Religion Paper

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The Palestinians are Arab and the Israelis are Jews, both want the same piece of land. The only state for the Jews in the world, is Israel. They are located at the Mediterranean Sea, East. Though it is claimed by both Arab Muslims and Jews, this land belongs to them from thousands of years ago, while the current conflicts started from the beginning of the 20th century. The oppression of the Jews in Europe, lead them to flee from their homes and the desire to develop the national Jewish homeland, which was then, the Arab Muslim majority territory, partially ruled by the British and partially by the Ottoman Empire. Arabs always see this place as being rightfully theirs and the plan of the UN to give both groups parts of the land has failed, miserably. The Arab nations and Israelis fought many battles on this territory. The war of 1967 is considered the important one in relation to today's conflict, as it gives Israel more control of the Gaza strip and West Bank, both the territories are home to a large population of Palestine. Recently, the West Bank is controlled nominally through the Palestinian Authority, but is mainly under the occupation of Israel. Gaza is controlled by Hamas, which is the fundamentalist party of Islam, although it is under the blockade of Israel. The basic approach for solving this conflict is the “two-state solution” that establish Palestine as being the independent state in Gaza while the rest of the land would be given to Israel. Though this solution is still difficult to implement. Another solution is developing one-state in which either the land becomes one big Palestine or Israel. But because of the demographic and political reasons, this issue cannot be resolved through a “one-state solution”.

Al-Emadi is Qatar's chairman for the reconstruction committee of Gaza to build the destroyed public infrastructure and homes. According to him, there is no hope for Palestine and Israel to acquire peace in the near future. He said that the reason behind his pessimistic thinking is that many states will be both politically and financially benefitted through this tension(“No hope for peace between Palestinians, Israel in ‘near future,’” n.d.). Al-Emadi described the situation of Gaza, as a man walking on a tight rope and keeping his balance as if not to fall while everyone is poking him. Gaza is the place where various authorities interfere including Egyptians, Palestinians and Israelis they all are trying to undermine each other’s power (“No hope for peace between Palestinians, Israel in ‘near future,’” n.d.). Prothero said that all of the world religions join the same faith in the end, they all are unifying and appealing. All the religious faiths are quite different from each other indeed, but if these divisions are not appreciated sufficiently, there is a risk of terrorism and violence(Wecker & reporter, 400AD).

# Islam

The meaning of Islam is to achieve peace within oneself, with God and with God's creations. This can be achieved by submitting oneself wholly to God and by following His guidelines. The word ISLAM is derived from three Arabic root words which means submission, peace, commitment, and surrender. This religion is revealed to Muhammad Ibn Abdullah from 610 to 632 Common Era. Islam is not the new religion rather it is the reiteration of previous religions about the Oneness of God, which is found in the other monotheistic religions earlier. It is mentioned in one of the narratives of Holy Prophet Muhammad which gives the best summary of Islam, “Submission means that you should bear witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is God's messenger, that you should perform the ritual prayer, pay the alms tax, fast during Ramadan, and make pilgrimage to the House if you are able to go there."

## Major Holidays/Celebrations

Every year, Muslims have two major religious ceremonies which are Hajj and Ramadan, while all the other holidays are associated with these two. Each Islamic holiday is observed on the basis of the lunar Islamic calendar. Ramadan corresponds to the lunar calendar’s ninth month in which Muslims fast for a month. They abstain from liquid, food, sex, and smoking. Fast is the important factor of the Muslim faith and is the fifth pillar of Islam. In commemoration of the first Quranic verse revealed on Muhammad, Muslims around the globe celebrate Laylat al Qadr ‘night of power’ and at the end of this month, Muslims celebrate Eid al-Fitr. In the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar each year, Muslims perform annual pilgrimage towards Mecca which is Muhammad's birthplace. Eid al-Adha, the festival of sacrifice is celebrated at the end of “Haj” which includes a sacrificial ritual of camel, goat or sheep, it is celebrated in the honor of Prophet Ibrahim(Abraham). These are the two major Muslim observances other than those which are not observed as Islamic holidays universally. However, some of the Muslims acknowledge a few other in the Islamic history context. These holidays include Ashura which is on the tenth of Muharram(lunar Islamic calendar) marked as the death anniversary of Muhammad’s grandson Hussein, 12th Rabia Awal is celebrated as the Prophet Muhammad’s birthday, although these holidays are celebrated in various ways by different sects.

### Land Right

In Islam, all the things including man himself, belongs to God. The land and its provisions also belong to him, though God has given trust to men to keep charge of it and use it wisely for their and community benefits(Iqbal & Gill, 2000). It is written in the Quran, “To Him belongs what is in the Heavens and what is on Earth and what is between them and what is under the soil.” Islam encouraged human creativity and entrepreneurship to utilize such resources for human welfare. Although, Islam does not provide specific instructions on how the land might be distributed, but clearly stated the principles of the just system(Iqbal & Gill, 2000). The private trusteeship is indeed protected and allowed in the Sharia law but only if it does not create poverty, injustice, and hunger. Hadith and Quran both forbid taking others’ property by unlawful means through state or individuals(Iqbal & Gill, 2000).

#### The economic concept in Islam

Islam prohibited from ‘riba’ or interests in all its form as it accumulates wealth in hands of a few, therefore gaps between rich and poor would increase as a result. Islam also prohibited from ‘qimar’ and ‘maisir’ which is the money acquired by ‘games of chance’ such as gambling or lottery. For the accomplishment of social obligations, Muslims are also encouraged to give 'Zakat'(tax).

##### 5 important Women

Khadija the first wife of Muhammad, was a trader and wealthy woman who managed all the commercial dealings. She hired Muhammad to work for her and then proposed him. Khadija always supported Muhammad every time, she was not just a spouse but had an important role in Islamic history(Ahmed, 1986).

Aisha was the most favorite wife of Muhammad and she was an intelligent lady. She had spiritual wisdom and after the death of Muhammad, she played a major role in military and politics(Ahmed, 1986).

Fatimah was the daughter of Prophet Muhammad and Khadija. She admired her faith and regarded as the purest and high virtue lady.

Summayyah bintt Khalid was the first martyr of Islam, she was born a slave and later became a free lady(Ahmed, 1986).

Hafsa bint Uma was the wife of the prophet and later narrated 60 hadiths.

# Politics and Challenges of wearing Hijab

Hijab is considered as the Islamic veiling and is regarded as a crucially cultural, religious and social symbol which is the central identity of Muslim women. It has proved to be a major political issue as it is regarded as the symbol of political oppression and political Islam(Guven, 2010). As wearing the hijab is connected with Islamism and it is assumed that the person who wears the hijab wants Islamization in the country. When the issue of immigration started, it was associated with Islam's problem due to the hijab which is regarded as the symbol of the problem by some global political leaders(Guven, 2010).

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