

2. A real change of heart is required in the urge of dominance of one civilization over the other. The imperial hubris supported by the belief that a particular religion or civilization has exclusive rights to truth has clogged a real dialogue between the east and the west. Both Islam and the West have to make room for each other, and for all others, to believe that they are in possession of the right path to salvation.
3. The most plausible and workable solution to the problem of value discourse is provided by the philosopher of enlightenment, Immanuel Kant who offers a formal structure which can cope with the diversity of moral values specific to various cultures. Instead of providing a list of values, he shows how value games can be played by providing rules of the game. The rules are neither culture specific nor irrational. They provide enough space for a dialogical and rational interaction to take place between religions and civilizations.

and civilizations.

طالبان خراب رائیٹنگ سے پریشان کیوں

اس غلطی عظیم کو آگئی نہ آؤ
حرف و معنی کی روشنی میں آؤ

نہال کرنا ہونے جو خطاطی کا
ذرا اچھا شکر کب لکھتی ہیں آؤ

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unless all metaphysics is thrown out of the window by declaring it as antirational. In any case, so long as we are dealing with abstract ideas of value and God, both of them can be a part of a consistent rational system. Neither Islam nor the West is averse to the idea of God. The difference occurs in the role that He plays in the affairs of the world. Here a compromise can only be reached by admitting that talk about God's role in the world belongs to a universe of discourse different from the discourse of science where natural laws govern the world. Scientific propositions have their own rules of validity and adding God's name to a scientific proposition is redundant and a category mistake, i.e. mixing concepts of one category to the concepts of another. That it, in some sense, involves a violation of rules of logic is true. But rules of Aristotelian logic are not the ultimate rules for all types of reasoning.

A scientist can live at peace with his faith, as well as his science, with the understanding that "God plays a role in natural sciences" is a statement that does not belong to the universe of scientific discourse. The West can cope with this multidimensional logic. The situation is more difficult with Islam, but here also it is not the scientific universe of discourse which is at stake because Islamic doctrine does not advocate continuous intervention of God in natural phenomena. Divine interventions are a part of religious history common to Islam and the West. The difficulty arises as a result of making particular societal directives and interventions in the revealed scripture, or otherwise, during the life time of the Prophet, as eternal and universal in nature. Here the Muslim jurists have to develop a new modality to accommodate the qualitative changes that have occurred in the society. It is not possible through the classical concept of *Ijtihad* as Iqbal suggest.

- An alternative theology and methodology is needed to replace the classical, which relies too much on deductive logic. We have to believe that a particular mode of conduct may not be universal in itself, but imbibe within it a universal moral value which is to be guarded, even at the cost of change in a particular pattern of behaviour, if needed.

This alternative theology may require a shift in our understanding of the Prophetic role in society. God has been speaking through Prophets from the very start of human kind and has guided them

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For any discussion on common values of Islam and the West to be meaningful, it is necessary that it fulfils the following four conditions.

1. Admitting the plurality of the universe of discourse, where value claims of one universe do not exclude the possibility of value claims of another. In so far as value claims are attached to an element of faith, as in case of Islam, one has to understand that by admitting values to be culture specific one is not necessarily renouncing making values relativistic. It is only to provide space for creative forms of negation and an active tolerance of different emotions involved in the exchange of ideas and opinions.
2. Delinking power and knowledge, or at least weaken the linkage by 'spiritual detachment and generosity'. So long as the value programmes are undertaken to dominate or manipulate the other, power would play a decisive role in steamrolling the differences and colonizing the minds of the conquered. The idea of civilizing the world on the part of the West or, Islamizing it on the part of Muslims as a necessary corollary of their beliefs is dissonant and disruptive in nature. It sets off manipulative procedures for gaining controls on knowledge and industry and would generate more conflicts that it resolves.
3. Listing the difference rather than common values and learning to live with them in a pluralistic world. Once the nature of a difference is delineated an attempt to either manage it or resolve it can be found through a dialogic rationalism, because rational disagreement is the path to a good society and makes a good society sustainable.
4. Renouncing rhetoric and admitting the possibility of a dialogic rationalism as an essential requirement for social progress. Dialogic reasoning presupposes that humans are disposed to communicate ideas which are in a sense relative but not necessary relativistic. Dialogic rationalism is a creative mode of activity through which ideas become acceptable to a majority providing the sort of objectivity one requires for common plans of actions.

The list of common values between Islam & the West may be long and impressive yet there are some basic discordant notes between them, which

sceptical of the success of this venture. It is not very difficult to prepare a reasonable list of values common between Islam and the West yet these commonalities are more often than not nominal and have no substantive character. Same words in a similar syntax can be used in a vast number of cases, each having a different meaning. A list of values that may be considered common between different cultures may operate differently in actual practice. In many cases, two persons may be uttering the same sentence yet each having a meaning very different from the other. A list of common values, therefore, serves no purpose at all, neither in the reduction of conflicts nor in entering into a real dialogue with one another. More often than not common value programmes end up in rhetorics from all sides without really creating a common understanding between two contending parties.

Understanding other cultures or civilizations has always been problematic. Quite a major part of it has been manipulative and has been undertaken either to prove the other as deficient or with a purpose to exploit it. Power and knowledge have been intimately connected and imperial powers, which ever they have been, have studied other cultures or religions in order to extend their hold on them or to solidify their power over the conquered nations. This added motivation has compounded the hermeneutical difficulties, which otherwise were also formidable.

Another dimension of the problem of understanding others arises out of the claims to truth as exclusive to a particular culture or an ideology. In case of religion truth claims are also a part of faith and no evidence can possibly be produced which could prove them to be false or wrong. The same is true with evangelical claims and, to a certain extent, of modernity, though the latter is amendable to a rational discourse.

Common value programmes are bound to fail because value concepts acquire meaning from the context in which they are used and though there is a significant area in which commonalities do exist, yet in their application, they are different. Had it not been so, every culture and civilization would look alike because value concepts are vastly common between all of them. For each of these cultures there is a particular universe of discourse and the validity or otherwise of a value is judged within this particular discourse. Picking up a value label common to two cultures would not make the values identical.

COMMON VALUES BETWEEN ISLAM AND THE WEST

Manzoor Ahmad

The purpose of this article is to explore the common grounds and to bring them to forefront hoping that the conflicts and tensions that exist today between Islam and the West would be reduced. The terms 'Islam' and the 'West' have been left undefined because any attempt of defining them would lead us to endless controversies. Suffice it to say that Islam is a cluster concept containing ideas and formulations, each different from the other in many significant ways. The core themes are faith, Prophethood, *Sharia* and life hereafter. In the same way, the West also stands for another cluster containing a plethora of ideas, central to which are individualism, democracy and liberalism. Neither the West nor Islam is or has ever been a homogenous socio-religious or socio-political structure. The political power structure in Muslim history and the presence of sects in Islam all taken together constitute as to what Islam is at this moment in time. The same with the West: the occurrence of two world wars and continuous struggle for acquiring power and resources are indicative of inner strife and contradictions. That both Islam and the West have enriched their respective civilizations with knowledge, culture, art and architecture is not denied by either side. With Islam, it is a part of history and with the West, the glory is still continuing.

There is also a sense in which we can speak of the West and Islam representing two world views which are presently, at loggerheads with each other. The question arises as to how this dissension can be lessened. At international political level a few flash points of conflict are mentioned and it is assumed that if these so called 'root causes' are removed the world would become more harmonious. While not denying the importance of these core irritants, it would be too much to expect that once the issues like Palestine and Kashmir are resolved the gulf between Islam and the West would be bridged.

Another popular method proposed for bridging the gap is to look for common values between Islam and the West, bring them to fore, and cooperate with each other in promoting them through joint efforts. I am