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# PEGASUS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CAUX ROUND TABLE FOR MORAL CAPITALISM  
NETWORK LOOKING AT BUSINESS ABOVE THE CLUTTER AND CONFETTI



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# Introduction

I am frequently asked “How does one become a moral capitalist?” or “How should a moral capitalist company make a profit?”

The quick, but profound answer is: “Learn the art.”

But that is only the start of the journey. Learning is the reciprocal of teaching. To learn, one needs a teacher. One can be self-taught, to be sure, but then part of one needs to be capable of insight and other self-guided means of instruction – learning from experience.

In this issue of *Pegasus*, our colleague, Michael Hartoonian, a teacher, reflects on the importance of teachers. For moral capitalism to thrive, for moral government to bring civility and well-being, teaching is needed. It is harder for the ignorant, the wayward and the angry to be kind, to be of empathetic service to others.

Michael’s call for character in professionals and citizens seeks to ward off the darker forces of our times. He encourages us to build foundations, to rest human aspirations on the justice of responsibility.

Professionals need to “to profess.” They need principles to frame a discipline, a teaching. They are disciples – students of that which needs to be “grasped” – *discipere* in Latin, descended from the Proto-Indo-European root word *kap* – to “grasp.”

But prophets too are teachers. They provide civilization with “discipline.”

Jesus was called a rabbi. The Buddha taught his disciples.

In addition to receiving the words of his God, the Prophet Muhammad taught with his example and with his own words – passed down to us as his sunna and in the Hadith.

For four years now, the Caux Round Table has sought to learn more of certain actions taken by the Prophet Muhammad, his teaching by personal example, by showing us, in word and deed, how to respect others of a different faith.

I am referring to his covenants to respect and protect Christians and Jews.

In this example of taking thoughtful care and being open-hearted, let him be our teacher.

In this issue, we include the PowerPoint slides of Professor Ibrahim Zein of the College of Islamic Studies, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, reporting on his research into the covenants given by the Prophet. Professor Zein was assisted in this research by Ahmed El-Wakil, now completing a Ph.D. at Oxford.

Secondly, we include the PowerPoint slides of Dean Recep Senturk, also of the College of Islamic Studies, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, which supported his lecture on the concept of Adamiyyah in Islamic thought.

Both Professor Zein and Dean Recep presented their thoughts at the Pontifical Institute for the Study of Arabic and Islam in Rome on May 16, 2024.

*Stephen B. Young*  
*Global Executive Director*  
*Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism*



## **The Mutual Obligations of the Professional and the Citizen**

**Michael Hartoonian**

***Athens, itself, is a school where we understand that,  
Any society that does not educate its warriors to be philosophers,  
And its philosophers to be warriors,  
Will have its wars fought by fools,  
And its philosophy crafted by cowards.  
-Pericles, King of Athens***

Are we becoming surrounded by cowards and fools? What are we teaching our children and ourselves? Rest assured that every time we walk down our streets, turn on the TV or computer or talk to others, we are teaching and learning.

As I look around our nation and witness the states and groups run by “professionals,” I see them truncating our ethical, economic, moral and social wisdom through such things as laws that ban books, woke hysteria, educators with little sense of purpose, legislators ignorantly taking authority over content like medicine, journalists who don’t pursue truth, only profit and business people who have little respect for community or real wealth. Professions are dropping their responsibilities for our schools and universities, courts, places of worship, healthcare, news media and business.

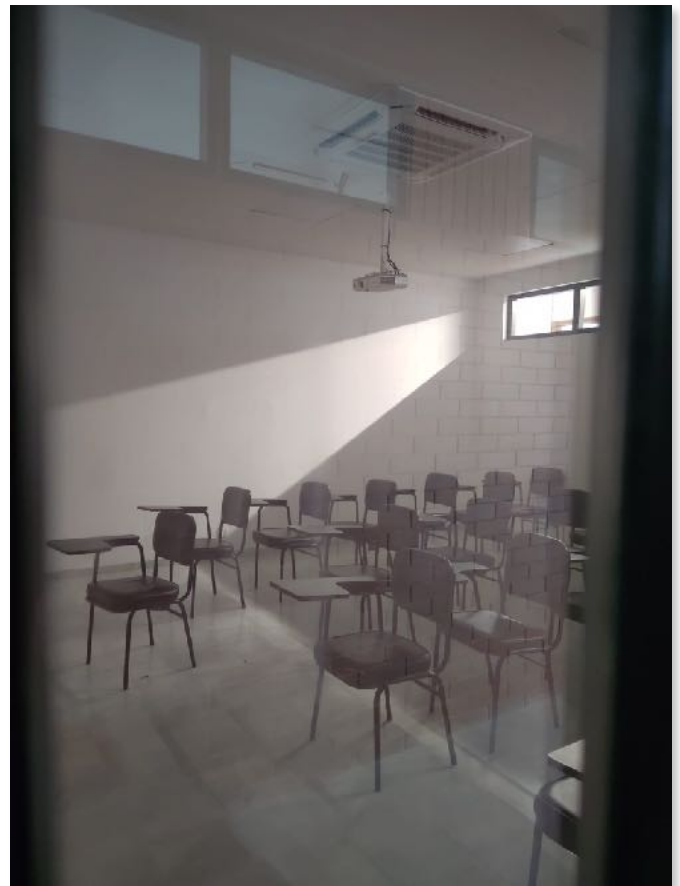
Yet, I would argue that first and foremost, professionals are *teachers*, but what are they teaching?

Have we come to believe that any individual or random group has the wisdom to be so certain about the depth of our own ignorance? Do we understand the obligations of holding the office of citizen (and of leadership) and the humility to see the limits of our individual and collective knowledge? Do we understand the purpose and responsibility of a learning society?

Classical cultures created four fundamental professions – education, then law, theology and medicine. Over time, new professions, like journalism in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and finance in the 20<sup>th</sup>, have agreed to accept the obligations of their profession.

Within the context of a democratic republic, there is and must be a tension between the enlightened citizen and all professions. However, all citizens/professionals must be skilled searchers of truth, which is always contested. They must also critically love the institutions and nation in which they spend their life's time. The tensions are displayed in debate, defined by civility, intellectual rigor and the character to be able to consider the possibility that you or any of us, could be wrong.

Every society creates a cultural narrative. That narrative reflects identity and purpose and becomes that culture's curriculum. That curriculum informs survival. Early in the evolution of human society, it was clear that survival would depend on a family's or a community's memory and ability to discern the truth, to discriminate among those cultural elements that should be passed on to the next generation and those that should be left behind, as well as values to be created anew. Cultural values, which have a half-life of one generation, implicitly demand that people evaluate these essentials and teach them to each other and to their children. As societies advanced, this task became more complex and professions were created by cultures to do that work. In other words, who would help deal with and explain death, the cosmos and the mysteries of the hidden soul? Who would explain the need for order with justice? Who would deal with sickness and the nature of health? And who would take these ideas and intentionally and critically pass them on to the next generation?



Certainly, other groups of people would administer and guide the implementation of the cultural concepts, but the professions were created to judge which ideas and narratives were necessary for cultural survival. This is and has always been a tricky business because of the changing nature of the cultural context and the nature of being human. Because of this complexity, citizens must cultivate a deep civic inquisitiveness and acquire a built-in scrap detector. When the culture works well, the professions, working in concert with one another – and the general wisdom of the people – debate, synthesize and recommend principles and policies that create more gentle and culturally beneficial changes on the landscape. What this means is that the professional's first responsibility is to the veracity of the content or

knowledge of the discipline in which they work. Thus, a medical doctor's first responsibility is to the science of medicine, not the patient. If she doesn't know the science, the patient suffers. Likewise, knowledge of the law/justice is more important than the lawyer's client. And in education, the student does not come first. The content of the disciplines do. You can only teach what you know and to the degree that you put students, patients, clients or parishioners before disciplined inquiry, to that same degree, you corrupt their learning and well-being. Good teachers/professionals know this truth.

Social, economic, political and technical employees, as well as managers, evaluate, implement and reevaluate professional content. They must continually make corrections and suggestions to their applied content. They do this primarily by achieving strength of character and by improving the worth and wealth (not money) of their institutions by allowing citizens to continue learning and live more independently and harmoniously with others.

When real learning and debate are missing from the cultural curriculum, change (social, ethical, economic, etc.) can be brutal and often bloody. And without a learning culture, democratic and market-driven societies become problematic. It is altogether true that a culture creates professions, first, to protect the culture. Secondly, to educate citizens into the possession of the conditional mind. That is, a mind that is always in research mode. Such an

intellect is always asking, "If we do this (X), then we expect that (Y) might happen." And thirdly, to insure the critical passage of ideas into the future.

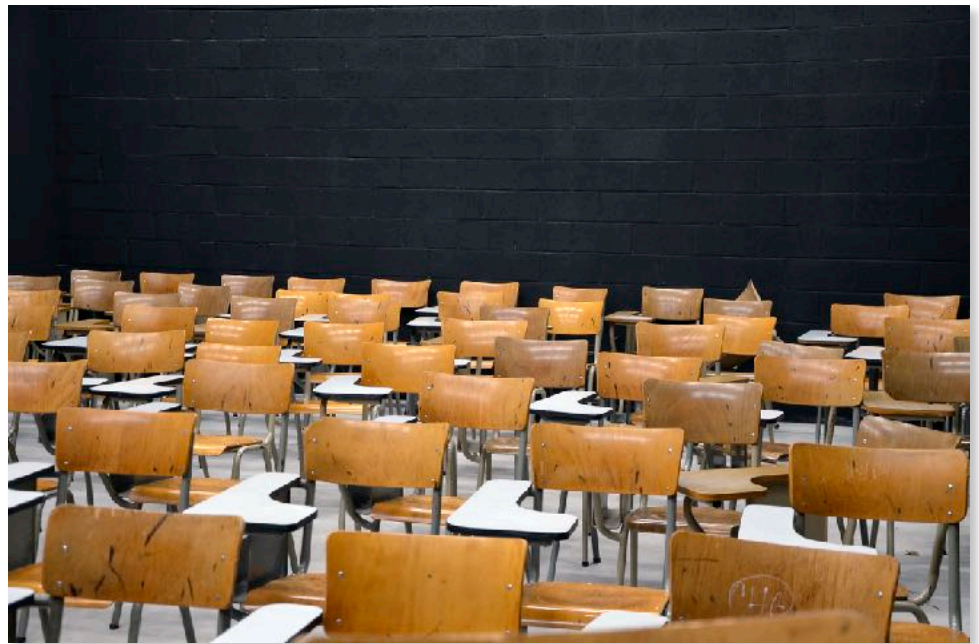


As listed above, the four classical professions so charged to attend to this challenge are education, medicine, religion and law. These four professions and the others that have been added, were created out of the ongoing need for cultural sustainability and crafted to protect, enhance and transmit the culture critically.

However, once a profession atrophies, caused either by outside or inside forces, it loses its first purpose and becomes irrelevant, corrupt and the larger culture is put in danger. This often happens when intellectual laziness, selfishness or an irresistible dogma or ideology invades the cultural DNA. The task of the professions is to understand and mitigate the issue, so it doesn't destroy the culture. Within a democratic republic, this evaluative transmittal is even more necessary, since republics are based on a set of principles sustained through enlightened legal and ethical arguments among responsible, healthy and educated citizens. For example, any inequitable distribution of knowledge or justice, manifested in different rules and sanctions based on such differences as class, geography or ethnicities, diminishes the republic and leaves all citizens vulnerable to disillusion and cynicism. This does not mean, however, an abandonment of knowledge,

as the behavior of the fearful and closed-minded would suggest, prohibiting ideas simply because they disagree. What it demands is an inclusive debate regarding the limits of law, faith and science. Enlightened citizens, who always constitute the fourth branch of liberal/inclusive governments, are responsible for continuing civil and civic debates. Democratic principles, such as freedom and equality or rule of law and limited government, are and always have been goals that are at odds, one with another and need serious ongoing debate. For example, there have and always will be tensions between the law and moral sediments. However, the law cannot be disregarded. It is always in play within the civic and civil arguments that move the republic forward toward justice. To engage in the civic debate, an individual or group needs to have an ethical grounding, historical knowledge and the understanding that we are held together by a shared value – in a word, that value is character.

Those who live in republics are, by fortunate circumstance, live in a nation of law, not a nation by law. To this end, all professions teach about self-governance and responsibility, knowing that all learning is uncomfortable. Indeed, you will never learn a thing if you refuse discomfort! The profession of education helps students understand how to pursuit truth. We have a choice: be comfortable or be truthful. This is the case because learning starts with the confession of ignorance. The educated person doesn't just try to prove someone else's argument incorrect, but works to prove his or her personal theory or argument incorrect. Teachers spend a lifetime trying to understand the long historic perspectives, empirical research, subjective faith and logic in deciding what knowledge to teach. But this is the life's work of all professions. The professionals have the responsibility for teaching the general tenets of enlightened citizenship. All professions teach citizens why they should and how they can govern themselves, as well as why justice must be understood and practiced as a necessary condition of civil society. Here, every citizen has power or agency because no one should be above the law and, thus, tries to construct a level or just playing field for all. Just as we want physicians to explain the principles of good health, we need all professionals to teach the standards of justice and truth. Armed with this knowledge so transmitted, citizens of a republic become more competent in discussing and acting on bringing health, wealth and meaning to their lives and the ability to balance the fundamental value tensions of democracy, both in their private and civic lives.



If professions do not teach these things, citizens will become subjects, meaning that they will not have the knowledge or will to live civil, healthy, productive and happy lives. In so many ways, this knowledge and ability separates citizens from subjects. Citizens place importance on



character. Subjects put their faith in image. Character is destiny. Image is mercurial. Character is doing what is right and often hard. Image is following the path of least resistance. Character is asking what I can do for family, school and community. Image is a belief that family, school and community exist for your benefit. Character means governing yourself – a necessary condition in a free market and just society. Image means following others and mimicking behavior and taste – a condition in a controlled society. Character means citizen, while image is the defining attribute of a subject. The first obligation, then, of professionals is to teach the duties of holding the office of citizen. Our first attribute of identity is and must be – citizen. Being a citizen is not and should not be comfortable. If we want the comfort of not thinking for ourselves, simply drop that burden and follow your separate demigods, be they the media, a political party, a loud blowhard or your uncle – and lose your freedom.

Like Pericles, we acknowledge that a republic is, first and foremost, a school. Again, we teach adults and children every time they walk into our place of employment or down our streets, turn on a TV or computer, attend a movie, engage in a civic meeting or visit a park. The key question is what content are we teaching? What content are you teaching? The first answer should be: ideally, we are teaching virtue and thinking.

The more realistic answer, gleaned from surveys and research alike, makes clear that we are teaching each other to embrace personal image and consumption. The values of materialism, sexuality, athleticism and physical strength have all but replaced the virtues of character. Our professions fulfill only marginally their public role, as they no longer consider civic purpose within their mission. A private greed has eaten away at our public happiness and in so doing, we have diminished liberty and life itself. Have we forgotten our obligations as professionals and citizens? My hope is that we are not too late.

*Michael Hartoonian is Associate Editor of Pegasus.*

# THE COVENANTS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD: HISTORICAL LEGACY AND CONTEMPORARY HUMAN RIGHTS

By

Ibrahim Zein &

Ahmed El-Wakil

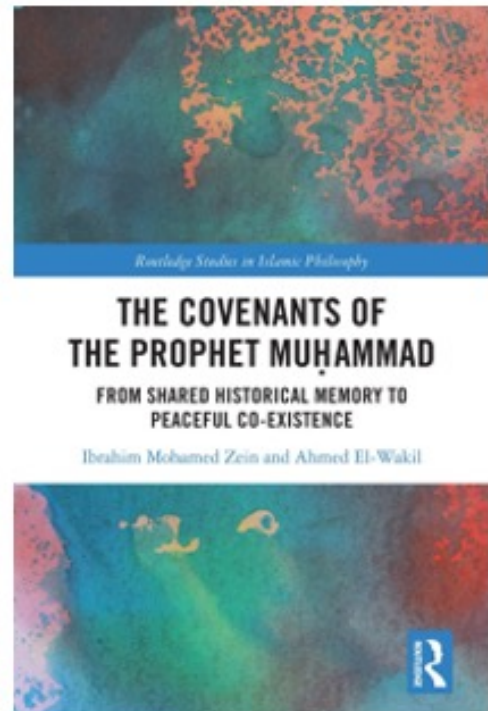
16 May 2024

## Introduction

- Research into the historicity of the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad began at Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Qatar in 2017.
- Outreach with Vatican began in January 2019 with Cardinal Tomasi, Steve Young and the Caux Round Table.

### Outcome of the research:

- One book
- 5 articles published in peer reviewed journals
- 1 book chapter
- Collection of images of manuscripts of the Covenants



## The Constitution of Madina

- First political document to have been written in the history of Islam.
- Considered by most scholars to have been reproduced from an authentic historical document.
- It sets out the parameters for good governance and co-existence by recognizing the plurality of religious communities within the city state of Madina.
- The Covenants of the Prophet emerged from the Constitution of Madina.



## Monastery of St. Catherine, Mount Sinai

### MS 695 in the Library of St. Catherine's Monastery pt. 1

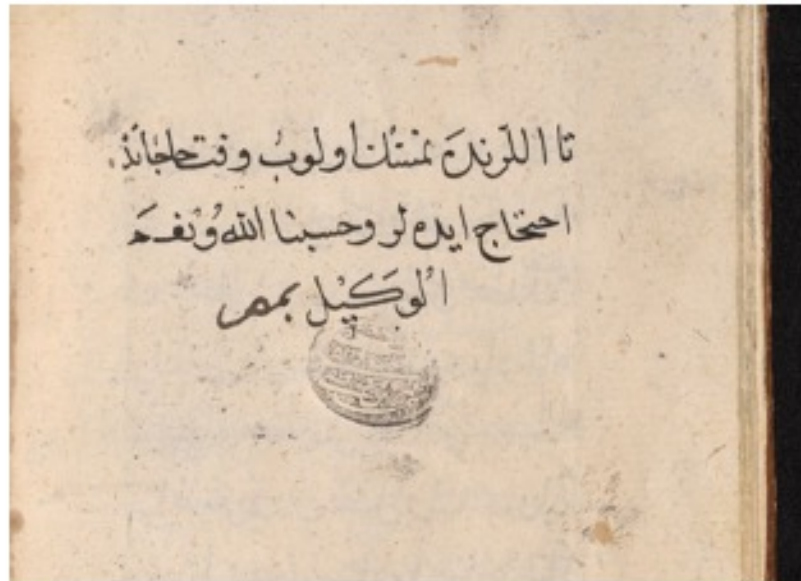
“Sinai Arabic 695, booklet cover and folio 2, Sinai Manuscripts Digital Library. Image reproduced with permissions from St. Catherine's Monastery.”



## MS 695 in the Library of St. Catherine's Monastery pt. 2

“Sinai Arabic 695, folio 25 R, Sinai Manuscripts Digital Library. Image reproduced with permissions from St. Catherine's Monastery.”

Seal reads: “Abdullah ‘Umar Mustafa 956” = 1550 CE



### Bar Hebraeus (d. 685 AH/1286 CE)

At that time Muhammad, the prophet of the Arabs, gained prominence. The leader of the [Christian] believers of Najran, [which was in the Arabian] desert, and whose name was Sayyid, went to pay homage to him and offered him many gifts and presents. He was accompanied by Isho‘ their bishop. He received from him a magnanimous ordinance, an eternal decree for all Christians. It stipulated that the Arabs would protect them from all violence, that they would not force them to participate in their military expeditions, and that their laws and customs would remain unchanged. If Christians wished to rebuild a church that had collapsed, the Arabs would help them in doing so. The tribute for the ordinary man, namely anyone who was not a priest or a monk, was not to exceed four *zuze* [i.e. dirhams], but for those who are wealthy and for traders, it was set at twelve *zuze* [i.e. dirhams]. Among other things, the decree stipulated that if a Christian woman was to come and live in the house of an Arab, he would not compel her to abandon her religion, nor would he prevent her from fasting, perform her prayers, or adhere to any of the tenets of her faith.

## John Bar Penkaye (writing in 67 AH/687 CE)

Source: Penn, Michael Philip . 2015 *When Christians First Met Muslims: A Sourcebook of the Earliest Syriac Writings on Islam*. Oakland: University of California Press.

In the days of their king Khosrau, when the kingdom of the Persians came to an end, the kingdom of the Sons of Hagar immediately spread over more or less the entire world. For they seized the entire kingdom of the Persians, and they overthrew all their warriors, who had been exceedingly proud in the arts of war. Indeed, we should not consider their coming to be ordinary. For it was a divine deed. Prior to summoning them, [God] had previously prepared them to hold Christians in honor. Thus there also carefully came from God a certain commandment that they should hold our monastic order in honor. (pp. 88-89)

From [the Westerners] a man named Mu‘awiya became king and took control of the kingdoms both of the Persians and of the Romans. Justice flourished in his days, and there was great peace in the regions he controlled. He allowed everyone to conduct himself as he wanted. For, as I said above, they upheld a certain commandment from him who was their guide [i.e. the Prophet Muhammad] concerning the Christian people and the monastic order. (p. 91)

## Catholicos Isho‘yahb III (d. c.a. 39 AH/659 CE)

Source: Penn, Michael Philip . 2015 *When Christians First Met Muslims: A Sourcebook of the Earliest Syriac Writings on Islam*. Oakland: University of California Press.

For also these Arabs to whom at this time God has given control over the world, as you know, they are [also here] with us. Not only are they no enemy to Christianity, but they are even praisers of our faith, honorers of our Lord’s priests and holy ones, and supporters of churches and monasteries. (p. 35)



## Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem

### ‘Umar’s Treaty with the Christians of Jerusalem

Muslim sources: Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH/923 CE) & Ibn Tamīm al-Maqdisī (d. 765 AH/1363 CE)

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. This is the writ (*kitāb*) and guarantee of security (*al-amān*) given to the people of Jerusalem (*ahl ʿIlīyāʿ*). This is what the servant of Allah, ‘Umar, the Commander of the Believers, has given to the people of Jerusalem (*ahl ʿIlīyāʿ*):

He has given them security in respect of their persons, wealth, churches, and crosses (*li-anfusihim wa amwālihim wa li-kanāʿisihim wa li-ṣulbānihim*); its residents and those living in the surrounding areas of the city (*muqīmihā wa mudunihā*); and all of its creeds. Their churches shall neither be inhabited nor destroyed (*lā tuskan kanāʿisuhum wa lā tuhdam*). Their church buildings and their relics shall be kept intact by the Muslims, as well as their crosses and their wealth. They shall not be forced to renounce their religion (*wa lā yukrahūn ʿalā dīnihim*) or suffer any kind of harm for adhering to their creed.

## ‘Umar’s Treaty with the Christians of Jerusalem

Greek Orthodox source: Eutychius of Alexandria (d. 940 CE)

In the name of Allah the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, from ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab to the people of Jerusalem. They have been granted protection in respect of their lives, offspring, wealth, and their churches (*‘alā dimā’ihim wa awlādihim wa amwālihim wa kanā’isihim*), that these neither be destroyed nor inhabited (*allā tuhdam wa-lā tuskan*).

## Early Reference to ‘Umar’s Treaty with the Christians of Jerusalem

Source: Sebeos. 1999. *The Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*. Edited by R.W. Thomson, and James Howard-Johnston. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Sebeos (writing in the 660s CE):

They [the Ismaelites] crossed the Jordan and camped at Jericho. Then dread of them fell on all the inhabitants of the land, and they all submitted to them. That night the people of Jerusalem took in flight the Lord’s Cross and all the vessels of the churches of God. Setting sail on the sea in ships, they brought them to the palace of Constantinople. Then, having requested an oath (*erdum*) from them, they submitted to them. (pp. 97-98)



## Jerusalem 32 Inscription



## Transcription of Jerusalem 32 Inscription

Source: Sharon, Moshe. 2018. "Witnessed by Three Disciples of the Prophet: The Jerusalem 32 Inscription from 32 AH/652 CE." *Israel Exploration Journal*, Vol. 68, No. 1: pp. 100–111.

1. In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful
2. ...
3. ...
4. The protection of Allah and the guarantee of His messenger (*dhimmat Allāh wa ḍamān rasūlihi*)
5. ...
6. It was witnessed by 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf
7. al-Zuhrī and Abu 'Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah.
8. Its scribe is Mu'awiya ...
9. The year thirty-two.

## ‘Umar’s Covenant with Patriarch Sophronius

The Christians have been granted protection for their churches, monasteries, and pilgrimage sites inside and outside Jerusalem. These include the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, where Jesus, peace be upon him, was born, along with its grotto and its three doors – the eastern, northern, and western ones.

All Christian denominations who are present in Jerusalem and its surrounding area have our protection... Those Christians who come for pilgrimage from among the Franks, the Copts, the Syrians, the Armenians, the Nestorians, the Jacobites, and the Maronites – all of whom fall under the patronage of the Patriarch – have our protection. This is because the honourable and beloved Prophet sent by Allah honoured them with his seal, which he gave to them using his blessed hand when he commanded that they be looked after and protected.

Every Sultan, ruler, or governor exercising his rule over the land needs to ensure that all Muslims, among who are believing men and women, and regardless of whether they be rich or poor, have a duty to abide by the stipulations laid out in this decree which has been issued in the presence of a large group of honourable Companions...

### Values of the Covenants

- Muslims are religiously bound to protect Christians and their places of worship.
- “There is no compulsion in religion” (Q2:256). Muslims are not interfere in the religious affairs of Christians which are to remain autonomous.
- A Muslim man cannot force his Christian wife to embrace Islam or prevent her from practising her faith and having access to her religious leaders.
- The rights given to Christians are eternal, until the end of time, and are thus inalienable.
- The Covenant of the Prophet to Christians was re-affirmed by ‘Umar when he entered Jerusalem.
- Discriminatory measures against Christians were a later development based on the dynamics of empire. These were manifested in the infamous “Pact of ‘Umar.”

## Conclusions

- The Covenants are relevant today in fostering positive interfaith relations.
- The Covenants were not only given to Christians. They were also given to Jews, Samaritans, and Zoroastrians among others.
- Non-Muslims were given autonomy over their religious affairs. Discriminatory measures were implemented at a later point in time.
- The Covenants are in harmony with contemporary human rights in a setting of rights and obligations.

# Ādamiyyah

## Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

**RECEP ŐENTÖRK**

Dean, College of Islamic Studies, Hamad Bin Khalifa University  
President, Usul Academy



## Open Civilization in Istanbul

- The view I had from the window of my highschool in Fatih district of Istanbul:
  - Orthodox Patriarchs **Church** in Fener
  - Chief Rabbi's **Synagogue** in Karaköy
  - **Caliph's Palace** in Topkapı

THE QUESTION: HOW DID THEY COEXIST?



Chief Rabbi's Synagogue



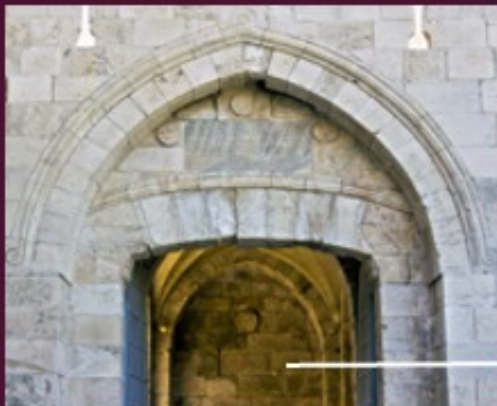
Caliph's Palace



Orthodox Patriarchs Church

## Peaceful Coexistence in Ottoman Jerusalem

- Ottoman inscriptions on the gates of its new cities:  
*"Lā ilāha illa Allah, Muhammadun rasūlu Allah"*
- 1516 Ottoman rule in Jerusalem:
  - An inscription ordered by Suleiman II on Al-Khalil (Jaffa) gate out of his respect to all Abrahamic religions. It reads:  
*"Lā ilāha illa Allah, Ibrāhīm khalīlu Allah"*



## Islam as an Open Civilization

- From its emergence in the seventh century, the Islamic civilization has been a multi-civilizational society embracing an open approach towards the other civilizations it encountered.
  - **The Prophet Muhammad's** ﷺ rule: **The Medina Charter and Farewell Sermon**
  - **Umayyads and Abbasids:** the conservation of the heritage of antiquity
  - **Andalusia:** an open civilization based on *Ibrāhimiyyah*
  - **India:** an open civilization based on *Ādamiyyah*
  - The **Ottoman State:** the institutionalization and modernization of open civilization



Levels of Fraternity in Islam

*Ādamiyyah*  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## The Covenants of the Prophet and their significance in promoting interfaith harmony



- The world of the seventh century was mired in war, feuds and hostility. The Byzantine and Sasanian empires surrounded the Arabian peninsula.
- The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ set a new precedent for the relationship between different religious communities across the world through the Covenants which became part of the state policy.



*Ādamiyyah*  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

# The Covenants of the Prophet

## and their significance in promoting interfaith harmony



- The Prophet's Covenant with the Monks of Mount Sinai
- The Prophet's Covenant with the Christians of Najrān and other Christians
- Covenants with the Samaritans, the Jews, and the Magi
- Covenant with the Jews of Medina
- The Covenants of the Prophet during the Caliphate of 'Umar



Ādamiyyah  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## The Prophet's Covenant with the Monks of Mount Sinai

*The St. Catherine's monastery at Mount Sinai*

- The Covenant that was sent to the monks of the Monastery was written by Ali ibn Abi Talib, in 624 CE, two years after the migration of the Muslims to Medina.
- It was witnessed by over thirty Companions and stamped with the Prophet Muhammad's seal. Many of the copies which exist today also possess a drawn representation of the Prophet's hand to symbolize the protection which he granted to the Christians until the end of time.



6/25

Ādamiyyah  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

Āshīnāmeḥ (Letter of Reconciliation) of the Prophet Muhammad

## The Pope Francis' Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (Fraternity of All People)

*The joy of acknowledging others*

220. Indigenous peoples, for example, are not opposed to progress, yet theirs is a different notion of progress, often more humanistic than the modern culture of developed peoples. Theirs is not a culture meant to benefit the powerful, those driven to create for themselves a kind of earthly paradise. **Intolerance and lack of respect for indigenous popular cultures is a form of violence grounded in a cold and judgmental way of viewing them.** No authentic, profound and enduring change is possible unless it starts from the different cultures, particularly those of the poor. **A cultural covenant eschews a monolithic understanding of the identity of a particular place; it entails respect for diversity by offering opportunities for advancement and social integration to all.**

*Ādamiyyah*  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## The Pope Francis' Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (Fraternity of All People)

221. Such a covenant also demands the realization that some things may have to be renounced for the common good. No one can possess the whole truth or satisfy his or her every desire, since that pretension would lead to nullifying others by denying their rights. **A false notion of tolerance has to give way to a dialogic realism on the part of men and women who remain faithful to their own principles while recognizing that others also have the right to do likewise. This is the genuine acknowledgment of the other that is made possible by love alone.** We have to stand in the place of others, if we are to discover what is genuine, or at least understandable, in their motivations and concerns.

*Ādamiyyah*  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam



What Made  
**Islamic Open Civilization**  
Possible?

Is There a Concept of  
**Universal Human Rights**  
in Islam?

## Is Universal Human Rights Possible?

- Scholars from a variety of disciplines disagree on whether universal human rights are possible or not.
- Those who agree that universal human rights are possible also disagree on how.
- Who is the subject of law?
  - human beings universally
  - citizens

## Is there a concept of universal human rights in Islam?

- Two schools of thought:
  - the universalistic approach to human rights-initially formulated by Abu Hanifa (ra),
  - the communalistic approach advocated by al-Shāfi'ī (ra) and his followers who attached universal human rights to *imān* ( declaration of Islamic faith) or *amān* (making a treaty of security).

# Is there a concept of universal human being in Islam?



*Ādamiyyah*  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## The Universalistic View: “I am Therefore I Have Rights and Duties”

- Mere existence qualifies a human being for universal human rights.

*Ādamiyyah*  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## What Makes Universal Human Rights Possible?

- An inclusive concept of the **universal human being**, detached from innate, acquired and ascribed qualities
- Even if we have the universal human rights on the conceptual level, it does not ensure their existence on the ground.

*Ādamiyyah*

Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

### Universalistic Approach (Abu Hanifa, Malik, Ibn Hanbal)

- Abu Hanifa: *Al- 'Ismab bi al-adamiyyah*.  
(Rights are due for humanity.)
- al-Miydani: *Al-Hurr ma'sum bi nafsib*.  
(A person inviolable by virtue of her existence.)
- Ibn Maze: *Al-Adami mubtramun bayyan wa mayyitan*  
(A human being has inviolability (*burmah*), both alive and dead.)
- Ibn 'Abidin: *Al-Adamiy mukarram wa law kafiran*.  
(A human being has sanctity (*karamah*) even if she is non-Muslim.)
- Rights are brought by at birth.
- Rights aren't granted by the state.
- **The subject of law is human being.**

### Communalist Approach (Shafi'i)

- *Al- 'Ismab bi al-iman aw bi al-aman*.  
Rights are due for citizenry by faith or treaty.
- Rights are granted by the state  
(legal/constitutional/civil rights).  
The subject of law is the citizen.

## Foundations of Universal Human Rights: Sarakhsi (d.1090)

"لأن الله لما خلق الإنسان لحمل أمانته أكرمه بالعقل والذمة ليكون بها أهلاً لوجوب حقوق الله عليه. ثم أثبت له العصمة والحرية والملكية ليبقى فيتمكن من أداء ما حمل من الأمانة. ثم هذه الأمانة والحرية والملكية ثابتة للمرء من لحظة ولادته، ويكون المميز وغير المميز فيه سواء. فلكذلك الذمة الصالحة لوجوب الحقوق فيها ثابت له من حين أن يولد يستوي فيه المميز وغير المميز".

Sarakhsi, *al-Usul*

*Ādamiyyah*

Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

"When God created human beings, He honored them with intelligence and the capacity to carry responsibilities and rights (*dhimmah*: legal personality), so they would be capable of fulfilling their obligations and the rights entrusted to them. Then He granted them the right to inviolability, freedom and property, so they could continue their lives in such a way that they can fulfill the responsibilities they carry. These responsibilities, freedom and right to property are inherent to individuals from the moment of their birth, and the discerning and non-discerning alike are equal in this regard. Thus, the capacity to bear rights and responsibilities is inherent in individuals from birth, and all individuals, regardless of their level of intellectual development, are equal in this respect."

## The *Ādamiyyah* Principle: Islamic Universal Humanism

ابن عابدين:

"الآدمي مكرم شرعا ولو كافرا"

Human beings are honored in terms of religious law,  
even if they are disbelievers.

العصمة بالآدمية

*al-ʿismah bi'l-ādamiyyah*

Inviolability is due to humanity.

# العصمة بالآدمية

Every child of Adam is qualified for the right to inviolability regardless of whether they are male or female, rich or poor, white or black, Muslim or non-Muslim.

- 1 All human beings have the right to inviolability.
- 2 They do so merely because of their humanity.
- 3 Islamic law adjudicates for all human beings and protects the rights of every child of Adam and not merely for Muslims.
- 4 It humanizes all people by bringing all of them to an equal level.
- 5 It doesn't present an anthropocentric world but establishes stewardship of Muslims over humanity, environment, and nature as divine trusts as vicegerents of Allah on earth.

## Islam offers a solid ground for universal human rights

- **Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah** (the objectives or purposes of Islamic law)
  - the higher goals and aims behind specific legal rulings and principles
  - universal principles, applying to all human beings regardless of their religion or nationality.
- **Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah:**
  - Protection of Faith or religion (*din*)
  - Protection of Life (*nafs*)
  - Protection of Lineage (*nasl*)
  - Protection of Intellect (*'aql*)
  - Protection of Property (*mal*)
- According to Islamic theology and jurisprudence, these *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* is inalienable, inherent, essential, and cannot be taken away or separated from individuals.

## Protecting All Humanity is A Religious Obligation

- Islamic legal system, based on the principle of *adamiyyah*, recognizes the rights and duties inherent to humanity.
- An example from history:
  - Ottoman Sultan sent a navy to rescue Jews being expelled from Spain in 1492:
 

In his proclamation, the Sultan told the Jews that **it was God's command to take care of the descendants of the Prophets Abraham and Jacob, to see that they had food to eat and to take them under his protection. They should come and settle in Istanbul and live in peace in the shade of the fig tree where they could engage in free trade and own property.**
- This understanding fosters an ethos of “open law” and “open civilization,” promoting inclusivity, justice, and mutual respect across diverse cultures and religions, as witnessed in Islamic governance from Andalusia to Ottoman Empire.



The Ottoman Caliph welcomes Jewish refugees on their arrival from Spain.

*Ādamiyyah*

Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## Which rights are protected by the Islamic law?

- Inviolability of **life**  
(*'ismatu'd-dem* or *'ismatu'n-nafs*)
- Inviolability of **property**  
(*'ismatu'l-mal*)
- Inviolability of mind or freedom of expression  
(*'ismatu'l-'aql*)
- Inviolability of **religion**  
(*'ismatu'd-din*)
- Inviolability of **honor**  
(*'ismatu'l-'ird*)
- Inviolability of **family**  
(*'ismatu'n-nasl*)

*Ādamiyyah*

Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## The *Adamiyyah* Covenant

- The *Adamiyyah* Covenant emphasizes the inherent dignity and rights of all human beings, regardless of their religion or nationality.
- It underscores the universal humanity shared by all individuals.
- This covenant serves as a basis for promoting coexistence, tolerance, and respect for diversity within and among civilizations.
- **True *Ibrahimiyyah* is through the *Adamiyyah* Covenant.**

*Ādamiyyah*

Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam

## How was the *Millet* System reformed in the late Ottoman period to overcome its limitations?

- **1847 Abolition of slavery**
- **1856: Royal Decree of Reforms (*Islahat Hatt-ı Humayunu*)**
  - Equal human and legal rights in all areas
  - Right to vote and be elected
  - Right to equal employment in all government positions
  - Right to open confessional schools
  - Right to practice denominational law in private law
- **1856 Abolition of *dhimma* status and *jizya* tax**
- 1876 First Constitutional Period
- First Parliament
- 1908 Second Constitutional Period
- Second Parliament
- Multi-party elections
- Non-Muslims were elected to the Parliament

*Ādamiyyah*

Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam



## Conclusion

- The protection of **six basic rights** is also considered the common ground of all religions, which provides a juridical ground for religious **pluralism**. For this reason they are called “the objectives of the law” (*maqasid al-shariah*).
- According to Islamic theology and jurisprudence, these six principles constitute the **unchangeable core of all religions** and the **legal systems** in the world.
- Islamic law has taken *adamiyyah* (humanity regardless of religion) as the **subject of Islamic law** to which rights and duties are accorded. This tradition, originating from Abu Hanifa, has formed the foundation of a universalistic interpretation of Islam in the Ottoman Empire.
- This understanding is the basis of ‘open law’ and ‘open civilization’.

*Adamiyyah*  
Humanity as a Ground for Universal Human Rights in Islam



Steve Young, Global Executive Director of the Caux Round Table and Recep Senturk, Dean of the College of Islamic Studies at Hamad Bin Khalifa University, present to Pope Francis a copy of the book on the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad on May 15, 2024, after his general audience in St. Peter's Square.



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