiths’ convention and Al-Faruqi edited the addresses given.²⁶⁰ Al-Faruqi’s activities demonstrate his conviction that dialogue between the Religions of Book (Islam, Judaism and Christianity) was an absolute necessity. His beliefs concerning the basis and agenda for that dialogue are developed in many of his writings.

²⁵⁶ See: Isma’il Raji Al-Faruqi, (Lecture delivered to the faculty of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, on 30th April, 1964, *Numen*, Vol. XII, 1965.35-65 and continued in the next issues of *Numen*, 81-95, See also Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) 161

²⁵⁷ See: Isma’il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article “Devine Transcendence and its Expressions” (Washington, Henry O. Thompson (ed.), *The Global Congress of the World’s Religions (Proceedings of 1980-82 Conference, Washington, DC; The Global Congress of the World’s Religions, Inc., 1982) 267-316* and see also Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) 21-44

²⁵⁸ See: Isma’il Raji Al-Faruqi, (ed.) “Trialogue of the Abrahamic Faiths” Foreword, I

²⁵⁹ *Ibid*

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*

3.3 OBSTACLES TO DIALOGUE:

- A- Obstacles in the way of dialogue with Judaism**
- B- Obstacles in the way of dialogue with Christianity**

Obstacles in the way of dialogue with Judaism

According to Al-Faruqi the American Academy of Religion's (AAR) organized a very unusual meeting its Islamic studies committee entertained the vision of bringing together members of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim academic committees in the United States to dialogue with one another on the subject of their own faiths. This was a novel undertaking, unprecedented in AAR history. The Islamic Studies committee sought and obtained the assistance of the Inter – Religious peace colloquium (later called the Muslim – Jewish – Christian conference – MJCC) the only western body with an experience in the matter.²⁶¹

According to Al-Faruqi Muslim – Jewish dialogue is still non-existent. It has absolutely nothing to show for itself: any precedent, not even a hypothetical agenda. The creation of the state of Israel and the continuous hostility, this had engendered between Jewry and the Muslim world prevented any religious dialogue from taking place. We can conclude that according to Al-Faruqi the Jewish obstacles to dialogue are following.²⁶²

- i. Israel
- ii. Zionism
- iii. Jews, elected nation

²⁶¹ *Ibid*

²⁶² *Ibid*

i- Israel:

According to Al-Faruqi the problem of Israel confronting the Muslims world today has neither precedent nor parallel in Islamic history. The Muslim world has tended to regard it as another instance of Modern colonialism.²⁶³ The state of Israel is a constant threat for Muslims in Palestine and the Muslim world because they were always involved in activities which proves that they are working against not only Islam but at the every possible content they are creating problems for Muslim communities all over the world.

ii- Zionism:

The movement known as Zionism, Herzal and others pleaded the cause of a Jewish state attempts were made to find land anywhere in the world where Jews might develop a state, but in Jewish hearts, all locations took second place to the land they had left hundreds of years before, the land now called Palestine.²⁶⁴

iii- Jews, elected Nation:

The Jews have two basic beliefs oneness of Allah and that they are elected nation of Allah. According to Al-Faruqi both Jews and Zionism are ethnocentric that's why pleading of Judaism is not allowed and a Jew can be only by birth. So Jews don't allow any one to enter into Judaism. But now the Reform Judaism has taken some steps to change things within the religion of Judaism.²⁶⁵

²⁶³ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, "Islam And The Problem Of Israel" 2

²⁶⁴ *Ibid*: 38 and also See, Lewis M. Hopfe, "Religions Of The World" 308

²⁶⁵ *Ibid*, See also Khursheed Ahmad, "Islami Nazriya-e-Hayat", (Karachi, University Press, 2001) 58

Obstacles in the way of dialogue with Christianity:

Al-Faruqi was convinced and he believed that rapprochement is possible and should be attempted. But such an effort is prevented, and hindered by the custodians of Christianity. Whereas, Muslim have always recognized Christianity as a valid religion, having Abrahamic roots. Christians have always tried to defeat Islam at the possible extent in almost all fields of life²⁶⁶. He focused on the more recent record of 'colonialism', "Christian mission" and its academic counterpart 'orientalism'. Al-Faruqi tried to brush aside the obstacles from Christian side; he stated "Christianity is not Christendom. The Muslim must learn to distinguish the one from the other. It is great intellectual achievement to do so and it is spiritual necessity if the Muslim-Christian dialogue is to continue and to succeed. The Church is made of fallible humans; Christianity is God's religion which can not be indicted under any condition".²⁶⁷

According to Al-Faruqi there were three major obstacles²⁶⁸ regarding the Muslim – Christian dialogues and they are listed below.

- i. Colonialism²⁶⁹
- ii. Western Christian Mission²⁷⁰
- iii. Orientalism²⁷¹

i- Colonialism:

According to Al-Faruqi it was Christendom not Christianity that was guilty of the two arches – enemies of the contemporary Muslim, colonialism and mission; colonialism attacked the personal integrity of every man in the colonized territory. Through colonialism, Christendom and not Christianity robbed the Muslim of his liberty to express his thought, to assemble with his peers to act in any field, including the

²⁶⁶ Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Islam and Christianity: Diatribe or Dialogue" (The article is available on Web address <http://global-dialogue.com/swidlerbooks/muslim.htm>.)

²⁶⁷ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi. Article "Common basis between the two religion in regard of convictions and points of agreement in the spheres of life", (This article was published in seminar of the Islamic Christian dialogue, Tripoli; popular office of foreign relations, socialist peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, 1981) 229-264. and see also 217

²⁶⁸ *Ibid* 220-223.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid* 220

²⁷⁰ *Ibid* 222

²⁷¹ *Ibid* 223

education of himself and his own children. The Christian-Muslim dialogue ought to mobilize Christians and Muslims around the world to condemn and, where possible, to resist the colonialist Christianity.²⁷²

ii- Western Christian Mission:

Western Christian mission as its method was the second obstacle mentioned by Al-Faruqi. According to him the second front on which Christendom and not Christianity sinned against human integrity is that of mission. In itself mission is morally and religiously imperative because it is the effort by man to enable other men to benefit from the supreme wisdom, the religious truth, appropriated by the missionary. Mission is integral to Ur-Religion. Christianity and Islam are missionary Par excellence to spiritual possessions because it knows them to be valid and good absolutely. The truth is always missionary i.e., it wants to be known. As directed to Muslims, Christendom's mission has betrayed this noble ideal. The betrayal, however, is not the work of Christianity but of its human, fallible and often gullible representative.²⁷³ Al-Faruqi did not deny to Christianity a religious duty involving the sharing of perceived truth. Both Christians and Muslim have the desire and the right to seek to convey the benefits of their respective insights. Christianity and Islam must be interested in each others claims by means of dialogue, which is the altruistic extension of both religions. Only through dialogue will the two religion ever be united in the religion of God (May He be Glorified and Exalted) and truth.²⁷⁴

The problem has to do with the Christian methodology by which Muslims have felt exploited. Christian missionaries too easily became associated with western colonial power; later they came to independent Muslim nations as development experts but with a hidden agenda for proselytizing to the Muslim world was never a mission of Jesus, (A.S), but a mission of the western digitization of Christianity arrogantly asserted in words, hardly ever exemplified in deeds.²⁷⁵

²⁷² *Ibid* 220, 221

²⁷³ *Ibid* 222

²⁷⁴ See Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Islam and Christianity: Diatribe or Dialogue" 45-47(The article is available on Web address <http://global-dialogue.com/swidlerbooks/muslim.htm>,) 16, 17

²⁷⁵ See: Ataullah Siddiqui "Cristain-Muslim Dialogue" 93,94

Recent developments among Christian theologians indicating a more open attitude toward other religions offered little hope for Al-Faruqi. After examining both the Vatican II documents and the writings of Paul Tillich, he concluded that any change in attitude is still hardly adequate because of the tenacious loyalty to the Christian digitization of Jesus.²⁷⁶ Nor can there be any real dialogue when, as Al-Faruqi claimed, undue authority is given to statements of Jesus about mission, such as that found at the end of Mathew Ch – 28, which biblical criticism has shown to be without historical basis.²⁷⁷ In many instances, Christian missionaries were caught in the working of the colonial power, and used by the latter to advantage.

iii- Orientalism:

According to Al-Faruqi Christianity is also innocent of orientalism, Christendom's effort to understand Islam and at the same time to undermine it. The rise of European Universities in the 19th century, many Jews, atheists and free-thinkers, men at the farthest removed from the Christianity, joints ranks with Christians in the study of the religion and culture of Islam. Orientalist repudiated the greatness of the Islamic civilization by explaining it away as a syncretistic copy of Byzantium and Persia; and, though they spared no effort to acquire, date, classify and exhibit the works of Islamic art in the Museums of the West, they explained them vindictively as works produced in spite of Islam or contemptuously as un original adaptations from the pre-Islamic art of the Muslim world. Where as all these disservices and misdeeds are undeniably true, it is not correct to ascribe them to Christianity. But Christianity and its honest and sincere adherents must come forward to denounce them. They must cooperate with the Muslims in their repudiation.²⁷⁸

Another expression of Christian interest in Islam which Al-Faruqi denounced was its participation in 'orientalism', i.e. the analysis of Islam by western authors and writers (who study and participate in order to influence Islam negatively) of various persuasions. He did not doubt the value of the numerous accomplishments made by

²⁷⁶ *Ibid* 273

²⁷⁷ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi. Article "Common bases between the two religion in regard of convictions and points of agreement in the spheres of life" 229-264. and see also Ataullah Siddiqui(ed) 222

²⁷⁸ See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) 223, 224

the academic study of religion, particularly the editing of classical Islamic text; but as an interpreter of Islam, orientalism has only helped to destroy the Muslim's confidence in Christendom.²⁷⁹

It can be added that the orientalist did much more than this. They tried to influence Islam negativity but they made the understanding of Islam very difficult for the Christians.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid*

- B. Islamic Da'wah
- C. Islam – The religion of reason par excellence
- D. Meta – Religion Principles

THE GLORIOUS QUR'AN:

As a committed Muslim, Al-Faruqi began with the teachings of Glorious Qur'an, and found that the Glorious Qur'an calls for Muslims, Jewish and Christians who adhered to the original teachings of Moses and Jesus were praised; those who clung to the western figurization of Jesus as the son of God were castigated.²⁸¹

In either case Glorious Qur'an called for dialogue and persuasion in dealing. The Glorious Qur'an invites the Jews and Christians for dialogue. The Glorious Qur'an states:

Say: 'O People of the Book! Come now to a noble principle common to both of us, that we worship none but God; that we associate naught with him; and that we take not one another as lords beside God (Qur'an 3:64)'.

Al-Faruqi's base for 'rational arguments' the only source is the Glorious Qur'an. Whatever he suggested for dialogue between the religions and called them to the revealed religion by Almighty Allah.

According to Al-Faruqi there is no compulsion in religion. The Glorious Qur'an states:
"There shall be no coercion in religion (Qur'an 2:256)"

Islam calls for argument and dialogue but it rejects the coercion according to Al-Faruqi coercion into conversion was forbidden, and this position was exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself.

²⁸¹ *Ibid* 306

The Prophet (PBUH) himself allowed those Christians who were not convinced by his own presentation of Islam to keep their faith and return home in dignity.

ISLAMIC DA'WAH:

According to Al-Faruqi Da'wah is based upon the Islamic assertion that primordial religion or monotheism is found in every man *Din, Al Fitrah* and that all he needs is to be reminded of it. So Da'wah is necessary for dialogue between the religions as the Glorious Qur'an states:

“Call unto the path of your Lord with wisdom and goodly counsel. Argue with them with the move comely arguments (Qur'an 16:125).

What Muslims expect to see from the Christian world is a fair understanding with regard to both the nature of the Qur'an and the personality of the Prophet. Such an understanding seems quite crucial if there is to be any hope of a Muslims - Christian dialogue.

Islamic Da'wah is not proselytism but invitation to think, to debate and argue.²⁸²

According to Al-Faruqi Da'wah is a divine commandment that Da'wah must be the end product of critical process of intellection. Its content cannot be the only content known, the only content presented. For there is no judgment without consideration of alternatives, without comparison and contrast, without test of inner consistency, of general consistency with all knowledge, without tests of correspondence with reality it is this aspect of Da'wah that earns who responds affirmatively to its content the grace of Hikmah or wisdom.²⁸³

²⁸² See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article “On the Nature of Islamic Da'wah”(International Review of Mission, Vol. LXV, No. 260, October 1976) 391-406, See also “Christian Mission and Islamic Da'wah, Leicester, The Islamic Foundation, 1982, 33-43. see also Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) 305

²⁸³ *Ibid* 308, 309

The basic characteristics of Da'wah in Al-Faruqi's view lies in its nature. He highlights these important characteristics as freedom, rationality and universalism. After reading such a fantastic way of Da'wah one can easily understand now Da'wah is a proper base for the dialogue between the religions.

ISLAM – THE RELIGION OF REASON PAR EXCELLENCE:

Al-Faruqi primary basis for an academic dialogue was reason, yet this actually led to an affirmation of Islam. According to Al-Faruqi, in Islam faith is never irrational in its role and contribution unlike other religions which tend to be dogmatic through and through. It does not stand above reason just as reason does not stand above faith. The perception of reason and faith as diametrical opposites and of man as having to choose between them is not Islamic.²⁸⁴

According to Al-Faruqi the Islamic stand toward the other faiths thus combines three crucial distinctions.

First: Tolerance towards other faiths.

Second: Din al - Fitrah.

Third: Islamic humanism.

Firstly it is not only tolerant but assumes the Holy of the other religions to be Holy, their Prophets to be the Prophets of God and their revelations to come from God.²⁸⁵

The second and the third point will be discussed under the next heading. i.e. meta-religion principles.

²⁸⁴ See Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Defining Islamic Traditionalism : First Principles in the Islamization of Thought"(Reference Web Address <http://www.ispi-usa.org/archives/islamictraditionalism.html>) 8

²⁸⁵ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article "Islam and Other Faiths"(A. Gauhar (ed.), The Challenge of Islam, London; Islamic Council of Europe, 1978) 82-111, and see also Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) 153

META – RELIGION PRINCIPLES:

Al-Faruqi suggested reason as the basis on which all the religions including three sematic religions will be agreed that there is one true religions i.e. Islam. In the earlier writings Al-Faruqi coined the term ‘meta-religion’ to describe what the one true religion would like when its principles are dictated by reason.²⁸⁶

However one can understand from Al-Faruqi’s arguments, which calls for a religion relevant to the real world where humans are held responsible for obedience to God.²⁸⁷ Al-Faruqi strongly recommended one true and original religion, from which all the present religions were derived, he called this *Din Al-Fitrah*, which he translated as ‘natural religion’ or ‘Ur-religion’ and he was convinced that it is the only condition for constructive dialogue and interrelation.²⁸⁸

Al-Faruqi was convinced that Islam has preserved natural religion intact, So much so that Islam calls this *Din Al-Fitrah* or Ur-Religion; Islam.²⁸⁹ The key principle which is preserved by Islam from the “natural religion” is “Tawhid”. Al-Faruqi called it the essence of the Islam the true religion: Tawhid defines that the nature of reality is dual, creator is God and created, it disavows any notion of incarnation as found in Christianity, and points to human responsibility in the achieve of divine will.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, “Christian Ethics” 21

²⁸⁷ *Ibid* 22-32

²⁸⁸ See: Ataullah Siddiqui (ed.) Article “On the Nature of Islamic Dawah” 31-312

²⁸⁹ *Ibid* 155-156

²⁹⁰ *Ibid* 314-318

3.5 EVALUATION OF DIALOGUE:

Al-Faruqi was convinced that Islam is the true religion of Almighty Allah and all other subsequent religions present in the world have links with the true religion of Almighty Allah, which he termed as *Din Al-Fitrah*.

He wanted to collect all the religions of world under the single roof of *Din Al-Fitrah*. It was infect Islamic humanism which he presented in many of his writings.

But this emphasis was more on the Abrahamic faith namely Judaism and Christianity. He was convinced that both custodians of these religions will understand the truth if preached to them, he suggested the need of dialogue. He was convinced that dialogue is the only solution in this matter, and to bring close the scholars and custodians of these three religions Judaism, Christian and Islam.

Al-Faruqi was on the view that without any encounters with these religions it is not possible to convince them so he emphasized the need of dialogue between these religions.

Al-Faruqi stressed the importance of rationality and reason in dialogue. He believed that Islam is the only religion which doesn't reject reason and the reason ultimately confirms Islam as the only true religion of God. According to him Islam is the religion of reason. So a rational person can easily understand it.

Al-Faruqi called both the custodians of Judaism and Christianity for dialogue and Da'wah on rational bases. There were some obstacles also in the process of dialogue which were discussed by Al-Faruqi in his writings. He pointed out three main obstacles from Christian side in dialogue and they were; colonialism, Christian mission and orientalism. These were the two main reasons suggested by Al-Faruqi to affect the process of dialogue between Christianity and Islam. He was convinced that there were three main obstacles from the Jewish side to affect the process of dialogue they are the state of Israel, Zionism, Jews elected nation Ethnocentrism of Jews.

Al-Faruqi not only mentioned the obstacle for dialogue between these three semetic religions which he rightly called "The Abrahamic Faith". He suggested in many of his writings that Qur'an is the first and most important base for dialogue, Islamic Da'wah, Islam as the religion of reason, meta religion principles, tolerance of Islam towards other faiths, *Din Al-Fitrah*, and Islamic humanism. Tawhid cause the most important bases for dialogue, he also suggested that Islamic Da'wah based upon the principles of the Glorious Qur'an will be effective force specially the principle of *Din Al-Fitrah*, Tawhid and phenomenon of Prophecy.

But having said all this he many times mentioned that the process of dialogues between Judaism versus Islam is non existence and the process of dialogue between Christianity and Islam is also not in a good condition.

3.6 THEORY OF RELIGIONS:

The theory of religions can be regarded as idea of acceptance of diversity of religions which do not absorb anything outside but presents the truth revealed by Almighty Allah for mankind. The universal nature of Islam can be understood if a rational person however takes a penetrating look into the revealed text of the Qur'an; the verses related to the creation. There are two significant bases for the theory of Religion or the idea of diversity of religions i.e.

Firstly: The Glorious Qur'an.

Secondly: The Sunnah.*

There were certain things in theory of religion which made it an institution to be followed. The principles can be viewed from these angles.

1. CONCEPT OF *DIN AL-FITRAH*:

Islam introduces the concept of *Din Al-Fitrah* to express its judgment that all men are endowed at birth by God with a religion that is true, genuine and valid for all time. According to Al-Faruqi all men are ontologically the creature of God, and all of them are equal in their creature as well as in their natural ability to recognize God and his law. Nobody may even be excused from not knowing God, his creator, for each and every one has been equipped at birth with the means required for such knowledge.²⁹¹

2. ISLAM THE TRUE RELIGION:

The theory of religions elaborates that it was the religion of Islam which was the religion of the all Prophet sent by Almighty Allah to the mankind. It was also called *Din-e-Haneef* or the Religion of Ibrahim (A.S).

According to Al-Faruqi Islam was not a new religion brought by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Arabia but it was reaffirmation of the message of Almighty Allah. The

²⁹¹ See Ataullah Siddiqui (ed) "Rights of Non Muslims under Islam" 280, 285

* See Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 40. and see also, Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 191

prophets of Judaism and Christianity were also Prophets of the same true religion 'Islam' sent by Almighty Allah as Almighty Allah confirms this in the Glorious Qur'an.

Allah has stated in his book:

"As for as religion is concerned, God has instituted for you the same religion which he had instituted for Noah, this and what has been revealed to you Mohammad being one. It is the same which we have revealed to Ibrahim, to Moses, to Jesus. Observe therefore the religion, and do not divide your self" ²⁹²

3. QUR'AN AS SOURCE OF PRINCIPLES IN THEORY OF RELIGIONS:

Qur'an is the ultimate religious authority. Muslims regards the Qur'an as God's own word verbatim, the final and definitive revelation of his will for all space and time, for all mankind. According to Al-Faruqi the only kind of contention possible for Muslim is that of exegetical variation but in this realm, the scope of variation is limited into two directions.²⁹³

Firstly: Continuity of Muslims practice throughout the centuries constitutes an irrefutable testament to the meanings attributed to the Qur'an verses.

Secondly: The Methodology of Muslims orthodoxy in exegesis rests on the principle that Arabic lexicography, grammar, and syntax, which have remained frozen and in perpetual use but the millions ever since their crystallization in the Qur'an, leave no contention without solution.²⁹⁴

According to Al-Faruqi these facts explain the universality with which the Qur'anic principles were understood and observed, despite the widest possible variety of ethnic cultures, languages, races and customs characterizing the Muslim world from morocco to Indonesia and from Russia and the Balkans to the heart of Africa.²⁹⁵

²⁹² See: The Glorious Qur'an, 42:13

²⁹³ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article: "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 40. See also, Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 191

²⁹⁴ *Ibid* 40

²⁹⁵ *Ibid* 40

As a true Muslims, Al-Faruqi not only established the theory of religions principles based upon the Qur'an for the understanding of different religions. The theory of religions is based upon the principles of Glorious Qur'an regarding the relationship and understanding of Islam to the variety of religions without having distinction of revealed and non revealed religions.

According to Al-Faruqi these principles of meta-Religion might not be acceptable for non-Muslims. Al-Faruqi suggested that they must know however, that Islam does not present its principles dogmatically, but it does so rationally, critically for those who believe or wish to believe exclusively. It comes to us, armed with logical and coherent arguments. Islam expects us to be rational.²⁹⁶

It will be noted that the main source for understanding the relationship of Islam with other religions is the Glorious Qur'an Al-Faruqi looked the relation of Islam with other religions in the light of Glorious Qur'an. The most important and significant point which can be noticed in the theory of religion is that the Glorious Qur'an is not for any specific nation, tribe or region but it is the final revelation of Almighty Allah's will, for all space and time and valid for all mankind.

John Hick is also aware that Qur'an is revelation of Allah as he states in one of his lecture at Tehran in inter-religions dialogue. He stated that "Islam and Christianity are both religions of the book, meaning the Holy Qur'an revealed through the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and the Holy Bible revealed through a number of different writers – both together with other holy scriptures being expressions of the heavenly Hidden book or preserved book referred to several times in the Qur'an."²⁹⁷

When we study the theory of religions we find one thing very constant and common throughout the theory from start till end and the Glorious Qur'an sets a proper basis for all the matters concerning the religion of Islam as one can see its plurality when it called

²⁹⁶ *Ibid* 40

²⁹⁷ See: John Hick, Article "Islam and Christianity", (This article is available at http://www.Johnhink.org.uk/article_12, the web address is searched using Google search site, which is www.google.com.)

the adherents of all the religions with wisdom, fair arguments and Hikmah as it is stated in the Glorious Qur'an:

"Call into the path of your Lord with wisdom and goodly counsel argue with them with the more comely arguments",²⁹⁸

4. PROPHET HOOD:

The phenomenon of Prophecy is universal according to Al-Faruqi it is very significant that it has taken place throughout all space and time.

As the Glorious Qur'an states:

"There are no people, but a Warner/Prophet has been sent to them".

The theory of Meta-Religion elaborates that Islam confirm the status of all the prophet and revelations, that's why it is a universal religion.

5. DIVERSITY OF RELIGIONS:

Theory of religions explains that there is a variety of religions in history. God has taken due account of each people. He has revealed to them all a message that is same in essence. God has conveyed to each one of them his law in a prescriptive from relevant to their particular conditions to their own grade of development on the human level. So now it is their own duty to understand what is right and what is wrong.

6. ISLAM'S RELATION TO THE RELIGIONS:

Islam is will of Allah in essence so the relation of Islam with the religions of the world is crystal clear. Secondly Islam is the natural religion because it was religion of all the prophets so it has deep relation with the world religions. It calls them to the final message of Allah i.e. Islam.

²⁹⁸ See: The Glorious Qur'an 16:125

This theory is the idea of accepting diversity of religions, which explains the relation of Islam to the world religions.

It can be viewed in this theory from the following angels.

- a) Islam and it's relation to Judaism and Christianity.
- b) It's relation to other religions.
- c) It's relation to all Humans.

7. THERE IS NO COERCION IN RELIGION:

The principle of Islam which shows its persuasion and shows the strength of Islam is not to force Islam to any one but prove it rationally and this principle is elaborated by the Glorious Qur'an. The Glorious Qur'an states:

“There is no coercion/compulsion in religion (Islam)”²⁹⁹

8. PROTECTION OF NON-MUSLIMS:

According to the religious principles the Islamic state guaranteed not only the safety of the lives of Muslims but also honor the Non-Muslims and protection of their religious beliefs, rituals, also the protection and maintenance of their personal laws institutions and endowments.³⁰⁰

9. SALVATION OF NON-MUSLIMS:

According to Al-Faruqi Islam has always accepted the possibility of salvation outside its borders it affirms the religious truth of Judaism and Christianity. Islam is unique for no religion in the world has yet made belief in the truth of other religions a necessary condition of its own faith.

²⁹⁹ The Glorious Qur'an; 2: 256

³⁰⁰ See: Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 199.

10. ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF REASON:

According to the theory of religion Islam is the religion of reason. It does not contradict with reason it do not ask to believe on religion dogmatically but it proves each and everything rationally.

3.7 ISLAMIC THEORY OF RELIGIONS:

The theory of religions can be divided into two phases.

1. First Phase : The Contemporary Phase
2. Second Phase: Manifestation of theory of religions in history

FIRST PHASE: THE CONTEMPORARY PHASE

The first phase of Islamic theory of religions deals with the issues of contemporary religions issues regarding the relation of Islam with the religions of world and this phase can be viewed from the flowing angles.

- According to Al-Faruqi how Islam and Muslims should treat with other religious traditions and faiths.
- How Islam Implement the idea of Islamic Humanism.
- This theory of religions have a clear vision which can meet the challenges of contemporary problems regarding the relation of Islam to other religions and how Islam establish a better sense about the understanding a religion.
- The theory of religions proves that Islam is the only true religion of the world present today.
- Islam not only confirms the semetic tradition with the religions of Judaism and Christianity but it also confirm the status of other religions and present this relation to all humans.
- Islam gives right to every human being to select the religion of his choice but it shows them a clear vision about Islam and it maintains their innate capacity to accept Islam.

ISLAM'S RELATION TO THE WORLD RELIGIONS:

Islam's relation to the religions of the World can be analyzed in three stages.

Stage A: It pertains to Judaism and Christianity.

Stage B: It pertains to the other religions.

Stage C: It pertains to all humans' weather they belong to any or no religion.³⁰¹

STAGE A: JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

According to Al-Faruqi Islam accords to these two religions special status. The acknowledgement of Islam regarding these two religions (Judaism and Christianity can be viewed from these angles).

- i. Each of them is the religion of God.
- ii. Their founders on earth Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, are the prophets of God.
- iii. Their revelation. The Torah, the Psalms, the Evangel (gospels) ... are from God.
- iv. According to Al-Faruqi Islam confirms them as religions of God, their prophet as Prophets of God, and their revelations from God are integral to the very faith of Islam to disbelieve in them, nay to discriminate among them is apostasy. Al-Faruqi explains these ideas in light of Glorious Qur'an. It states:

“Our Lord and your Lord is indeed God, the one and only God”.³⁰²

It will be suitable to add John Hicks views. In a chapter in disputed questions entitled “Jews, Christian,, Muslims: Do we all worship the same God? Hick evaluates that “all religions worship the same God and merely refer to him by different names”. Hick writes, and so it does not seem sufficient simply to say that the same identical God is being named and described differently”.³⁰³

³⁰¹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; “Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology” 41 and See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 191.

³⁰² See: The Glorious Qur'an 20:88

³⁰³ See: John Hick, “Disputed Questions in Theology and Philosophy of Religion” (New Haven, CoNN: Yale university Press 1993)153 and see also , Keith E. Johnson, article “John Hick's Pluralistic Hypothesis and the problem of conflicting Truth-claims”,(This article is available at <http://www.leaderu.com/wri/articles/hick.html>)

- v. According to Al-Faruqi God described his Prophet Muhammad and his followers as “believing in all that has been revealed from God, in His Angels, in His revelations and Prophets as not distinguishing among the Prophets of God.”³⁰⁴
- vi. Exclusivist Monopoly on Former Prophets: According to Al-Faruqi the Glorious Qur'an argues with Jews and Christians who object to this self identification and claim an exclusivist monopoly on former prophets.

The Glorious Qur'an says:

“You claim that Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and their tribes were Jews or Christians”.³⁰⁵

Al-Faruqi emphasized that “would the Christians and Jews claim knowledge in these matters superior to God and for this Al-Faruqi brings verses of Glorious Qur'an regarding this problem.

The Glorious Qur'an states:

“Say, [Muhammad], we believe in God, in what has been revealed to Abraham, Isma'il, Issae, Jacob, tribes, in what has been conveyed to Moses, to Jesus and all the Prophets from their Lord.” We revealed [our revelation] to you [Muhammad] as we did to Noah, and the Prophets after him to Abraham, Ishmael, Issae, Jacob, the tribes, to Jesus Job, Jonah, Aaron, Solomon, and David. “It is God indeed the living and eternal one, that revealed to you [Muhammad] the book [i.e. the Qur'an] confirming the previous revelations. For it is he who revealed the Torah and the Gospels and his guidance to mankind... who revealed the psalms to David.”³⁰⁶

- vii. Righteous People from Judaism, Christianity and Sabians will be rewarded: This idea of Righteous people from Judaism, Christianity and sabian will go to heaven according to a verse of Glorious Qur'an was discussed by many Muslim scholars of present and past this idea was strongly favored by Abu Hassan Al-Ammeri in

³⁰⁴ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; “Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology” 41, See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 190,191

³⁰⁵ See The Gloriouss Qur'an 20:88

³⁰⁶ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; “Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology” 41 See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, “The Cultural Atlas of Islam” 191

his book and in present time we find Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi discussing this idea by quoting the verse of Qur'an.

The Glorious Qur'an states:

"Those who have attained to faith [in this divine write] those who follow the Jewish (scripture), and the Sabians and the Christians... all those who believe in God and in the day of judgment, and have done good work... will receive their due reward from God, they have no cause to fear, nor shall they grieve".³⁰⁷

The salvation outside the borders of Islam is possible but in what circumstances can one be considered as a person who has received the call of Islam. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali argues that there are three conditions under which one can be considered as a person who has received the call. He maintains one can only be regarded as an unbeliever and therefore exempted from salvation.

- a) If one has heard the prophet's name and description in a manner such as the Muslim has received it (al-Ghazali says if some one is given inaccurate portrayal of the prophet as being a liar and deceitful, and believes so, he or she is not obliged to believe in the Prophet and therefore can be saved even though he or she did not believe him).
- b) If one has also seen miracle manifested in his regard and yet has deliberately refuse to consider and reflect on the issue.
- c) If one has suppressed a motive for enquiry that possibly could lead to truth in the matter, or the motive fear arose but was not pursued.³⁰⁸

viii. Islam's honor to Judaism and Christianity:

- a) According to Al-Faruqi the honor with which Islam regards Judaism and Christianity, their founders and scriptures is not courtesy but acknowledgement of religious truth. According to Al-Faruqi Islam is

³⁰⁷ The Glorious Qur'an 5:69

³⁰⁸ See: Muhammad Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, "Freedom and Fulfillment" 170, 172 Originally found in Adnan Aslan, "Religious Pluralism in Christian and Islamic Philosophy" 194

unique for no religion in the world has yet made belief in the truth of other religions a necessary condition of its faith and witness.³⁰⁹

But if this idea of Al-Faruqi which presents a pluralistic approach is compared to John Hicks idea of inclusivism*, it will be noticed that what is pluralism in view of Al-Faruqi becomes inclusivism in view of John Hick. According to John Hick there is an Islamic form of inclusivism. It can be said that the concept of the people of book could be regarded as a limited inclusivism with the full and final being in Islam.³¹⁰

It can be said that the ideas of John Hick are wrong and that can't be acknowledged right, yes he can be considered more rational among the contemporary western scholarship who had at some extent a better point of view but rational attitude is needed to understand that which religion is truth revealed and acceptable today, the conclusion will be only one religion Islam.

The brilliant idea of Islam according to Al-Faruqi will be the unsure what John Hick said. Al-Faruqi views that Islam sees Judaism and Christianity in the world not as "other views" which it has to tolerate but as standing *de jure* (equal) as truly revealed religion from God. Moreover, their legitimate status is neither sociopolitical nor cultural or civilization but religious.³¹¹

b) According to Al-Faruqi Islam confirms its self identification with the religions of Judaism and Christianity.³¹²

³⁰⁹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 42 See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 191,192 *Inclusivism; sees one religion as the fulfillment of other paths, the pluralistic paradigm has been characterized as one that claims that different religions provide an equally salvific path to one God. Exclusivism, on the other hand claims the authenticity of one religion as the salvic path to God. See: Adnan Aslan "Religious Pluralism in Christian and Islamic Philosophy" XI(Introduction)

³¹⁰ John Hick, the official website lecture: "Religious pluralism and Islam".
(This lecture was delivered to the institute for Islamic culture and thought, Tehran, in February 2005. Originally can be found www.johnhick.org.hick/article/11.html)

³¹¹ ³¹¹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 42 See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 193

³¹² *Ibid* 42

STAGE B: THE OTHER RELIGIONS:

The theory of Meta – Religion is theory of “Islamic Pluralism” but it must be noticed that it is not “pluralism” which accept and absorb in itself the norms and ethics of other religions but it is based upon the truth revealed by Almighty Allah. It will be noted that Islam is the truth revealed religion which was the religion of first ones and all the prophets of Islam and for this religion Almighty Allah sent many prophets in different nation, tribes and different times. Allah sent His last prophet on earth Muhammad (PHUH) and His final revelation to His last prophet and there were certain things which were discussed in the second stage of Meta-Religion theory which deals with the other religions present in the world.

There are some aspects discussed by Al-Faruqi about the other religion can be viewed from these angles.

i. The Phenomenon of Prophecy:

This is one of the major aspects of theory of religions, according to Al-Faruqi, Islam teaches that the phenomenon of prophecy is universal that it has taken place throughout all space and time.³¹³

a) Prophet for every Nation:

According to Al-Faruqi being absolutely just as well as merciful and forgiving God Islam holds, left no people without a prophet to teach them,³¹⁴ the divine law.

“The Qur'an asserts: there is no people but a Warner/Prophet has been sent to them”.³¹⁵

According to Al-Faruqi some of these prophets are widely known: others are not so neither the Jewish nor the Christian nor the Muslims ignorance of them implies the non existence.³¹⁶

³¹³ *Ibid* 44

³¹⁴ *Ibid*

³¹⁵ See: The Glorious Qur'an 25:24

The Qur'an States: "We have indeed sent prophets before you [Muhammad] about some of them we have informed you. About others we have not."³¹⁷

This also presents an approach that the whole of mankind, past and present, is capable of religious merit and felicity as well as demerit and damnation because of the universality of prophecy.³¹⁸

b) One and the same Message by all prophets:

This principle of Islam and meta-religious theory is perfect example of Islamic pluralism. According to Al-Faruqi the divine system is one of perfect justice. The phenomenon of prophecy needs be universally present but also its content must be absolutely the same. If different in each case, the universalism of the phenomenon would have little effect. Therefore, Islam teaches that the prophets of all times and places have taught one and the same message.³¹⁹

The Qur'an affirms:-

"We have sent to every people a messenger, to teach them that worship and service are due to God alone; that evil must be avoided (and the good pursued) "we have sent no messenger except to convey (the divine, message) in the tongue of his own people, to make it (the context) clearly comprehensible to them".³²⁰

c) Islam and other religions:

According to Al-Faruqi Islam thus lays the ground for a relation with all peoples, not only with Jews and Christians whose prophets are confirmed in the Qur'an. Having once been the recipients of revelation and of a revelation that is identical to that of Islam, the whole of mankind may be recognized by Muslims are equally

³¹⁶ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 44 See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 193

³¹⁷ Al-Qur'an 40:78, 4:163

³¹⁸ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 45

³¹⁹ *Ibid* 45

³²⁰ The Glorious Qur'an, 14:04

honored, as they are, by virtue of mankind may be recognized by Muslims as equally honored, as they are by virtue of revelation and also as equally responsible, as they are by virtue of revelation and also as equally responsible as they are to acknowledge God as the only God and to offer him worship, service, and obedience to his eternal laws.³²¹

ii. Religious diversity:

The main reasons of religious diversity are two:

- a) Islam holds that the messages of all prophets had but one essence and core composed of two elements. First is Tawhid or the acknowledgment that God alone is God and that all worship, service, and obedience are due to him alone. Second is morality which the Qur'an defines as service to God, doing well and avoiding evil.
- b) The second cause of religious diversity is human as we have seen the first is divine. To acknowledge and do the will of God the second human. To acknowledge and do the will of God. Conveyed through revelation.

First: Helping the poor.

Second: Favor of ordered social living i.e. obedience of the ruled to the law and self discipline.

Third: Man's relation with God.

Fourth: The need of discipline in humans.

Fifth: The content of revelation must not be changed.³²²

"The Prophet(PBUH) says that all people are as equal as the teeth of Comb. Islam does not discriminate on grounds of race, color, age, nationality, or physical traits. The

³²¹ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 45

³²² *Ibid* 46

Prophet(PBUH) declared; "you are all from Adam and Adam is from earth. O' servants of God, be brothers (and sisters)." Those who belong to certain families or ethnic group have no inherent right to rule others. Islam also upholds the following principles:

- Power lies in truth, a repudiation of the common idea that truth relies upon power.
- Justice and the rule of law are essential.
- Freedom of belief and right to life, personal property, reproduction and health (both mental and physical) can not be violated.
- The privacy and immunity of individual life must be maintained.
- No one can be convicted of a crime without evidence.
- An advisory system of administration is essential.”³²³

STAGE C- ISLAM'S RELATION TO ALL HUMANS:

The Relation of Islam to all humans can be discussed from these angles.

- i) Islamic humanism.
- ii) Vice gerency of God.
- iii) Reason of creation.
- iv) The purpose of nature.
- v) Revelation, will of God.
- vi) UR-Religion.
- vii) Islamic universalism.

i) **Islamic humanism:**

According to Al-Faruqi Islam has related itself, equally, to all other religions whether recognized, historical, or otherwise even to the a religionists or a non-Muslim this relation.³²⁴

ii) **Vice gerency of God or The Khilafa:**

³²³ See Mehran Kamrava (ed.), "The New Voices Of Islam: Reforming Politics and Modernity – A Reader", (Article by Fateh Ullah Galan, "A Comparative Approach To Islam and Democracy") 101.

³²⁴ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 47 , See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 193,194

The Qur'an reports "Allah offered the trust to heaven and earth and mountain. They refused to undertake it out of fear. But man did undertake it".

According to Al-Faruqi vice gerency on earth means man's transformation of creation ... including above all himself...in to the patterns of God. It means obedient fulfillment of his command, which includes all values, all ethical imperatives. He is the only creative through whom the higher part of the divine will can be realized in space and time.³²⁵

iii) Reason of Creation:

Reason d'etre of man, the divine purpose, the Qur'an asserts:
"And I have not created men and jinn except to worship/serve me".³²⁶

According to Al-Faruqi in order to enable man to fulfill his reason deter, God has created him capable, and in the best of forms. He has given him all the equipment necessary to achieve fulfillment of the divine imperatives.³²⁷

iv) The Purpose of Nature:

According to Al-Faruqi the purpose of the creation of universe or nature is to serve the man. In religious language, God has made nature subservient to man. God is God of every one and he does not stop his blessing if one is not a Muslim.³²⁸

v) Revelation, Will of God:

Religion of Islam invites all the human being. As Islam is a religion for every one, Qur'an, the final revelation of Allah is also for every one. The Qur'an calls not only Muslims but it calls all the humans. According to

³²⁵ *Ibid* 48

³²⁶ Al-Qur'an 51:56

³²⁷ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; 'Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology' 49, See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 193,194

³²⁸ *Ibid*

Al-Faruqi its purpose is to make man's knowledge and fulfillment of the divine will easier and more accessible.³²⁹

vi) Ur-Religion:

According to Al-Faruqi the true religion is innate a 'religio naturalis' with which all humans are equipped. Al-Faruqi calls it "primordial religion", the one and the only religion.

He believed that every one possesses it unless acculturation and indoctrination, misguidance, corruption, or dissuasion has taught him otherwise all men therefore possess a faculty, a birth sense a senses communist with which they can perceive God as God.³³⁰

vii) Islamic Universalism:

According to Al-Faruqi Islam entertains no idea of "the fall of man" no concept of "original sin". Man is innocent according to Islam. He is born with innocence and he is born with a thousand perfections with faculties of understanding and an innate sense with which to know God. Man is equal since it follows from their very existence from their creativeliness. This is the basis for Islamic universalism. He also discussed the idea of Islam concerning morality and piety man's career on earth no distinctions among humans, no divisions of them into race or nations, castes or classes. All men³³¹, Qur'an asserts are issued from a single pair, their division into peoples and tribes is for their identity as the Glorious Qur'an states:

"The Nobler among you is only the more righteous".³³²

The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) added in his last sermon: "No Arab may have any distinction over a non-Arab, no white over non-white, except in righteousness."³³³

³²⁹ *Ibid* 56

³³⁰ *Ibid* 50

³³¹ *Ibid* 51

³³² The Glorious Qur'an 49:13

SECOND PHASE: MANIFESTATION OF THEORY OF RELIGIONS IN HISTORY:

The theory of religions is not a new theory but it was a theory, which was established and practiced by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Infact it was not only a theory but it was the practice of Islam. This theory of religions can be viewed from these angels.

- i. Al-Faruqi presented the theory of religions, which is the truth, revealed by Almighty Allah in the shape of Islam describing Islam's relation to other religions.
- ii. The theory of religions is not a new theory of religion which elaborates the relation of Islam with the world religions but it was both established and practiced by Muhammad (PBUH) in history.
- iii. It can be said that the theory of religions is not human but a revealed theory in the shape of a religion i.e. Islam and how Islam treats the other religious communities present in the world.
- iv. The theory of religions was based upon the principles of Qur'an and practice of Muhammad (PBUH) in history.
- v. Theory of religions, the theory of religions based upon the principles of Qur'an and practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PHUH) and his four Khilafa can rightly be distinguished as the theory of Islamic diversity it was not pluralistic in the sense that its relation to the other religions but the plurality of its laws both politically and religiously while it called the adherents and custodians of other faiths with wisdom and Hikmah to consider rationally freely and critically under the roof of one true religion that is the one and only meta-religion.

³³³ See: Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi, Article; "Meta Religion, towards a critical World Theology" 51, See also Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi and Dr. Lois Lamya al-Faruqi, "The Cultural Atlas of Islam" 193,194

For example

“Coercion is forbidden in Islam” this thing was exemplified by the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) when some of the Christians who were not convinced by the prophet Muhammad (PBUH), were allowed to remain Christian and live freely in Muslim state as they wanted.³³⁴

vi. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) proclaimed the constitution (according to the revelation) of the first Islamic state. He brought together all inhabitants of Madina, its environs and promulgated with them the Islamic state and its constitution according to Al-Faruqi. This event was of capital importance for the relation of Islam to the other religions and of non-Muslims to Muslims of all times and places. Umar Ibn al Khattab the second caliph ordered that the date of promulgation of this constitution was so crucial for Islam as a world movement that it should be considered the beginning of Islamic history.³³⁵

vii. The Covenant of Madina:

According to it when the prophet settled in Madina, the prophet Muhammad formed a constitution whose guarantor was Allah, between the prophet, the Muslims and the Jews it abolished the tribal system of Arabia under which the Arab defined himself and by which society was governed. This covenant not only regulated the affairs of all the inhabitants of Madina but it could be considered the first example of the practice of this theory can be viewed from these angles:

First: The Arab was to be defined by Islam: his personal and social life was to be governed by Islamic law, the Shariah.

³³⁴ *Ibid* 54

³³⁵ *Ibid*

Second: The old tribal loyalties gave way to a new social bond that tied every Muslim to all other Muslims across tribal lines to form the ummah.

Third: The ummah is an organic body whose constituents mutually sustain and protect one another. Their personal, reciprocal, and collective responsibilities are all defined by law.

Fourth: The prophet was to be its chief political and Juristic authority and as long as he lived he exercised this power.

Fifth: The Khilafa exercised political authority, while juristic authority devolved exclusively upon the 'ulama' who had by then developed a methodology for interpretation, renewal and expansion of the Shariah.³³⁶

THE JEWISH UMMAH:

- i. Ummah of Jews: According to Al-Faruqi the Jews were also considered as ummah alongside the ummah of Muslims the life structured of Jews institutions was governed by Torah the juristic authority rested with the system or rabbinic courts.³³⁷
- ii. The covenant and Jews: The covenant was between the Jews and Muslims according to Al-Faruqi both parties were not allowed to conduct any relation with a foreign power to declare war or peace with any state. The Jews who entered into the covenant freely with the Prophet later betrayed it.³³⁸

³³⁶ *Ibid* 52

³³⁷ *Ibid*

³³⁸ *Ibid* 52

- iii. The Attitude of Muslims with Jews: The Jews betrayed the covenant and found guilty of conspiring against the Muslim nation but the attitude of Muslim ummah with the Jews was the same, the Muslims considered it as the work of man and individuals instead of Jewish ummah. The attitude of Muslim can be understood by the example which Al-Faruqi gave that when the Islamic state was expanded to include northern Arab Palestine, Jordan and Syria, Persia and Egypt, where numerous Jews lived. They were treated innocent constituents of the Jewish ummah within the Islamic state according to Al-Faruqi.³³⁹
- iv. Jews were free under Muslim rule: Al-Faruqi explains the covenant on Jewish life he stated: "For the first time in history since the Babylonian invasion 586 B.C, and as citizens of the Islamic state the Jew could model his life after Torah and do so legitimately, supported by the public laws of the state where he resided. For the first time, a non Jewish state put its executive power at the service of a rabbinic court. For the first time, the state-institution assumed responsibility for the maintenance of Jewishness, and declared it ready to use its power to defend the Jewishness of Jews against the enemies of Jewishness, be the Jews or non Jews."³⁴⁰
- v. Development of Jews: The principles of the theory of religions have played a vital role in maintaining Jewish identity in history. Al-Faruqi explains the importance of such Islamic rules for Jewish survival and development: After centuries of Greek, Roman and Byzantine (Christian) oppression and persecution, the Jews of the Near East, of North Africa of Spain, and Persia, looked upon the Islamic state as a liberator. Many of them readily helped its armies in their conquest and co-operated enthusiastically with the Islamic state administration. This co-operation was followed by acculturation into Arabic and Islamic

³³⁹ *Ibid* 53

³⁴⁰ *Ibid*

culture, which produced a dazzling blossoming of Jewish arts, letters, science, and medicine. It brought affluence and prestige to the Jewish, some of whom became ministers and advisors to the caliphs. Indeed Judaism and its Hebrew language developed their “golden age” under the aegis of Islam. Hebrew acquired its first grammar, the Torah its most highly developed jurisprudence, Hebrew letters their lyrical poetry; and Hebrew philosophy found its first Aristotelian, Musa Ibn Meymun (Maimonides), whose thirteen percepts, couched in Arabic first defined the Jewish creed and identity. Judaism developed its first mystical thinker as well, Ibn Gabirol, whose Sufi thought brought reconciliation and inner peace to Jews throughout Europe. Under Abd al-Rehman III in Cordoba, the Jewish prime minister, Hasdai Ben Shapirut, managed to effect reconciliation between Christian monarchs whom even the Catholic Church could not bring together. All this was possible because of one Islamic principle which it all rested namely, the recognition of the Torah as revelation and of Judaism as God’s religion which the Qur’an attested and proclaimed.³⁴¹

THE CHRISTIAN UMMAH:

viii. Delegation from Najran and Example of Islamic pluralism in history: There is a principle of Islamic pluralism that coercion is prohibited in Islam and there is no compulsion in religion it was exemplified by the prophet Muhammad (PBUH). According to Al-Faruqi shortly after the conquest of Makkah by Muslims forces in 8/630, the Christians of Najran in Yemen sent a delegation of chieftains to meet the prophet in Madina. The conquest of Makkah had made the Islamic state a power to reckon with in the region. The delegates were the guests of the Prophet and he received them in house and entertained them in his faith and cause. Some of them did and became instantly the members of Muslim Ummah. Others did not. They chose to remain Christians

³⁴¹*Ibid*

and to join the Islamic state as Christians. The prophet constituted the as a Christian ummah alongside the Jewish and Muslim ummah, within the Islamic state the prophet (PBUH) sent them one of his companions, Mu'adh Ibn Jabal, to represent the Islamic state in their midst. They converted to Islam in the period of the second caliph (2 – 14 A.H / 634 – 646 A.C).³⁴²

ix. The liberty of Christians:

The liberty of Christians in Islamic state was also a principle of theory of religions. According to Al-Faruqi the Christian ummah, in the west indeed, for the greater part of a century, the majority of the citizens of the Islamic polity were Christians, enjoying respect, liberty, and a new dignity they had not enjoyed under either Christian Rome or Byzantium. Both these powers were imperialist and racist and they tyrannized their subjects as they colonized the territories of the near East. An objective account of the conversions of the Christians of the near East to Islam should be required reading for all especially for those still laboring under the crusades old prejudice that Islam was spread among Christians by the sword. Christians lived in peace and prospered under Islam for centuries, during which time the Islamic state saw righteous as well as tyrannical sultans and caliphs had it been part of Islamic sentiment to do away with the Christian presence, it could have been done without a ripple in the world or history. But it was Islam's respect for and acknowledgement of Jesus as prophet of God and of his Evangel (Gospel) as revelation that safeguarded that presence.³⁴³

³⁴² *Ibid* 54

³⁴³ *Ibid* 55

UMMAH OF OTHER RELIGIONS:

The manifestation of the theory of religions can be understood if one examines the relation of Islam with other religions in history. One can say that the relation of Islam with the semetic faiths was due to Islam's unity with them but when one looks at the situation with clear heart and open eyes, then he can understand the reality that Islam is presenting the theory of religions based upon the rules and principle of the Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah exemplified by the prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

i. Recognition of Zoroastrians:

The recognition of Zoroastrians as another ummah by the prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was also another example of practice of theory which was called by Al-Faruqi theory of religions in history. According to Al-Faruqi "very soon afterward, the Islamic state conquered Persia and included all its millions within its citizenry. Those who converted to Islam joined the ummah of Muslims and the millions of other who those to remain Zoroastrian were accorded the same privileges and duties accorded by the constitution to the Jews. They were extended to apply to the Zoroastrians in 14 / 636, following the conquest of Persia. Notable among the Persian Zoroastrians in Arabia was Salman al Farsi, who converted to Islam before the Hijrah and became one of the illustrious companions of the Prophet.³⁴⁴

ii. Buddhism and Hinduism:

According to Al-Faruqi following the conquest of India by Muhammad bin Qasim in 91/711, the Muslims faced new religions Buddhism and Hinduism co-existed in Sindh and Punjab.³⁴⁵

Jizya: The term of "jizya" can be rightly regarded as an example of the theory of religions in history. "The caliph called a council of Ulama and asked them to render judgment on the basis of governor report. The

³⁴⁴ Ibid

³⁴⁵ Ibid

judgment was that as long as Hindus and Buddhists did no fight the Islamic state, as long as they paid the jizya or tax due. They must be free to worship their Gods as they please to maintain their temples, and to determine their lives by the precepts of their faith thus, the same status as that of the Jews and Christians was accorded to them".³⁴⁶

“DHIMMAH”:

The Islamic Shariah is known as the millah or millet system which means “religious communities” or the Dhimmah or Zimmi system meaning the covenant of peace (whose Dhimmah or guarantor is God).³⁴⁷

The term al-Dhimmah also explains the attitude of Islam and a principle of Islamic theory of religions, which defined the status of Jews and Christians were considered an equal status with Muslims in religious, economic and administrative domains in turn they were asked to pay jizya or due tax although dhimmah was started for Christians and Jews, it was also applied to Zoroastrians when Persia was conquered and to Hindus and Buddhists when the India was conquered.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid*

³⁴⁷ *Ibid* 56

3.8 COMPARISON OF ‘RELIGIOUS PLURALISM’ ACCORDING TO JOHN HICK AND THEORY OF RELIGIONS ACCORDING TO AL-FARUQI

The thought of John Hick about religious pluralism is very important and significant because his views about the “Religious pluralism” are very close to the idea of “Religion naturally”, Ur-Religion or *Din Al-Fitrah* of Isma’il Raji Al-Faruqi so it is very important to discuss his views about “Religions pluralism” and his perception of Islam.

- “John Hick’s views about ‘religious pluralism’ and John Hick’s perception of Islam”.

1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RELIGIONS:

John Hick ideas about the relationship between the religions are based upon his own perceptions and one can easily judge that he is a pessimist while writing about a very important issue between the religions. The major difference between John Hick’s views about “Religions pluralism” and Isma’il Raji Al-Faruqi views is that whatever he says that is his own perception and human intellect. But what Al-Faruqi presents is not his own perception but it is the perception of the religion of Islam. Secondly John Hick seems to be confused at times without having solid examples but Al-Faruqi is very confident because he had strong examples from the Glorious Qur’an and the Sunnah.

- i. John Hick is very confused while viewing about the relationship between the religions and he is afraid that it will lead to war and exploitation than anything else he states:

“The subject of relationship between the religions is extremely important, even more so today than in the past. For centuries almost every war between the nations has involved religion not as its primary cause, but as a validating and intensifying factor. It will emerge that some conceptions of

this relationship are much more easily exploited to justify and encourage war and exploitation.³⁴⁸

- ii. As we are well aware that mainly John Hick is considered a philosopher so he takes the problem of relationship between the religions as a philosophical problem? He stated.

“Why is this philosophical problem? Each religion is accustomed to think itself as either the one and only true faith, or at least the truest and best. Must not the situation, then, simply be that one of them is right and the rest wrong, either absolutely or only relatively wrong”³⁴⁹.

There are certain things to be noted:

Firstly: a rational person knows that if a person believes or belongs to a faith or religion then it must be at least in his view the best and truest religion or more valid than the other religions exist.

Secondly: Al-Faruqi was aware that Islam is a true and only meta – religion with solid examples. Not only examples from the Glorious Qur'an and Sunnah but the examples which Islam set are rational and historically proven that Islam is the true religion of Almighty Allah. The thing which makes it different from other faiths is that it confirms its relationship with other religions on the basis of *Din- Al Fitrah*. Islam does not reject the status of any faith or religion being as it possesses it but Islamic theory of religions theory confirms that all these faiths have a strong link with the religion of Islam. This is the only reason Islam gives every religion the maximum of being a religion and doubt about any religion or move them that about a faith or religion.

³⁴⁸ See: John Hick, “Religions Pluralism and Islam”(This lecture was delivered to the Institute for Islamic Culture and Thought, Tehran in February 2005. Originally found at www.Johnhick.org.uk article 11),01

³⁴⁹ *Ibid*

2. THE RELIGION TO WHICH A PERSON ADHERES DEPENDS ON WHERE THEY WERE BORN VS DIN- AL FITRAH ACCORDING TO AL-FARUQI (ISLAM):

While reading about the view of John Hick “the Religion to which a person adhere depends on where they were born is a geographical concept that you will belong to a religion where you are born but the theory of *Din Al-Fitrah* according to Al-Faruqi is a belief that all the people have ability to recognize God.

According to John Hick, Someone born into a Muslim family in a Muslim country, or indeed a Muslim in a non-Muslim country is very likely to become a Muslim. Someone born into a Christian family is equally likely to become a Christian and the same is true of Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Taoists. It is very Unlikely that someone born into a Muslim family in Iran or in Pakistan will grow up as a Christian or a Buddhist and so on round the world. The historical fact is that we inherit and always have inherited our religion together with our language and our culture and the religion which has formed us from childhood naturally seems to us to be obviously true; it fits us and we fit it as usually none other can. It is true that there are individual conversions from one faith to another but these are statistically insignificant in comparison with the massive transmission of faith from generation to generation with in the same tradition”.³⁵⁰

After reading the view of Hick one can easily point out that John Hick might be influenced by the theory of *Din Al-Fitrah* when it speaks for “humanism”. According to it every person born with one instinct to understand the primordial religion of man i.e. Islam. But some times the circumstances and some times environment of person do not allow him to accept it some times his parents force him to become a Jew, Christian or any other. According to Al-Faruqi a human always have the ability to accept the Religion of Islam. So the theory of religions is an institution which has not only diversity of religious laws but it has covered all the spheres of life. The religion of Islam always calls and invites the adherents and custodians of other religions to the one and only true religion of Islam.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid* 01

3. RELIGIONS PLURALISM AND SALVATION:

According to John Hick: "Religious pluralism in its broadest terms, this is the belief that no one religion has a monopoly of the truth that leads to salvation or in the more poetic words of the great Sufi, Rumi, speaking of the religions of the world, the lamp are different but the light is the same, it comes from beyond"*.³⁵¹

But when we compare it with the theory of religions of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi we find that Islam is the religion par excellence. Islam is proved rationally, and Islam is the only true religion on earth. There were many aspects of it which had been discussed in the theory of religions but the point here to be noted is that John Hick is describing the religious pluralism in the term that there is no one true faith" which is contradictory itself because one must believe that his faith is the true faith of Almighty Allah if it is proven rationally.

Secondly, he is of the view that there is no one religion which leads to salvation but Islam, according to the theory of religions is the religion which not only confirms that salvation within the Islam. Some cases confirm the salvation of Jews, Christians and Sabians, who were on the right path and they will be rewarded for that it means that they will attain salvation. John Hick's view shows his philosophical understanding, but the view of Al-Faruqi is faith based.

Thirdly, the Rumi is a Muslim poet if John Hick is inspired by his poetry then it does not mean that he understand his poetry. It can be said that his poetry is that all the religions of the world leads to one final end that is the religion of Islam. In every lamp there is light of belief in God or in the Religion of God.

³⁵¹ *Ibid* 05

* Rumi: Poet and Mystic Trans R.A Nicholson London and Boston University, John Hick, "Religions Pluralism and Islam" (This lecture was delivered to the Institute for Islamic Culture and Thought, Tehran in February 2005. Originally found at www.Johnhick.org.uk article 11) 166

4. JOHN HICK'S VIEWS ABOUT GOD IN ALL RELIGIONS:

Although Hick remained theologically conservative for many years he became increasingly troubled by the implications of his Christian theology for other religions in 1967 he moved to Birmingham England to teach philosophy at the University of Birmingham had large Muslim, Sikh and Hindu communities. As Hick met Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, as well as attend services at their places of worship, his thinking began to change. Reflecting that time in his life, Hick later wrote,

“And occasionally attending worship in mosque and synagogue, temple and Gurdwara, the same kind of thing is taking place in them as in a Christian church ... namely, human beings opening their minds to a higher divine Reality, known as personal and good and as demanding righteousness and love between man and man”.³⁵²

Coming to the last point it is more evident that the theory of ‘religious pluralism’ according to John Hick have some kind of similarity or hidden influence of the theory of religions in the sense that Hick considered that all the people of faiths worship the one divine Authority it is acknowledgment of true religion of Islam. Islam calls all religions to the true religion of God.

5. JOHN HICK PERCEPTION OF ISLAM:

The mysticism of Islam was more inspiring thing for John Hick other wise his formal study of Islam was limited. He was inspired by Rumi and other Sufis who in his view propagated a form of pluralism in Islam. He was of the view that:

“When compared with Christianity and Judaism, Islam might have a better pluralistic attitude but it cannot be fully integrated into a pluralistic framework for two reasons. Firstly, according to Hick Islam has not yet developed in a manner that enables it to accommodate the norm of modern culture and ecumenical outlook, as Christianity has. Islam has not yet created a need for adopting secular norms to Muslim society. Nevertheless, one thing is certain the unfolding or

³⁵² See: Keith E. Johnson, article “John Hick’s Pluralistic Hypothesis and the problem of conflicting Truth-claims”, (This article is available at www.leaderu.com/wri/articles/hick)

growth of Islam in the twenty first century will not produce the same Islam in the medieval period. Secondly the Qur'anic revelation portrays itself as the fulfillment of all previous revelations, and therefore demands a unique status".³⁵³

It can be analyzed as below:

- i. A change or tendency to change a right thing into wrong is not a matter of development as said by John Hick.
- ii. Hick is not rational in his opinion because accommodating any religious norm into a religion means "religious pluralism: to Hick but it means that some day that pluralistic point of view which do not have original basis will be a reason of collapse of that religion, with its accommodating norms, will be a new religion without any real religious base.
- iii. The thing which is development to accommodating norms from outside are infact distortion and corruptions made by the followers and custodians of Christianity and Islam is not a religion to be changed or influence by humans. It is the final revealed religion of God and it is not in the hand of any human to change it. It is preserved in the Glorious Qur'an and Sunnah and will be remained same as it was revealed to prophet Muhammad (PBUH). No one can change it or harm it because Allah promised that he is protector of Islam.
- iv. Yes, the Qur'anic revelations are fulfillment of all previous revelations and it confirms the revelations before Islam and it calls the custodians of other faiths to the only faith of God.

³⁵³ See: John Hick, "The Metaphor of God Incarnate" (London, SCM Press 1993) 87 and see also John Hick article "Religions Pluralism and Islam" (This lecture was delivered to the Institute for Islamic Culture and Thought, Tehran in February 2005. This article is available at www.Johnhick.org.uk article 11) 01

3.9 EVALUATION OF DIALOGUE AND THEORY OF RELIGIONS:

Al-Faruqi believed that in this age, the Hanifi tradition religions particularly have to learn how to deal with each other religions with greater tolerance than they display at the present.

This seems to be needed because there are certain elements in the dialogue in contemporary times which are liable to hurt and obstacle the process of dialogue.

Al-Faruqi was a man who tried to bring change from grass root level. So he called the semetic religions to dialogue. I believe that Islam is better than other faiths in many respects but it is of great value for Muslims to seriously engage in dialogue as in contemporary times Islam is in the midst of a great change and in order to build up a strong Muslim Ummah it is imperative to address the issues concerning the dialogue with the people of Book how should deal with human being of other faiths or with people who have no faith at all like the great thinker Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi suggested and did with the real spirit of Islam.

Al-Faruqi was one of the few Muslims in contemporary age who took pains to write extensively about religions and dialogue between the religions in general and his writings provide the reader not only as a Muslim's perspective but as rational approach to the study of religions.

Al-Faruqi used much tolerate attitude, as it assumes certain interpretations of Qur'an to be definitive and valid for all times and places. I believe that dialogue with other religions is a characteristic of the contemporary times. The stress of Islam on one true faith or religion is more than ever.

The Muslims in the western countries are truly in great need of studies, such as work of Al-Faruqi that would help them to construct the role they should play as they have direct interaction with both Jewish and Christian people.

Al-Faruqi understood the religion of Christianity to be corruption of original teachings of Jesus, which was instead preserved faithfully by Islam in the teachings of Glorious Qur'an. He believed that Christians have hindered the constructive dialogue between the religion of Islam and Christianity through their involvement in mission and orientalism. His primary basis for academic dialogue was reason yet this actually led to an affirmation of Islam as the truth revealed by Almighty Allah.

THEORY OF RELIGIONS

Isma'il Rage Al-Faruqi rightly understood the call of Islam regarding the religions of the world to the only true religion which is primordial base of all religions. He articulated the theory of religions. The most significant thing about this theory was that it relied heavily upon the teachings of the Glorious Qur'an regarding Islam's attitude towards the other religions of the world and with their custodian. Al-Faruqi tried to implement this theory at every level to convince the custodians of all faiths by dialogue methodology based upon the principles of Islam (Qur'an). He also proved that this theory has divine origin and it was not a new theory introduced by him but he brought the manifestation of this theory in history which was practice by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The main stress of the theory can be described in the following points.

- i. Islam is the only true religion of Almighty Allah which is innate (*Fitrah*) in human beings and it gives human being the ability to recognize God as God.
- ii. Islam confirms the universality of revelation and prophethood as well in all the time, places and to every tribe and nation so it confirms the notion of diversity of religion.
- iii. Islam identified its divine status with the religions of Judaism and Christianity. Islam acknowledge their religion as true religions of God, their religious books as revelations from God, their prophets as prophets of God but having acknowledged the religious truth. Islam is aware that the

custodians of those religions have changed their religious beliefs distorted, corrupted and misinterpreted their sacred books for their selfish desires and wishes today they are not on the right way and their religious situation may led them to the avenues of “secularism” so it is theory of ‘meta-religion’ which calls them, as suggested by the Qur'an on the common bases between these religions to the only one and true religion of the world. It is more important that no religion of the world has yet acknowledged the religious truth of other religions.

- iv. Islam is the religion of truth and there is no coercion in the religion of Islam. As directed by the Glorious Qur'an and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his rightly guided four Caliphs of Islam. The first example comes from the time of Prophet Muhammad who preached Islam to the delegation of Christians of Najran, those who accepted Islam became the part of Islamic Ummah and those who remained Christians were allowed to live freely in the Islamic state and Islam established them as another Ummah alongside the Ummah of Muslims and after Jews who were already considered as an Ummah by the rules of treaty or constitution of Madina.

The second example comes from the caliphs of Islam when Persia and India were conquered by the Muslims. The Ulama decided to recognize them as other Ummah alongside the Ummah of Islam. So they were also allowed to live freely according to their religions.

- v. This theory rejected the false concept of original sin and fall and considered that man is innocent. This theory presented the idea of salvation of non-Muslims i.e. Jews, Christians and Sabians etc. and the last point is the theory can be regarded as theory of religions based upon the principles of Glorious Qur'an, not like the western “Religions pluralism” which according to John Hick “Have the ability to absorb the norms and ethics of the other religions” and as I have pointed out in the chapter that this kind of religions pluralism will led that religions to the avenues of secularism, having not a single

quality and original norm of religion due to the absorbing capacity for the so called religious pluralism.

- vi. The scheme of Islam is basically universal. As humans are created into many tribes, races and nations. They speak many languages, and they are of many colors and that is to get know each other (49 verse's and 30:4 22). The Shariah is very accommodating and gives only a principle outline and leave the matters of details on scholars.
- vii. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sympathetic in his attitude and behavior towards the non-Muslims. The essential teaching of Islam is Tawhid, unity of Allah, Allah is a One and there is no partner of Him (17: verse 111). This perception of Islam has direct bearing to the life and activities of Muslims.
- viii. The Glorious Qur'an played and continues to play a major role in Muslims conscience and social system. The Qur'an shapes the Muslim out look. The Muslim community is therefore by and large tolerant and pluralistic.
- ix. The universalistic nature of Islam can be understood from the fact that Muslims are permitted to eat the food of Jews and Christians. The Muslim bridegroom can marry Christian and Jew bride without conversion.
- x. For both Judaism and Christianity custodians were free and it is truth that they nourished and developed rapidly, can be regarded their golden age under the Islamic rule. The Christian rule always suppressed and had cruel attitude with the custodians of Judaism and Islam.
- xi. The custodians of all religions should identify the reason of tension and conflict between all the religions and sincerely work to eliminate the existing bitterness among the religions. They should admire peace, hope and reasonability instead of hatred, hopelessness and dogmatic. So they can get a very better guidance and solution for their salvation in this and in the next

world. All religions should promote the humanism and the belief that God is God of every one and he is alone. So there is only one religion accordingly which they follow and thus they can attain the prosperity and peace for this they should be sincere for a healthy exchange of ideas for dialogue between the religions based upon reason and rationality. This calls for the construction of a new world order when different religions could live peacefully without resorting to war, enmity and mutual destruction of ethics.

CONCLUSION

Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi not only understood the religion of Islam but he sharply elaborated the spirit of Islam, he was convinced that the religion of Islam sought to convince humans of its truth and to recruit them for its fellowship. The essence of religions experience being what it is, Islam entertained the greatest plan ever, namely to convert the whole of humanity and to mobilize them for the achievement of justice, truth, well-being, saintliness and beauty. Islam does not discriminate between people except of their virtue, their righteousness, and their piety and that Islam sees the divine imperatives as touching every range of human activity and concern that everything is relevant to religion, no just the rituals of worship or sacraments. The story of Islam is common place in the history of religions. Practically every religion has had a similar beginning. The majority religion seeks to safeguard itself by preventing other religious movements to grow in its midst whenever there happen to be minorities, the majority culture or ethnicity tries hard to absorb them and when it fails; it resorts to Tyranny and coercion. It is a sign of health and validity for majority to seek to expand itself and absorb the minority practically all the religions of the world are guilty in this respect. All except Islam that is why Islam is superior to the world religions. Islam has a unique mission of Da'wah to all humans to the only religions of God secondly unique theory of other faiths that they are also revealed religions and unique theory of other religions how to treat the custodians of other religions.

1. My over all impression of Al-Faruqi's work as a religious scholar, comparativist is a positive one. His way of analyzing, arguing, criticizing other religions with a soft tone based upon reason particularly in his writings is enlightening in this age, he was convinced that the Semitic tradition religions particularly have to learn how to deal with each other religions with greater tolerance than they display at the present. It becomes clear from the study of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi study of world religions, that the Muslim contemporary historian of religions has seriously involved themselves to the issues of religious truth, religious diversity, religiously, intellectually and rationally. Al-Faruqi was the best among the contemporary Muslim religious scholars who were convinced of methodological relevant principles of Islam, namely, the unity of truth, the unity of knowledge, the unity of humanity; he

did no brush aside the fact that there existed a diversity of religions and variety of world views. Besides all this intellectual activity Al-Faruqi was also convinced that religions are the centre and core of any culture. He was well aware that the human hand always corrupted the religions of past particularly Judaism and Christianity but he was convinced that Islam is complete religions in every sense because Almighty Allah took the responsibility of the religion of Islam. This is true to the extent that the orientalist, who shows the most enmity and arrogance towards the religion for Islam are also convinced and they acknowledged that the Glorious Qur'an is the same and untouched by any kind of change in it.

2. Al-Faruqi believed in the unity of truth, unity of knowledge and unity of humanity. He was convinced that the methodology in any branch of knowledge must be based upon reason. The governing principle in Islam's description of other religions should be reason. He was of the view that the superiority of Islam to the other religions of the world is because of commonsense perception, reason, critical analysis, must all are basic pursuit of knowledge in Islam and they cannot be challenged at any level because they do not contradict a single religious belief in Islam. Al-Faruqi was convinced that there should be some links between the proceeding problem, not only on religious basis but it should also be confirmed by the reason and science specially in the field of history of religions hence, objective study is needed to interpret the truth and justice in all kind of circumstances. If something is right then it should be confirmed and if there are some kind of errors in observation or examination in the description and reportage they must be viewed critically and must be changed according to the evidence.
3. Al-Faruqi was convinced that the truth is one and that "truth" is one of the names of Allah 'Al-Haq' so it is evident that there must be one true religion. He was determined to see that unity is established as the ultimate criterion of the religious diversity. He believed that there was one true religion which was innate *Din Al-Fitrah* in all human beings. It was the capacity to recognize God

as God. His determination to seek and let other understand the truth of religious tradition (Islam) led him to the avenues of one 'Meta-religion' i.e. Islam, the primordial base of all the religions of the world. For him Islam, only true religions of Allah does not reject the possibility of truth hidden in their religious books or in teaching and practices Al-Faruqi was determined to show that Islam is the only meta-religion (the truth revealed) which was the religion of all the prophets sent by God in different times, different places and to the different tribes and nations. He was convinced that as the custodians of all religions were recipient of the only one true religion so they had the ability to understand the truth. He was on the view that Islam identified the Semitic religions as true religions their prophets as prophets of Islam, their scriptures as revealed from the one and only Creator and Lord of the universe invited them on these bases by using the methodology of Da'wah described by the Almighty Allah in the Glorious Qur'an. He was also convinced that there is no contradiction in reason and revelation in Islam but the reasons confirms the authenticity of revelation.

4. Al-Faruqi was not only convinced that the religions of Judaism and Christianity are the corrupt form of religion by the human hand. He has taken account of the concept of past and contemporary in these two religious traditions and he provided enough material and evidence from their own scriptures and theology to reject them as they claim to be the only true faiths of God. Hence, after doing the analysis, criticism, unveiling their dogmatic illogical beliefs, and the major corruptions in the beliefs regarding the teachings of their prophets, the concept of God and gods, their distortion in religious Books, their secular mentality. Al-Faruqi invites them to dialogue on the common basis between the religions. He analyzed the obstacle from their side but he engaged himself in dialogue with the leading scholars of their traditions both Christianity and Judaism. From the Jewish side he mentioned many obstacles, which include Zionist, the state of Israel, Jews elected nation and the most important thing is the attitude of Judaism towards Islam and Muslim was always based on arrogance and hatred. The most significant thing

in Al-Faruqi's study was to explore that the Christian mind was always working against the Muslims. They planted the seed of Zionism in Judaism in order to use their enmity against Islam and Muslim. This idea can not be taken as it is. Qura'an described the enmity and arrogance of Jews against Muslims, and also described the love and mercy of Christians towards Muslims. And as its known that Qura'an is valid and true, so it can be concluded that he was against the Christians in USA. That may be due to some personal problems he faced there. Zionism was not something new but it can be called a more developed and modern shape of colonialism. Al-Faruqi mentioned many obstacles from the side of Christianity and those include "Christian mission and colonialism", their beliefs and "orientalism". Al-Faruqi was of the view that through dialogue between the custodians of the revealed religions, the truth can be arrived at. In this respect, Al-Faruqi closely followed the directives of the Glorious Qur'an as to how to approach other religions both for dialogue and Da'wah.

5. In his examination for the claims of different religions Al-Faruqi relied heavily on the Glorious Qur'an and he brought examples from their sacred books. That they have both kind of teaching. Some of them are true and some others are false which shows that they were corrupted by their custodians. He refuted the claims of Jews regarding many gods anthropomorphism and ethnocentrism (Jews elected nation) and their beliefs about the sins of prophets and their denial of the Day of Judgment. Al-Faruqi mentioned the behavior of Jews was not based on past experience nor on scriptural grounds but it is rather based on self contradiction, arrogance and blind following of the ancestral tradition. Al-Faruqi refuted the beliefs of Christians; he refused the concept of divinity of Christ, Idea of trinity original sin, redemption etc. Al-Faruqi believed that the development of Christianity and its contemporary religious beliefs to be corruption in teaching of Jesus (who was the only true Christian) which was instead preserved faithfully by Islam in the Glorious Qur'an.

6. For Al-Faruqi the theory of religions posses a salvific value for all humans. The theory of religions in more comprehensive sense, it is acceptance of diversity of religions in Islam. The theory of religions reflects its relation to the religions. Al-Faruqi was convinced that Islam is the only true religion of Almighty Allah. The theory of religions does not reject any religion and he was of the view that all the religions are revealed until it is proved historically that the religion is man made. This idea can not be taken as it is because most of the religions have belief in more than one God or in non. So it is impossible to call all the religions revealed by God. Al-Faruqi believed that the diversity of religions shows that all the religions are revealed religion. Al-Faruqi confirms the universality of revelation, prophecy and invites all the religions of the world to the only true religion of Islam. He believed that there is no compulsion in religion. Al-Faruqi acknowledges that all humans have been born with innate *Al-Fitrah* to recognize God. Al-Faruqi not only present the theory of religions but he also brought example from history presented the manifestation of this theory in history exemplified by prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his rightly guided four caliphs. Islam not only identified the religions of Judaism and Christianity but it also recognized the religions of Zoroastrians. All of those who accepted became the part of Muslim Ummah and those who did not accept Islam were also recognized as another Ummah other than Muslim Ummah like the Jewish Ummah, Christian Ummah etc.

7. Al-Faruqi was of the view that no communication of any sort may be made beyond critique, no man may speak with silencing authority. According to him dialogue is a two way affair – “freedom to be convinced as well as to convince of the truth”. Al-Faruqi produced outstanding, excellent and exemplary academic work. He was a scholar, who during his lifetime had made profound and invaluable contributions not only to Islamic scholarship but to learning as a whole. The themes and conceptual ideas he articulated deserve academic research by student of comparative religions i.e. Theory of “Din al - Fitrah”, Da’wah, relation of Islam with other faiths etc.

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GLOSSARY

Abrahamic Faith: term used to describe the three semetic(divine) religions, namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Al-Dhimmah: The Jew and Christian were considered an equal status with Muslims and religious economic and administrative domains in turn they were to asked to pay Jizya or due tax.

Christ: The “Messiah”, who is agent of salvation.

Christian Mission: The mission of Christianity, to spread the Christian religion in the world.

Colonialism: A Christian plain of materialism i.e the land and sources of the people all over the world.

Da'wah: Is base is the Islamic ascertain that monotheism is in the fitrah of all human.

Datum: materials or data of history of religions is called datum.

Din-al-Fitrah: Monotheism or primordial truth, according to the teachings of Islam every human have an inborn capacity to accept the religion of Islam. Islam is the true, genuine and valid religion for all time.

Eucharist: ‘Thanksgiving’, The act of worship as instituted by Christ the night before his death, involving sharing bread and wine to symbolize sharing in Christ's life.

Ghettos: The walled parts of the cities in which the Jews of medieval Europe were forced to live. Today it is used the poorer areas in the city where a particular people are concentrated.

Hanif: term used to describe follower of a true religion.

IIIT: International Institute of Islamic Thought founded by Ism'ail Raji Al-Faruqi.

Incarnation: Christian doctrine which describes that God became human in Jesus Christ.

Meta-Religion: The only true religion that is Islam. Islam is the religion for all time and space.

Orientalism: The Christian who study Islam in order to misinterpret it. It is also related to the study of the people or country of orient.

“Religionswissenschaft”: *Scientific study of the religion and it is also the most popular* of the study of religion.

Rabbi: A teacher of traditional Torah. Today it means the religious leader who conducts the services at religious ceremonials, such as weddings and funerals etc.

Reform Judaism: the movement that arose in Germany in the early 1800's. It introduce reforms (changes) in Jewish beliefs and practices.

Tawhid: The essence of Islam is Tawhid.

Trinity: God as three in one, as Father, as Son and Holy Spirit: being three person in one being.

UR-Religion: term used to describe the innate religion of mankind *Din-Al-Fitrah*, Islam.

Vice gerency of God or the Khilafa: Islam pictures the life humans as a free competition among them for doing the better, the nobler and the greater deeds. On this account, it called the individual a Khilafa, or vice gerent (deputy of God) that is one who acts on behalf of God.

Zionism: it is basically secular movement which started in 19th century under the influence of nationalism.

