

## Inter-faith Dialogue: Perspective of Isma'il Raji Al Faruqi's *Islam and Other Faiths*

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### Abstract

*The Muslims could do the same by relearning the dialogical process embedded in Islamic history all the way back to Adam (A). Dialogue is no stranger to Islam, for the Qur'ān is a Book of Dialogue between Allah and his creation, starting with the angels after Adam's creation and then with the Prophets. Although many publications by Muslim scholars have addressed the status to recapture this dialogue form of communication so that they can effectively analyze the present widening gap between Muslims themselves and Muslims and other faiths in the light of Shariah. Many Muslim institutions could lead such initiatives and widen the path for interfaith and intra-faith dialogue among Muslims. In this context, this paper highlights the Interfaith Dialogue which is part of Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi's writing- "Islam and other Faiths". Al-Faruqi, who saw the world through the prism of his Islamic faith and commitment, focused on issues of identity, history, belief, culture, social mores and international relations. He analysis of the strengths and weakness (past, present, and future), of Muslim societies, began with Islam-its presence in society and its necessary role in development, issues of identity, authenticity, acculturation, western political and cultural imperialism, inter-religious understating and dialogue.*

**Keywords:** Muslim, Interfaith Dialogue, Islam, Islamic faith, other faith.

### Introduction:

*There was a time in my life...when all I cared about was proving to myself that I could win my physical and intellectual existence form the West. But when I won it, it became meaningless. I asked myself: Who am I? A Palestinian, a philosopher, a liberal humanist? My answer was: I am Muslim.<sup>1</sup>-Isma'il al-Faruqi*

*Isma'il al-Faruqi (1921-1986) was an Arab Palestine exile who contextualized his faith in the West and emerged as a passionate activist-scholar intent on preparing the Muslim Ummah (community) to engage the Western World. He spent most of his long academic career engaging in various forms of interfaith study and dialogue from a Muslim perspective until he and his wife Lois were murdered in 1986<sup>2</sup>.*

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This paper is a humble attempt to the *Isma‘il al-Faruqi* works on Interfaith dialogue based on *Islam and the Other Faiths*. The study highlights some opinions of *Isma‘il al-Faruqi* on interfaith dialogue. *Al-Faruqi* was a major force in Islam’s dialogue with other world religions. As the collection of articles in *Islam and Other Faiths* demonstrates, *al-Faruqi*’s interest and involvement in interreligious dialogue was to continue throughout the rest of his life. He was a major voice and serious participant in the emerging fields of comparative religions and ecumenism. Here was a scholar who demonstrated his knowledge of the scriptures and scholarly tradition of the ‘*other*’. As he travelled around the world in his capacity as an Islamic scholar-activist, he was also an active participant in international ecumenical meetings. As a leading Muslim spokesperson for Islam, *al-Faruqi* became one of a handful of Muslim scholars known and respected in both western academic and ecumenical circles. His writings, speeches, participation and leadership role in interreligious meetings and organizations sponsored by the *World Council of Churches*, the *National Council of Churches*, the *Vatican*, and the *Inter-Religious Peace Colloquium* of which he was Vice-President from 1977 to 1982, made him the most visible and prolific Muslim contributor to the dialogue among world religions. In his writings, he set out the principles and bases for Muslim participation in inter-religious dialogue and social action<sup>3</sup>. *John L. Esposito* reflecting upon *Isma‘il al-Faruqi* career adds that:

“He was a major force in Islam’s dialogue with other world religions; and His writings, speeches and participation and leadership role in interreligious meetings and organizations ...made him the most visible and prolific Muslim contributor to the dialogue of world religions.<sup>4</sup>”

#### **Outline of *Islam and Other Faiths*:**

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the relationship of Islam to other faiths has never been more important. Globalization and the significant presence and force of Islam in the Muslim World and the West make civilizational dialogue an imperative. *Isma‘il al-Faruqi* provides a model to be emulated. While some might disagree at times with his analysis and conclusions, *al-Faruqi* was a scholar who earned his right to participate in an inter-civilizational dialogue<sup>5</sup>.

*Al-Faruqi's* book *Islam and Other Faiths* chapter three -*the Role of Islam in Global inter-Religious Dependence* mentioned that:

“For the Muslim, the relation of Islam to other religions has been established by God in His revelation, the Qur’ān. No Muslim, therefore, may deny it; since for him, the Qur’ān is the ultimate religious authority. Muslims regard the Qur’ān as God’s own word verbatim; the final and definitive revelation of His will for all space and time, for all mankind<sup>6</sup>.”

This chapter is divided into three part:

- i        *The Ideational Revelation*
- ii       *Practical Relation*
- iii      *Conclusion: Islam’s contribution to Global Religious Interdependence*

*Al- Faruqi* stated that the respect with which Islam regards Judaism and Christianity, their founders and scriptures, is not just courtesy but an acknowledgement of their religious truth. In this, Islam is unique, for no other religion in the world has yet made belief in the truth of other religions a necessary condition of its own faith and witness. God is identified as the source of all three religions; Islam reaffirms the same truths as presented by all the preceding Prophets-their revelation are one and the same as its own<sup>7</sup>.

## **I. The Ideational Revelation**

*Al-Fruqi* studies Islam’s ideational relation in three stages: that which pertains to Judaism and Christianity, that which pertains to the other religions, and that which pertains to religion as such, and hence to all humans whether they belong to any or no religion<sup>8</sup>.

### **A.     *Judaism and Christianity:***

Islam accords to these two religions special status. *First*, each of them is the religion of God. Their, on earth, Abraham, Moses, David, and Jesus, are the Prophets of God. What they have conveyed-the *Torah*, the *Psalms*, the *Evangels*-are revelations from God. To believe in these Prophets, in the revelations they have brought, is integral to the very faith of Islam. To disbelieve in them-nay, to discriminate between them<sup>9</sup>-

وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَقُولُوا آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا  
وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

*And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, "We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one; and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him."*

[Al-Qur'ān, 29:46]

فَذَلِكَ فَادْعُ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَقُلْ آمَنْتُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا  
وَرَبُّكُمْ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ

*So to that [religion of Allah] invite, [O Muhammad], and remain on a right course as you are commanded and do not follow their inclinations but say, "I have believed in what Allah has revealed of the Qur'an, and I have been commanded to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds, and for you your deeds. There is no [need for] argument between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the [final] destination."*

[Al-Qur'ān, 42-15]

أَمَّنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ  
وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

*The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say, "We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination."*

[Al-Qur'ān, 2:285]

Isma'il al-Faruqi writes:

*"The respect with which Islam regards Judaism and Christianity, their founders and scriptures, is not courtesy, but acknowledgement of religious truth. Islam sees them in the world not as 'other views' which it has to tolerate, but as standing 'de jure', as truly*

*revealed religions from God. Moreover, their legitimate status is neither socio-political, nor cultural or civilizations, but religious. In this, 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 and witness<sup>10</sup>.*”

### **B. The other Religions**

al-Faruqi words:

*“Islam thus lays the ground for a relation with all peoples, not only with Jews and Christians whose Prophets are confirmed in the Qur’ān. As 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 as equally honored, 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<sup>11</sup>.*”

### **C. Islam’s Relation to all Humans**

Al-Faruqi argues that:

*“Islam has related itself, equally, to all other religions, whether recognized, historical or otherwise. Indeed, even the- religionists and atheists-whatever rehabilitate them as integral members of society”<sup>12</sup>.*

## **II. Practical Relation**

In this book al-Faruqi has well thought-out:

*“Under percepts, whether explicitly revealed in the ‘ipsis sima verba’ of God or implied therein, the Prophet Muhammad □ worked out and proclaimed the Constitutions of the first Islamic state. He had barely arrived in Madinah when he brought together all the inhabitants of Madinah and its environs and promulgated with them the Islamic state and its constitution. 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. Four years after the prophet’s demise in 10 AH/632 CE, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab(C. 581-644), 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<sup>13</sup>.”*

### **III. Conclusion: Islam’s Contribution to Global Religious Interdependence**

Islam’s potential contribution to world order, to inter-religious dialogue, understanding and living, to global religious interdependence may be very significant<sup>14</sup>.

- **First**, Islam has 1400 years of experience in inter-religious intercourse between the widest variety of the ethnic and religious entities.
- **Second**, with Judaism and Christianity, the two other surviving Semitic religions, Islam built a relation of common origin, of one and the same God, of one and the same tradition of prophets and revelation, tantamount to self-identification with them.
- **Third**, this relation of identity with Judaism and Christianity which Islam established with the authority of revelation, the Muslims extended to cover all other religions on the basis of their common origin in God, and in a necessary *religio naturalis* innate to all humans.
- **Fourth**, following theory with practice and implementation, Islam devised the *millah* system as Islam-led federation of religious communities, guaranteeing their freedom, and girding it with rights and obligations clearly laid down in Islamic Law and invokable in the courts by individuals as well as communities, Muslim as well as non-Muslim.
- **Fifth**, rather than scepticism, doubt, secularism and 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.
- **Sixth**, without falling into dogmatism, Islam has laid its claim rationally and critically to seeking to convince the others in freedom and responsibility. It did not dilute its claim, nor renounce the exclusivity of religious truth, while ever maintaining its esteem for other religious claims.
- **Seventh, and finally**, Islam managed 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.

### **The Basis for Inter-Religious Cooperation: Islamic Humanism**

In *Islam and other Faiths*, al Faruqi pointed out that the Islam's theory of other faiths, backed by the experience of fourteen centuries, still commands the loyalty and support of a billion Muslims around the world. It provides us with the best foundation for a religious world-ecumene in which the religions honour one another's claims without denying their own. It also provides us with the only legitimate foundation for seeking the religious unity of mankind. If inter-religious dialogue is to move beyond the exchange of information and courtesies, it has to have a religious norm in terms of which it can compose the differences between the religions. This must be common to the dialoguing parties. Islam finds this norm in *dīn al-fiṭrah*. It is also essential that the dialoguing parties feel a measure of freedom *vis-à-vis* their historical religious traditions. No idea is more conducive to such freedom than Islam's suggestion that the religious tradition is a human outgrowth from primal *dīn al-fiṭrah*. It was this Islamic idea which incepted in history the academic study of religion involving a critical assessment of the historical authenticity of the religious traditions of mankind, of their Holy texts, traditions, and practices. Scholarship in religion, i.e., critical analysis of texts and history, has begun in the West in the Enlightenment. Islamic Scholarship in religion is a whole millennium older and has an advantage over the most advanced scholarship of today, namely, that its stand is not one of skepticism. The skeptic may ask questions in religion; but he may not answer them<sup>15</sup>.

It did, in fact, exist in the Muslim world until western imperialism, colonialism and Zionism came to subvert it. Their effort, however, has been in vain. The Muslim will continue to believe in and work for this unity, confident that his God whom he knows to be one as truth is one, cannot but desire one religion, to be entered into by all men freely and deliberately, because it is itself when it is the result of personal conviction, not of a blind wager, but a certainty reached after critical weighing of all the options, of all the evidence. In following up this ideal, nothing could be more worthwhile to the Muslim to subsidise and to promote whether in the Muslim world, or the non-Muslim world than the comparative study of religion<sup>16</sup>.

## **Al-Faruqi's Interfaith Dialogue**

As interesting as it may be as a narrative of his life, does not offer a complete picture of al-Faruqi nor does it explain the factors and influences that shaped his thought. This is more difficult to discover because it deals with motivation, personal goals, various influences and issues of identity. Essentially, the question is: why was al-Faruqi interested in and committed to interfaith study and dialogue<sup>17</sup>?

### ***What is inter-faith dialogue?***

Interfaith dialogue is a method of communication among people, an undertaking that respects the differences of the other. It allows for true listening in a safe environment and provides possibilities for each participant's self-awareness to grow. Yet even though it is a key element of the faith and tradition<sup>18</sup>.

## **Al-Faruqi's Dialogue**

al-Faruqi's basic approach to interfaith-dialogue must follow these ground rules<sup>19</sup>:

1. *No religious pronouncement is beyond the reach of criticism.*
2. *Internal coherence must exist.*
3. *Proper historical perspective must be maintained*
4. *Correspondence with reality must exist*
5. *Freedom from absolutized scriptural figurization*
6. *Dialogue should be carried on in areas where is a greater possibility of success, e.g., the field of ethical duties.*

## **Themes**

According to Faruqi, three themes for dialogue are discernible<sup>20</sup>:

1. *Contemporary Muslims and Christians are life-affirming in regard to God's creation and hold that man has a unique task to perfect this world. The theological usefulness of the notion of original, hereditary, collective, and vicarious sin are gone sin is personal and based on free-will; it is primarily located in misperception, and its solution is in education rather than forgiveness. Sin is not necessary nor is it predominant in human*

*affairs. For modern Muslims and Christians the way out of the predicament of sin is in human rather than divine hands. Salvation is achieved by continuous education and each person must educate himself.*

2. *An awareness of the imperative of doing the will of God exists. Former notions of justification are insufficient, justification is a continuous process which does not consist of confession to God, but of recognition of real values and the following of the long, hard road in reaching these values. Knowledge is a virtue. Neither great sin nor serious repentance is typical of most people, hence the confession of faith has but mediocre value. Justification is a psychic release which may enable a man with the determination to reach his goal but is not a value in itself.*
3. *Every man has an equal imperative to fulfill his moral mission which is yet unfulfilled on a world-wide basis. Redemption is only being accomplished by man rather than already having taken place. Justification and redemption are but a prelude to the perception and pursuit of value (God's will). This is possible to all people and has to take place all the time.*

He argues that these reconstructions of religious thought are compatible with both Islam and Christianity but it is unlikely that the latter will be willing to accept these tenets. Roman Catholics through *Vatican II* have made too few advances in that respect and are still too condescending toward Muslims. Protestant acceptance of the above ground rules could lead to useful dialogue<sup>21</sup>.

### **The Methodology of Dialogue:**

Granted then that dialogue is necessary and desirable, that its final effect should be the establishment of truth and it's serious, free candid and conscious acceptance by all men, the specific principles of methodology which guarantee its meaningfulness and guard against its degeneration into propaganda, brainwashing or soul- purchasing. Outline of his methodology following<sup>22</sup>:

1. *No communication of any sort may be made ex-cathedra, beyond critique. No man may speak with silencing authority when the man was an infant, and infant man may have accepted and submitted. To the mature man, however, His command is not whimsical and peremptory. He argues for, explains and justifies His command, and is not offended*

*if a man asks for such justification. Divine revelation is authoritative, but not authoritarian; for God knows that the fulfilment of His command which issues from the rational conviction of its intrinsic worth is superior to that which is blind. Fully aware of his moral freedom, modern man cannot be subjected; nor can he subject himself to any being without a cause; nor can such cause be incomprehensible, irrational, esoteric or secret.*

2. *No communication may violate the laws of internal coherence mentioned earlier. The Paradox is legitimate only when it is not final, and the principle overarching thesis and antithesis is given. Otherwise, discourse will issue in unintelligible riddles.*
3. *No communication may violate the laws of external coherence; that is to say, man's religious history. The past may not be regarded as unknowable, and historiography assumed to stand on a par with either poetry or fiction. Historical reality is discoverable by empirical evidence, and it is man's duty and greatness to press ever forward toward the genuine understanding and reconstruction of his actual past. The limits of evidence are the only limits of historical knowledge.*
4. *No communication may violate the laws of correspondence with reality but should be open to corroboration or refutation by reality. If the laws of nature are not today what they were before Albert Einstein (1879-1955) or Copernicus (1473-1543), it is not because there are no laws to nature, nor because the reality is unknowable, but because there is a knowable reality which Corroborates the new insights. The physic, ethical and religious sensitivities of the people, of the age, are part of this reality; and man's knowledge of them is most relevant for the Muslim- Christian dialogue we are about to begin.*
5. *Dialogue presupposes an attitude of freedom vis-s vis the canonical figurization. Jesus is a point at which the Christian has contact with God. Through him, God has sent down a revelation. Just as this revelation had to have its carrier in Jesus, it had to have a space-time circumstance in the historical development of Israel. Equally, Muhammad ﷺ, the Prophet, is a point at which the Muslim has contact with God Who sent a revelation through him. Muhammad ﷺ was the carrier of that revelation, and Arab consciousness and history provided the space-time circumstance for its advent. Once the advent of these revelations was complete, and men began to put their*

*faith there in numbers and confronted new problems calling for new solutions, there arose the need to put the revelation in concepts for the ready use of the understanding, in percepts for that of the intuitive faculties, and in legal notions and provisions for the guidance of behaviour.*

6. *Islam regards the Bible as a record of the divine word but a record with which the human hand had tampered, with holy as well as unholy designs. Secondly, while Christianity regards God as man's fellow, a person so moved by man's failure that He goes to the length of sacrifice for his redemption, Islam regards God primarily as the just Being whose absolute justice-with all the reward and doom for man that it enjoins-is not only sufficient mercy, but the only mercy coherent with divine nature. Whereas the God of Christianity acts in man's salvation, the God of Islam commands him to do that which brings that salvation about. Thirdly, while Christianity regards Jesus as the second person of a triune God, Islam regards him as God's human Prophet and messenger. Fourthly, while Christian's regards space-time and history as hopelessly incapable of embodying God's kingdom. Islam regards God's Kingdom as truly realizable-indeed as meaningful at all-only within the contexts of space-time and history. Fifthly, while Christianity regards the Church as the body of Christ endowed with ontic significance forever and ever, Islam regards the community of faith as an instrument mobilized for the realization of the divine pattern in the world, an instrument whose total value is dependent upon its fulfillment or otherwise of that task.*

### **Themes for dialogue**

*Al-Faruqi explained that in the contemporary ethical reality of Muslims and Christians, three dominant facts are discernible<sup>23</sup>:*

*Firstly, the modern Muslim and Christian regard themselves as standing in a state of innocence.*

*Secondly, the modern Muslim and Christian are acutely aware of the necessity and importance of recognizing God's will, of recognizing His command.*

*Thirdly, the modern Muslim and Christian recognizes that the moral vocation or mission of man in this world has yet to be fulfilled, and by him; that the measure of his*

*fulfillment thereof is the sole measure of his ethical worth; that in respect to this mission or vocation all men start out in this world with a carte blanche on which nothing is entered except what each individual earn with his own doing or not-doing.*

### **Dialectic of the themes with the Figurizations:**

*Al-Faruqi* writes on the different dialectic Figurizations. This part of the book is divided into three sections.

#### **A. Modern Man and the State of Innocence:**

The notion of original sin, of the fallibility of man, appears from the perspective of contemporary ethical reality to have outlived its meaningfulness<sup>24</sup>.

- i. *Sin is, above all, a moral category; it is not ontological. For modern man, there is no such thing as a sin of creation, of nature, of man as such, no sin as entry into existence or space-time.*
- ii. *Moral Sin is not hereditary, neither is it vicarious. Or communal, but always personal, always implying a free choice and a deliberate deed on the part of a moral agent in full possession and mastery of his powers.*
- iii. *Sin is not only a doing, whether introverted, as when the doing is strictly within the person's soul directly affecting neither his body nor anything else outside his soul, or extroverted, as when the doing is spatial involving his body, the souls and bodies of others, or nature. Such doing is only the spatio-temporal consequence of sin.*
- iv. *It is within the realm of perception that the modern Muslim and Christian can make sense out of the Christian figurization's notion of sin. From this perspective, sin is man's prosperity to ethical misperception. It is an empirical datum whose ubiquitousness is very grave and disturbing. Nonetheless, it is not necessary. The general prosperity to ethical misperception is counterbalanced by the propensity to sound ethical perception which is at least as universal as it's opposite.*

Hence these points bring out what *al-Faruqi* explained his book:

*Ethical misperception, in all its varieties, is that which we ought to guard against, to avoid and to combat in ourselves, in others and in all men. Indubitably, we must become fully aware of the enemy, of his tactics and defences, of his nature and constitution, if we are to*

*fight him successfully...to be always conscious of this disposition, i.e. to keep it constantly in mind as the negative object of the moral struggle, is the peculiar merit of the fathers emphasis on sin<sup>25</sup>.*

Finally, it is here that al- Faruqi says the dialogue must move towards a clear answer to the ethical question<sup>26</sup>:

*“If we keep our balance, we will recognize that the right mental and emotional attitude to sin is to keep it in consciousness in order to avoid and to surmount it. The road hitherto is and can only be education, the axiological anamnesis which causes a man to see for himself, to perceive value and expose his own ethos to the determination by it. The teacher in general, whether mother, father or elder, teacher by concepts, or by example, is precisely the helper who helps man perceive rightly and thereby surmount the sinful misperceptions. Education is the unique processus of salvation. No ritual of water, therefore, or ablutions or baptism, of initiation or confirmation, no acknowledgement of symbols or authority, no confession or contrition, can by themselves do this job for a man. Every person must do it for himself, though he may be assisted by the more experienced; and everybody can.”*

### **B. Justifications for Declaring or Making Good:**

*Al-Faruqi* defines the figurization created by the fathers, the contemporary Muslim and Christian observe that its notion of justifications as a declaring or making good the person who has to acknowledge the figurization does not accord with contemporary reality. Here three considerations are in order. **First**, where ethical misperception has been the factor the rule, no confession of any item in the figurization will transform misperception into perception. **Second**, education, as we have defined it, is a long and continuous growth which has no divisions admitting of the representation of its processes as a before and an after. **Third**, the perception of genuine value is only the beginning of the process of felicitous achievement. Beyond it yet lies the longest and hardest part of the road, the realization in space-time of that which had been correctly perceived<sup>27</sup>.

### ***C. Redemption as Ontic Fait Accompli:***

In the words of *al-Faruqi*, the Figurations of the fathers, the modern Muslim and Christian recognize that redemption is not a fait accompli in as much as the filling of space-time with realized value is not yet, but has still to be done by man; that it is man's works, his actualization of divine will on earth as it is in heaven, that constitutes redemption. Were redemption a fait accompli in this sense, i.e. were the ethical job or duty of man towards God done and finished, his cosmic status, and hence his dignity, would be impaired. In that case, morality itself falls to the ground<sup>28</sup>:

Al-Faruqi writes:<sup>29</sup>

*“Ethical salvation, on the other hand, i.e. the actualization of divine will or moral value, is a progressive achievement open to all men by birth; and it is judged and measured on the scale of an absolute justice that knows no alternative to or attenuation of the principle ‘Better among you is the more righteous’, for ‘whose doeth good an atom’s weight will see it then, and who so doeth ill an atom’s weight will see it then.’”*

### **Analysis:**

Although many Publications by Muslim scholars have addressed the status of the “other” in Islam, Muslim religious institutions would be wise to recapture this dialogic form of communication so that they can effectively analyze the present widening gap between Muslims themselves and Muslims and other faiths in the light of Shariah. Many Muslim Institutions (viz., Al-Azhar, the Organization of the Islamic Council (OIC), various fatwa councils in Saudi Arabia, and so on) could lead such initiatives and widen the path for interfaith and intra-faith dialogue among Muslims. Dialogue cannot be left to scholars alone. This need for skill in dialogue has become more urgent since 9/11, for Muslims in the West have faced a terrible test. Many Muslims, especially Arabs, have been arrested, imprisoned, interrogated, and humiliated. In direct response, Christian and Jewish groups already active in interfaith dialogue reached out to their Muslim brothers and sisters. Muslims from around the world expressed their condolences to Americans with heartfelt words that recalled the Prophet's method of teaching through *adab* and compassion. In turn, many Muslims reaffirmed their faith in Islam. As a result of 9/11, many Muslims realized the need to

dialogue with Western individuals and institutions in order to express and share in the ensuring sorrow while feelings secure in their own religion<sup>30</sup>.

### Conclusion:

In his writings in *Islam and Other Faiths*, he set out principles and bases for Muslim participation in inter-religious dialogue and social action. As in many other areas, *al-Faruqi* served as an example to other Muslim scholars of the importance of studying other faiths seriously<sup>31</sup>.

*Al-Faruqi* was assassinated together with his wife in 1986. They were savagely stabbed to death in their house by a mentally deranged black American Muslim apparently known to the Muslim circles of Temple University. The reasons for their murder remain a mystery to this day. *Muhammad Shafiq*, his biographer, interprets the murder as a Zionist-American conspiracy.<sup>32</sup>

### References

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<sup>1</sup>John L. Esposito, John Obert Voll, *Makers of Contemporary Islam*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, P. 27.

<sup>2</sup>Charles Fletcher, *Muslim-Christian Engagement in the Twentieth Century: The Principles of Inter-faith Dialogue and the Work of Ismail Al-Faruq*, U.K: I.B. Tauris, 2014, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ismail al Faruqi, *Islam and Other Faiths*, edited by Ataulloh Siddiqui, UK: The Islamic Foundation and IIIT, 1998, PP. IX-X.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Fletcher, *op.cit*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>5</sup>Ismail al Faruqi, *op.cit*, P. X.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>7</sup> Ismail al-Faruqi, (1998), [Review of the Book *Islam and Other Faiths* by Ruqaiyyah Waris Maqsood, American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, vol.6, issue.1, p. 125), ISSN-0742-6763.

<sup>8</sup>Ismail al-Faruqi, *op.cit*, p.73.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid*, pp.73-74.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid*, p. 79.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid*, p. 81.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid*, P. 85.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 91-92.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid*, p.152.

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<sup>16</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 152-153.

<sup>17</sup>Charles Fletcher, *op.cit*, P.21.

<sup>18</sup>Muhammad Shafiq, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Interfaith Dialogue: A Guide for Muslims*, UK: International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2007, p. 7-8.

<sup>19</sup>Ismail al Faruqi, *op.cit*,P.242.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid*,P. 242.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 242-243.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 250-255.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid*, pp.256- 258.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 258-260.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid*,p.261.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid*,p.262.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid*, pp.262-263.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid*, p.266.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid*, p.268.

<sup>30</sup>Muhammad Shafiq, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Interfaith Dialogue: A Guide for Muslims*, UK: International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2007, pp.6-7.

<sup>31</sup>Ismail al-Faruqi, *op.cit*,P. x.

<sup>32</sup>Mona Abaza, *Debates on Islam and Knowledge in Malaysia and Egypt: Shifting Worlds*, USA: Routledge, 2013, P. 80.