



### Wealth Obsession and Disillusionment: The Teachings of Islam and the Perceptions of Edward Morgan Forster

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#### Abstract

This article explores the obsession with wealth and the disillusionment it causes through the teachings of Islam and the perceptions of EM Forster. Excessive greed creates an insatiable desire for power and property, leading to unhappiness and conflict. In his essay "My Wood," EM Forster illustrates how property ownership can affect the human mind and the ultimate consequences it entails. Islamic teachings, which also warn of the dangers of wealth obsession, offer a similar perspective. This study shows that many people endlessly chase wealth without understanding their actual needs. If they recognized this limit, they would stop the pursuit. The article concludes that by following Islamic teachings and understanding Forster's insights, individuals can overcome wealth obsession and achieve a peaceful and fulfilling life.

**Keywords:** Wealth Obsession, Disillusionment, Impact of Wealth, Teachings of Islam, Forster's Perceptions

#### Introduction

Conflict of interest has always played a crucial role in creating chaos within families, societies, and nations.<sup>1</sup> Greed for money or property has

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<sup>1</sup> Youniss, James, Susan Bales, Verona Christmas-Best, Marcelo Diversi, Milbrey McLaughlin, and Rainer Silbereisen. "Youth civic engagement in the twenty-first century." *Journal of research on adolescence* 12, no. 1 (2002): 121-148. Castles, Stephen.

long been considered one of the most powerful and misleading forces in generating worldwide chaos and conflicts.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the founders and preachers of all major religions, as well as prominent writers, have sought to convince their followers and readers to avoid greed, as the resulting conflicts have destroyed many civilizations and brought immense suffering to humanity.

Edward Morgan Forster (EM Forster) was one such writer who experienced the pervasive effects of an obsession with wealth and recorded his perceptions in his writings.<sup>3</sup> Although Forster admitted that he did not believe in any particular 'Belief',<sup>4</sup> he advocated for curiosity, an open mind, belief in good taste, and faith in the human race.<sup>5</sup> These key humanistic characteristics, evident in his writings, clearly align with the teachings of major religions, particularly Islam. His perceptions of property ownership, described in his essay "My Wood,"<sup>6</sup> strongly support the Islamic philosophy regarding wealth obsession and its consequences. Islam explicitly highlights the dangers of wealth obsession and how to become disillusioned with it. Although Forster was not a follower of Islam, his experiences and understanding of wealth obsession and its potential hazards remarkably parallel Islamic teachings.<sup>7</sup>

It is an inherent part of human nature to pursue great wealth, invest significant effort in accumulating and enjoying it, and eventually spend it to achieve grandeur and power, social prestige, luxurious pleasures, as well as

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"Migration and community formation under conditions of globalization." *International migration review* 36, no. 4 (2002): 1143-1168.

<sup>2</sup> Risen, James. *Pay any price: Greed, power, and endless war*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Gerber, Helmut E. "EM Forster: an annotated checklist of writings about him." *ELT: English Fiction in Transition* 2, no. 1 (1959): 4-27.

<sup>4</sup> Forster, Edward Morgan. *What I believe*. London: Hogarth Press, 1939.

<sup>5</sup> Grazer, Brian, and Charles Fishman. *A Curious Mind Expanded Edition: The Secret to a Bigger Life*. Simon and Schuster, 2023. Kelley, Tom, and Jonathan Littman. *The ten faces of innovation: IDEO's strategies for beating the devil's advocate and driving creativity throughout your organization*. Currency, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Sultzbach, Kelly. *Ecocriticism in the modernist imagination: Forster, Woolf, and Auden*. Cambridge University Press, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Karsh, Efraim. *Islamic imperialism: A history*. Yale University Press, 2013.

continuous peace and happiness. People are often overwhelmed by the illusion that wealth can empower them to do and have whatever they desire. This belief and perception lead them to an eternal and limitless desire for wealth or property.<sup>8</sup> However, in the end, they discover the limited capacity of wealth and realize that it cannot bring them happiness, peace, selfless relationships, or moral upliftment or spiritual enrichment, which bring true peace and happiness. The teachings of major religions and the literary works of great writers around the world frequently highlight the limited capacity of wealth to fulfill the desires cherished by most people. They also warn about the tangible and intangible hazards associated with this.

This research aims to uncover the reasons why people become obsessed with wealth and its impacts. It also seeks to show how Islamic teachings and the experiences of EM Forster in this regard can motivate people to become disillusioned with this obsession. Islam prescribes a comprehensive code of human conduct and provides complete ways of life that address all human issues, either implicitly or explicitly.<sup>9</sup> Wealth obsession and disillusionment with it have always been major issues in human lives. This issue is complex and difficult to explain, as people both accept and reject this fact. Therefore, this issue has drawn special attention from writers and preachers throughout time. Islam addresses this issue in the Holy Quran and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Great writers have attempted to address this issue in their writings. EM Forster, one such writer, exemplified the causes and effects of wealth obsession, particularly in his essay "My Wood" and his great novel *Howards End*.

## Research Methods

In this research, it was attempted to find out the reasons for why people get obsessed with wealth, its aftermaths, and the solutions to it in the light of the teachings of Islam and the spiritual enlightenment of EM Forster

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<sup>8</sup> Jackson, Philip C. *Introduction to artificial intelligence*. Courier Dover Publications, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> Avery, Harry C. "Heracles, Philoctetes, Neoptolemus." *Hermes* 93, no. H. 3 (1965): 279-297.

that he experienced after purchasing a piece of land. As this research is about values, opinions, beliefs, behaviors, experiences, subjective judgment, and various social contexts, I chose, in keeping with the research objectives, qualitative research methodology to collect and analyze the data, and reach the goal.

The Grounded Theory Approach, one of the approaches followed in qualitative research, was used to collect the data. It was first attempted to find out the reasons why people get obsessed with wealth, and how to address the issue of disillusionment based on religious philosophy and great writers' thoughts. The teachings of Islam and the perceptions of EM Forster were especially considered to justify the hypothesis that people hanker after wealth to enjoy happiness, pleasure, and comfort without knowing what makes them happy and comfortable, and how much wealth they need for it. References from some other religious scriptures, books, and journals also were sought to ensure triangulation, justification, and validity. To conduct the research, to make inferences and decisions, textual analysis was used throughout the study. To establish the argument and prove the hypothesis, secondary sources *i.e.*, books, journals, websites, etc. were used.

### **The Reasons for Getting Obsessed with Wealth**

The word 'wealth' derived from the Old English 'wealh' means 'to be well' but in the modern English, the meaning has changed to 'a great amount of money'. From the psychological and spiritual point of view, wealth is something that enhances the quality of life through deeper meaning and aesthetic aspects of life and values that do not necessarily come from money.<sup>10</sup> People become obsessed with wealth for lack of the knowledge that psychological wealth is the true riches that include attitudes towards life, spiritual development, social support, health, material resources, and the activities people are engaged in. Psychological riches come from happiness and life satisfaction. If we want to get disillusioned with obsession, we need to know first why people get obsessed with wealth. Very often, we do not

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<sup>10</sup> Zohar, Danah, and Ian Marshall. *Spiritual capital: Wealth we can live by*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2004.

long for wealth based on our needs and necessity rather “we all accept or create illusions and cling to them”.<sup>11</sup> Some people want wealth to become happy in life but upon achieving it, their thirst for wealth increases, and it makes them unhappier than before.<sup>12</sup> The increase in wealth makes people more wealth-hungry than before. Scientists from the University of Queensland found in a study that people of higher social status and wealth desire more wealth and status even when they already have got these and are well-set in families and societies. They always feel identity threat in fear of losing the wealth by which they like to define themselves.<sup>13</sup>

### Impact of Wealth on Human Minds

As human beings, we have various types of materialistic needs that are always on the rise from the bottom of the hierarchy to the upward. The hierarchy of needs according to Abraham Maslow is related to human physiology, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization.<sup>14</sup> People want properties for hedonistic purposes and very often they take these for granted for everything they want in their lives. But, as a matter of fact, we neither can consume all the wealth or properties we achieve nor we can preserve it for generations. Despite this fact, the thirst for gathering wealth never stops. The ‘Holy Qur’an’ says, “Striving for more distracts you until you go into your graves”. Our thirst for wealth increases with the increase in our age. In this regard, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, “The son of Adam (*i.e.*, man) grows old and so also two (desires) grow with him,

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<sup>11</sup> Fedor, Emily, MaryCatherine Heighton, and Victoria Freniere. "Collaboration of Healthcare Professions to Provide Interprofessional Experiences through the Eyes of Learners." *Health, Interprofessional Practice and Education* 4, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>12</sup> Olivia, Monita, and Hamid Nikraz. "Strength and water penetrability of fly ash geopolymer concrete." *Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences* 6, no. 7 (2011): 70-78.

<sup>13</sup> Muldoon, Orla T., S. Alexander Haslam, Catherine Haslam, Tegan Cruwys, Michelle Kearns, and Jolanda Jetten. "The social psychology of responses to trauma: Social identity pathways associated with divergent traumatic responses." *European Review of Social Psychology* 30, no. 1 (2019): 311-348.

<sup>14</sup> McLeod, John. "Beginning postcolonialism." In *Beginning postcolonialism (second edition)*. Manchester University Press, 2020.

*i.e.*, his love for wealth and (a wish for) a long life".<sup>15</sup> Besides, the possession of vast properties or wealth may also affect the lives of other people as "power is a force that needs an object: to have power, a person has to have it over something, or someone".<sup>16</sup> Money cannot ensure all we need in life. It creates a kind of illusion that can neither be dispelled nor caught. Bill Gates, the world's one of the richest man at present expressed his feelings of being the richest man this way "I wish I wasn't ... There's nothing good that comes out of that".<sup>17</sup> The co-founder of Microsoft told a conference in 2006 when he was the richest man in the world.<sup>18</sup>

Some people want the property to lead a happy life but wealth or money cannot always make us happy because "after we have our basic needs covered, buying objects does not influence our satisfaction with life or feeling of happiness".<sup>19</sup> However, only our mental ability to feel happy makes us happy because happiness is completely a state of mind. But they also want to get all of their problems in their lives solved with money. However, the thirst for money or wealth adds additional hassles and troubles to our lives instead of making our lives trouble-free as our thirst for wealth can never be satisfied. In this regard, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "The seekers of two concerns are never satisfied: the seeker of knowledge and the seeker of the world (of wealth)".<sup>20</sup> Properties cannot be taken for granted for anything as it is volatile and inconstant. About the inconstancy of properties, Gautama Buddha said, "Monks, the earth property is inconstant, changeable, alterable".<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Moreno, Jorge E., Firyal S. Khan-Dawood, and Joseph W. Goldzieher. "Natural family planning: suitability of the CUETM method for defining the time of ovulation." *Contraception* 55, no. 4 (1997): 233-237.

<sup>16</sup> Beck, Judith S. *Cognitive behavior therapy: Basics and beyond*. Guilford Publications, 2020.

<sup>17</sup> Dolan, Timothy E. "The Evolution of Leadership Theories." *Leadership for the Future: Lessons from the Past, Current Approaches, and Future Insights* (2021): 2.

<sup>18</sup> Burkeman, Oliver. "The phoney war on Christmas." *The Guardian* 8 (2006).

<sup>19</sup> Thompson, John N. *Interaction and coevolution*. University of Chicago Press, 2014.

<sup>20</sup> Abeje, Misganaw Teshager, Atsushi Tsunekawa, Nigussie Haregeweyn, Zerihun Nigussie, Enyew Adgo, Zemen Ayalew, Mitsuru Tsubo et al. "Communities' livelihood vulnerability to climate variability in Ethiopia." *Sustainability* 11, no. 22 (2019): 6302.

<sup>21</sup> Bhikkhu, Ānandajoti. *Safeguard Recitals*. Buddhist Publication Society, 2004.

**Forster and Islam on Wealth**

Human beings have an irresistible yearning for accumulating wealth. They desire, plan, toil, and acquire wealth seemingly for the good. In the essay 'My Wood', Forster showed in a convincing and argumentative way how the feeling of possessing property undermines a nice heart slowly but certainly. He consciously kept the discussion limited only to the psychological aspects of owning properties. He made clear to us the four harmful effects of possessing properties on human minds, and the realization of this fact may help us get disillusioned with wealth obsession. His realization of the effects of possessing properties on his mind is as follows:

Firstly, EM Forster points out that the possession of properties makes a man feel heavy – physically, financially, egoistically, and psychologically. It makes people epicurean and voluptuous and eventually may make a man physically heavy resulting in the inconvenience of free and easy movement. Even if a person does not become physically fat, he will likely be too overburdened with egoism and chauvinism to move and visit the people and places he likes. Possessing properties or enormous wealth increases the volume of work and engagement in various activities because the owner always feels an impulse inside to increase or sustain it. The sense of duties and responsibilities associated with the attainment of wealth makes someone feel burdened and heavy. It virtually snatches away our physical comfort and pulchritude.

On the other hand, the psychological effects of owning property always remind us of its pomp and power and instill in us a kind of feeling that we are superior to others around us. It always hangs upon us as heavily as our property. It fills our minds with many false and ostentatious ideas and beliefs as well. Ultimately, we reach such a situation that we do not buy properties rather properties buy us – our life, time, comfort, peace, tranquility, easy-going manner, and honest attitudes to life. It is because if we possess properties, we may indulge ourselves in voluptuous pleasures and malicious bragging which is strongly discouraged in all the major religions. Besides, properties entail duties towards mankind and society,

and the failure of which incurs dissatisfaction with the Almighty. It is echoed in the 'Holy Qur'an' this way "And in whose wealth there is a right acknowledged. For the beggar and the destitute".<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the possession of properties may make one feel proud as well. Neither any religion nor any person likes a proud guy. So, consequently, the pride resulting from wealth may deprive us of the true love and respect of others and the compassion of the Supreme Being.

Secondly, according to EM Forster, the feeling of possessing properties begets an unlimited desire for endless properties. It is idiosyncratic to most humans that the more properties they acquire, the more they feel hungry for it. The gratification in attaining properties and the desire for more of it never meet together rather they always run on parallel lines. The inordinate avarice to amass more properties leads people to an unhappy and ever-discontented state of mind because even if we possess all the properties of the world, our thirst for wealth will not be appeased at all. Our ever-greedy heart never gets gratified because more property begets more wants or desires. It is observed that the richest people at present on the list of Forbes magazine have not stopped their endeavor to make more wealth though they will not be able to consume the wealth they already have achieved in thousands of years even if they live so long and spend the wealth in a usual manner. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "If Adam's son had a valley full of gold, he would like to have two valleys, for nothing fills his mouth except dust (of his graves). And Allah forgives him who repents to Him".<sup>23</sup>

So, a man of more property is always a man with more wants and desires *i.e.*, a wealthier man is poorer at heart based on the volume of wants than a real poor man. Consequently, the greed for wealth keeps us ever thirsty and this thirst is never appeased until we die. And a life of ever thirst cannot be a life of happiness. Besides, this endless yearning for wealth very often makes the owner immoral, heartless, unkind, and harmful to society.

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<sup>22</sup> III, John S. Smart, and Tom Pickthall. "A new system for on-line monitoring of internal corrosion and bacteria in pipelines." (2001).

<sup>23</sup> Khan, Badrul Huda, ed. *Web-based instruction*. Educational Technology, 1997. 245.



About this, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Two wolves roaming freely among a flock of sheep are less destructive to them than the passion of a man for wealth and fame..."<sup>24</sup>

Thirdly, EM Forster thinks that property constantly pokes its owner to do something to it like the creative mind of an artist that pokes him to create something all the time. But the artist knows well what and how to create things, unlike the rash possessor of properties. An impetus relentlessly works in him to do something ostentatious to show off his pomp and grandeur. It also goads him to do something to increase the volume of his wealth by adding more to the existing property that he already has achieved. Dishonesty may engulf his good manner as his desire for doing something is not sincere and honest. This pseudo-creativity works in him relentlessly like a reckless driver, who neither knows traffic rules nor his destination. As a result, the owner of properties always feels an impulse to create things and commits miscreancy. A strong reason shown for amassing properties is carnality but a person cannot consume a galore of things or properties. A wealthy person makes money just to make money forgetting the purpose for which he needed it. It becomes a mere addiction to amass wealth.

In George Eliot's novel 'Silas Marner', we notice that poor Silas Marner primarily needed money to start a married life and he started amassing his earning. But, later on, he forgot the reason why he was saving money, and his love for money became his only passion and goal in life. Forster alludes to Leo Tolstoy's great story 'How Much Land Does a Man Need' in which the need for the land of a wealth-obsessed peasant ever increased upon owning new land, and his inordinate desire for unlimited land continued rising till his death.<sup>25</sup> This story teaches us the great

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<sup>24</sup> Bagheri, Amirmasood, Zahra Rahimian Omam, Seyed Ehsan Hosseinienejad, Pei Xiao, and Mohsen Khalily. "Compact Polarization Converter on a Thin Ferrite-based Metasurface for Enhanced 5G Wireless Communication." In *2024 18th European Conference on Antennas and Propagation (EuCAP)*, pp. 1-4. IEEE, 2024.

<sup>25</sup> Tolstoy, Maya, Alistair J. Harding, and John A. Orcutt. "Crustal thickness on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge: Bull's-eye gravity anomalies and focused accretion." *Science* 262, no. 5134 (1993): 726-729.

philosophy that we do not need so much land or wealth to survive or lead a decent life. At the end of the story, it was pathetically revealed that he needed only six feet of land whereas he was struggling to own thousands of acres of land just because of his wealth obsession and ignorance of his actual need and consumption capacity.

Fourthly, EM Forster asserts that property makes people more property-hungry and selfish. The more property we possess, the more selfish we become because the propensity to amass property relentlessly increases. This hunger instigates us to deprive others of their rights and increase our volume of wealth.<sup>26</sup> Not only that, it makes us jealous and thrust us into unhealthy competition. But the eternal welfare is not in amassing and relishing but in giving. Regarding this point, the *Holy Qur'an* said "Allah ...will give increase for *Sadaqat* (deeds of charity, alms, etc.)."<sup>27</sup>

Forster nicely concludes in my 'My Woods' his experience of the deleterious and materialistic effects of owning properties on human minds by saying that property makes a man, "enormously stout, endlessly avaricious, pseudo-creative and intensely selfish..."<sup>28</sup>

The core theme of the essay made it clear that the ownership of properties has multifarious effects, mostly pernicious, on its owner. It has economic, social, corporate, and psychological aspects. To corroborate his feelings of owning property in human minds, he referred to the *Holy Bible*. His realization of the experience and feelings of possessing properties complied with the teachings of the *Holy Qur'an* and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It was also in line with the teachings of the 'Holy Upanishad' and the *Holy Tripitaka* as well.

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<sup>26</sup> Kwasniewski, Fábio Henrique, W. Tavares de Lima, Y. S. Bakhle, and Sônia Jancar. "Impairment in connective tissue mast cells degranulation in spontaneously hypertensive rats: stimulus dependent resistance." *British journal of pharmacology* 124, no. 4 (1998): 772-778.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Hilali, Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din, and Muhammad Muhsin Khan. "Interpretation of the meaning of the Qur'an in the English Language." *King Fahd Quran Printing Complex, Madinah* (1998).

<sup>28</sup> Forster, Edward S. "Trees and plants in Homer." *The Classical Review* 50, no. 3 (1936): 97-104.

## How to Get Disillusioned with Wealth-Obsession

Human beings need to know how much money or property they need and for what purposes. It is very necessary to know these 'hows' and 'whats' because earning money without this knowledge becomes a mere addiction that gives us nothing worthy in return but rather snatches away our happiness and the normal pace of life.<sup>29</sup> Besides, the more we possess the more the fear of losing them increases. We are not always clearly conscious of the transitoriness of our wealth and properties. We do not or cannot realize what it gives and what it takes away from us because it puts a heavy dark curtain on our conscientious eyes and seals our gracious hearts. The only way to stop the unhealthy competition of amassing wealth is to be aware of the futility and transient nature of properties and our mundane lives. The solution to stopping this race is given in the 'Holy Qur'an'. Allah says, "To God belongeth all that is in the heavens and on earth. Whether ye show what is in your minds or conceal it God calleth you to account for it..."<sup>30</sup> And as soon as we die, all of our properties get transferred from our ownership to our successors.

However, it is not guaranteed that our hard-earned properties will stay with us as long as we live. Properties are volatile and always tend to travel from the hands of one person to that of others.<sup>31</sup> That is to say, it leaves us even while we are alive. So, it is implied that we, human beings, are not the actual owner of wealth rather we are the temporary custodians. We can amass a colossal amount of wealth but we cannot consume them all. Gautama Buddha inspires us to donate wealth without amassing and consume it all as it causes spiritual upliftment. "Also, the [first] three of giving, etc., are the path of promotion (abhyudaya), because they promote great wealth, a body [fit for practice], and [good] companion".<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Weisul, K. "Women on boards: Are quotas really the answer." *Fortune*. Available at (2014).

<sup>30</sup> Asad, Muhammad. *Muhammad Asad*. Sang-e-Meel Publ., 2006.

<sup>31</sup> Van der Ploeg, Rick, and Steven Poelhekke. "The volatility curse and financial development: revisiting the paradox of plenty." (2009).

<sup>32</sup> Cook, Vivian. "Going beyond the native speaker in language teaching." *TESOL quarterly* 33, no. 2 (1999): 185-209.

Forster says that humans amass properties apparently for voluptuous purposes. However, humans do not realize that their capacity to consume these is very limited though they can earn a lot. Very few people realize or know this fact. Some people search for happiness in it but happiness is not in the wealth or in consuming it. In this regard, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Richness is not an abundance of (worldly) goods, rather richness is the richness of the heart".<sup>33</sup>

As human beings live in society, they need to interact with people, depend on so many things, and comply with so many systems for safety, survival, and comfort. Moreover, the economic system is one of the bonding which is entangled in our existence in such a way that it can hardly be avoided by any person living in this society. This system comprises many components. Property and ownership are two of them which play a vital part in the structure and function of the economic system of the society.<sup>34</sup>

The experiences of EM Forster with properties reveal that money makes our lives difficult if we do not know the limit because the limitless desire for money keeps us ever thirsty and unhappy. Forster found that properties obliterate the boundary of desire limit in human minds. The teachings of Islam established this very fact thousands of years ago. According to Islam, money or wealth cannot satisfy a human heart because it is like an addictive drug that ever increases addiction. So, if we want to lead a peaceful life free from wealth obsession, we may adopt and practice the teachings of Islam as "religious effect and empathy are significantly connected",<sup>35</sup> and it may make the world a peaceful place for the human beings to live in.

Addiction to wealth creates unlimited desires and avarice which "... ruins cities and fields, temples and homes..." because it "...is a mighty,

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<sup>33</sup> Nasiruddin 2007: 94

<sup>34</sup> Nasohah, Zaini, Hayatullah Laluddin, Zuliza Mohd Kusrin, and Rizal Muwazir. "Standardisation of fatwa in Malaysia: Management and problems." *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences* 6, no. 6 (2012): 923-930.

<sup>35</sup> Guleryuz Erken, Humeyra, Leslie J. Francis, and Ursula McKenna. "Love for Allah and love for others: exploring the connection between religious affect and empathy among Muslim adolescents in England." *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 42, no. 2 (2021): 223-234.

bestial force sweeping through individuals to wreak havoc in social and spiritual affairs".<sup>36</sup> Wealth creates social discrimination as it builds "around a primary line of division between two antagonistic classes, one dominant and the other subordinate".<sup>37</sup> Forster was overwhelmed by these deleterious effects of properties and sought some solutions to this problem in the 'Holy Bible', Bolshevic Movement, and some concepts expounded by great writers like Tolstoy.

However, I looked for the solutions to this problem in the religious scriptures and prescriptions. I found the most befitting solutions to this problem in the *Holy Qur'an* and 'Hadith'. The *Holy Bible*, the *Holy Tripitaka*, and the *Holy Upanishad* also supported this. To dispel greediness or inordinate avarice from our minds, we need spiritual purification and mental upliftment as the hunger for properties lives in our minds. No political or economic system can purify our hearts and mind. No such system can refrain us from joining the endless race of amassing properties.

EM Forster hopes to solve this problem with the advent of the Bolshies that seized power in Russia in 1917. However, it is proved in the present world that the Bolshevik movement itself failed.<sup>38</sup> So, the present world does not believe any longer that the Bolshies or the Bolshevik Movement can make the world free from wealth obsession. The theories and propagandas that come from literary pieces are not always proven universal, practical, perennial, and unfailing. The effects of owning properties can be avoided by leading a modest and mediocre life free from inordinate avarice, dishonesty, and ungratefulness because, in the *Holy Qur'an*, it is said that only the Almighty can give us honor and wealth,

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<sup>36</sup> Bulik-Sullivan, Brendan K., Po-Ru Loh, Hilary K. Finucane, Stephan Ripke, Jian Yang, Schizophrenia Working Group of the Psychiatric Genomics Consortium, Nick Patterson, Mark J. Daly, Alkes L. Price, and Benjamin M. Neale. "LD Score regression distinguishes confounding from polygenicity in genome-wide association studies." *Nature genetics* 47, no. 3 (2015): 291-295.

<sup>37</sup> Giddens, Anthony. *Capitalism and modern social theory: An analysis of the writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber*. Cambridge University Press, 1971.

<sup>38</sup> Dmowski, W. P., Russell W. Steele, and Glen F. Baker. "Deficient cellular immunity in endometriosis." *American journal of obstetrics and gynecology* 141, no. 4 (1981): 377-383.

health, and happiness, power and properties, and the vice versa.<sup>39</sup>

## Conclusion

EM Forster believed that “one of the evils of money is that it tempts us to look at it rather than at the things that it buys.” As a result, humans are rarely satisfied with what they have. When one need is met, another arises almost instantly. Maslow echoed this sentiment, stating, “At once other (and ‘higher’) needs emerge and these, rather than physiological hunger, dominate the organism. And when these, in turn, are satisfied, again new (and still ‘higher’) needs emerge and so on.” This perpetual cycle leads many people to lose sight of how much wealth they truly need and for what purposes. Consequently, excessive greed fosters endless selfishness and a perpetually restless life. No one benefits from the insatiable desire to amass wealth. A world free from chaos and conflict, where people can live peacefully, can only be achieved when individuals learn to be content with what they have and live according to the teachings of Islam and other major religions. Although EM Forster's views on wealth obsession and its dangers align closely with Islamic teachings, his solutions differ from those of Islam. Islamic teachings encourage people to gather only the necessary amount of wealth to lead a decent and peaceful life in this transient world. Our time on Earth is limited, and thus, we do not need an unlimited amount of wealth.

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<sup>39</sup> Hilali and Khan...

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