

**Summary of research to the part of the universities in Italy and
some civilian and culture organizations**

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**Non-violence and tolerance
in Arab-Islamic thought**

By

Dr. Hussain Shaban*

*** Iraqi thinker and writer, Vice President of The Non Violence University and Human rights (AUNOHR) Beirut, and Professor of Non- Violence and Human Rights subject, and The International Law and Humanitarian International Law. Author of over 60 books within International Law, Constitution Law, Politics, Ideological conflict, In the Jurisprudence of Contemporary Religions, Nationalities and Ethnic Issues, Culture, Literature, Human Rights and Civil Society.**

This research begins with a central question: Is violence an Arab phenomenon, an Islamic specialty or part of a global phenomenon? If the phenomenon is widespread and influences the Arab and Islamic worlds, there are objective and subjective reasons for the outbreak, especially in international and regional wars that have taken place in the Middle East over the past four decades.

In addition to this, civil conflicts, particularly sectarian, religious and ethnic groups, have increased sharply, especially in light of the continuing phenomena [of violence] in underdevelopment, illiteracy and the social inequality between the rich and the poor, as well as attempts to impose hegemony, external dependence and looting the wealth and resources of the region.

Socially and psychologically, this research considers violence a sign of cowardice and not a courageous guide, because as far as the other is concerned, it also works to destroy oneself by removing a part of its humanity. The adversaries of the idea of nonviolence consider this as an unrealistic ideology, especially under the rule of the culture of violence, which is the rule in force, while nonviolence is the exception.

However, the spiritual and moral force of non-violence owned in resisting violence, puts more than a question on the concepts of weakness and surrender, showing its spiritual and moral strength and ability to confront violence in a more effective manner.

This research argues that the effective way to resist violence is non-violence, which has exceptional power, and that confronting violence with violence will only turn the wheel of violence. Note that tyrants and the oppressors are the ones who choose violence. The oppressed and the advocates of justice should not resort to the means of their enemy, who has greater power, so that this is a justification for their destruction, and this is different to self-defence, which is recognized by all legal and religious laws.

This research considers that violence pollutes the noble principles and values, two vices that do not give birth to virtue; violence that does not generate peace and two crimes [of violence] do not create justice.

The next standpoint in this research poses the important question: **Is non-violence a Western product?** Analysis of this will focus on preachers of non-violence: Indian **Mahatama Gandhi**, African-American **Martin Luther King**, Russian writer **Leo Tolstoy**, Pakistani **Abdul Ghaffar Khan** [also known as “Bacha Khan,” meaning ‘king of chiefs’], South African leader **Nelson Mandela**, and I would like to add to them my own colleague from the Academic University of Non-Violence, French contemporary philosopher of non-violence, **Jean-Marie Muller**.

The research presents the relationship of purpose by means of the antithesis of the thesis of the Italian thinker **Machiavelli**, who said, “the end justifies the means.”

There is no honest person without honest means, and if a person cannot control the ‘ends’ because it is far away, **what he can control is the means**, because the latter is concrete, the ‘end’ concerns the future, while the means is responsible for the present. Knowing that the means represents the honour of the end and is a measure of the assessment of goals, objectives, ideas, philosophies, principles and practices, the unity of means by the ends represents a real force. Power, according to this concept, does not mean the use of weapons or violence to compel the other to obey or to abandon his ideas and beliefs, but the power to uphold the right and resist violence with the power of spiritual non-violence. According to **Buddha**, “if we repeat hatred with hatred, when will hatred end?”

Thus, the non-violent researcher is considered to be a civilized, civil, modern and humane product. Perhaps our need to circulate it in the Arab and Muslim worlds is more urgent than other societies for the reasons we have mentioned. It requires first and foremost the promotion of citizenship based on freedoms, equality, justice, especially social justice, joint and participatory, just as we need the **rule of law, independence of the judiciary, recognition of diversity, pluralism and the right to disagree**. This will provide a platform for the

dissemination of the values of tolerance and the rejection of the spirit of hatred, discrimination and prohibition of sectarianism, making the State's authority over all references.

This research considers violence to be a political issue as well as an economic, social, cultural, educational, legal and religious issue. At the same time, it is a security issue. The spreading of the values of tolerance will reduce the cycle of violence on the foundation of non-violence. If there are difficulties due to many restraints, cultural and social obstacles, Slavic thinker Slavy Gijek said: “ We ask the impossible, because we want the possible.”

Thus, nonviolence becomes a vital necessity and a fundamental issue, because everything around us is marked by **violence and intolerance**. Over the last decade alone, the aggravation of this phenomenon can be monitored by:

1. **The terrorism** perpetrated by al-Qaeda and later By Isis (Daesh) and a number of terrorist organizations, including terrorist acts in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen and many Arab countries and their extensions to the West.
2. **The chaos that followed the so-called Arab Spring:** especially in Libya and Yemen, and to some extent in Egypt and Tunisia, not to mention the escalation in Syria and its

continuation in Iraq since the US occupation in 2003 and until now.

3. **The continued suffering of the Palestinian people** and the failure to reach a peaceful and just solution to the Palestinian question based on the right to self-determination, through repeated Israeli aggression.

If these are objective reasons, there are additionally subjective reasons, particularly since many currents still view non-violence with a negative perspective, and scepticism of his intentions and dimensions, glorifying violence and often constructed on false readings of religious texts to show the virtues of violence justified by its use. Perhaps the intellectual background of such opinions is distributed as follows:

1. **The current denial** - who refuses to talk about non-violence and claims to have the truth and his preferences over the other, especially by calling for violence.
2. **The current isolationist** - which claims leadership and is built on self-amplification and isolates itself from historical development, any invitation to non-violence is a dubious invitation.

3. **The compromise** - which takes some of what is contained in the philosophy of nonviolence and rejects some, that is, an eclectic stream, a status between the two houses.
4. **The current trend** – the opposite of the incarnate and incessant tendencies that transcends the compromise. It calls for severing the connection to heritage and history if the Arab and Islamic world wants progress. It represents a goal of identity and privacy, claiming cosmopolitanism and inclusiveness.

It deals more openly with the world, based on common human values, interaction and civilized communication among different cultures, viewing non-violence as a spiritual concept. It is not a concession of rights, appeasement or compromise.