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HUMAN SOCIETY IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

Aristotle's famous quote, "Man is social animal." Abd al-Rahman ibn Khaldun, who founded Sociology in the fourteenth century, also presents the same theory of human nature in his famous "muqadamah." (preface) that a human being is social in nature. In general, two main motivations for the socialization of man are famous:

1. Humans are physically weaker than other animals and need an external source to cope with climate change on Earth. Therefore, he needs the support of other human beings to meet his basic needs and to defend his life from other challenges this has been considered as a basic need to framing a human society.
2. The second motive is man's special nature, that is, man is collectivist and likes to live in society to enjoy his life. That is why so many people come together to form a community. The famous philosopher Max Weber said that Society is simply a concept that describes interrelated functions, for example, family is a structure or structure, parents and children who are physically and legally interconnected. Which are related to each other due to certain functions. That is, because of living together and sharing in certain activities. ⁱ

If we ponder over the above sociological concept, there is no major reason behind the socialization of man except the satisfaction of man's animal needs and his physical temperament. If ponder other modern sociological theories, they too depicts that human beings are forced to live in a society with other human beings to make their basic needs possible. In this connection, if we briefly describe the theory of society in the light of modern sociological theories, we can say that although the views of sociologists are somewhat different in relation to human society, they have a value in common with human society and that neglect the moral aspect as a factor behind the formation of the society by man, although some of them have come close to this fact.

ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF SOCIETY

When we talk about Islamic view of society, we see that despite recognizing the fulfillment of these basic needs for man to live in society, Islamic concept of society is beyond these materialistic needs. Society is an institution of great importance for man beyond these material needs without which the man can't achieve his Islamic goal and that is to fulfill his duty as an obedient and devoted servant of Allah, his Lord on earth. Every society is a mirror of its ideology of life, in the same way, the Islamic societal concept also fully reflects the Islamic concept of life. Islam does not define man as a mere animal entity, but gives him the status of "Khalifat Allah alalarz," (vicegerent of Allah on earth), which distinguishes him from other animals. Islam does not negate the need for understanding the fulfillment of man's animal needs and satisfaction of his self through society, but recognizes

them as natural human needs. But the purpose of Islam is not the fulfillment of the human body, but the worship of Allah, according to the Holy Quran a peaceful human society is a basic need for humans, besides other material needs. The Islamic concept of society is described in the following different Quranic verses As the Holy Qur'an states:

*“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa [i.e. he is one of the Al-Muttaqun (the pious). Verily Allah is All-knowing, Well Acquainted (with all things)]”*ⁱⁱ

The Holy Qur'an clarifies this point even further in another place:

*“O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam). He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both. He created many men and women. Fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul and created from it its mate, and spread from both of them many men and women, and fear Allah through whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) The wombs (kinship). Surely you ask one another, and be mindful of kinship ties. Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.”*ⁱⁱⁱ

From the above verses, the relationship between human beings and society in the Holy Qur'an becomes absolutely clear.

THE ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF LIFE IS CONNECTED WITH SOCIETY:

In the light of the Holy Qur'an, human beings are born into the world as responsible beings. As it is stated:

“You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his Sunnah] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma'ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam has ordained) and forbid Al-Munkar (polytheism, disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden), and you believe in Allah ...”

To understand the Islamic concept of society, it is essential to understand the concept of goodness in Islam. We can say that understanding the concept of “*ibadah*” (worship) in Islam is the fundamental means of understanding the Islamic concept of society. The Holy Qur'an states:

“It is not Al-Birr (piety, righteousness, and each and every act of obedience to Allah, etc) that you turn your faces towards the east and (or) the west (in prayers); but Al-Birr is (the quality of) the one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book, the Prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, the kinsfolk, to the orphans, and to Al-Masakin (the needy), and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and to set slaves free, and performs As-salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and gives the Zakat, and who fulfil their covenant when they make it, and who are patient in extreme poverty and ailment (disease) and at the time of fighting (during the battles). Such are the people of the truth and they are Al-Muttaqun (the pious—See V.2:2)”^{iv}

These verses of the Holy Qur'an directly shed light on the Islamic concept of society. In their light, the form of the Islamic concept of society that emerges before us is one in which the individual and society appear as two sides of the same coin—where a person's responsibility is not limited merely to the self, but extends to the whole of society. In this regard, a person is made accountable before Allah. Therefore, the final Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh), presented every human being as a responsible citizen and warned them in this regard, as stated in his saying:

"كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ، فَالْأَمِيرُ رَاعٍ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ، وَالرَّجُلُ رَاعٍ عَلَى أَهْلِهِ وَهُوَ مَسْئُولٌ، وَالْمَرْأَةُ رَاعِيَةٌ عَلَى بَيْتِ زَوْجِهَا وَهِيَ مَسْئُولَةٌ، أَلَا وَكُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ، وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ. (بخاری عن ابن عمر)"⁵

"Ibn 'Umar reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "All of you are shepherds and each of you is responsible for his flock. A man is the shepherd of the people of his house and he is responsible. A woman is the shepherd of the house of her husband and she is responsible. Each of you is a shepherd and each is responsible for his flock."⁵

Pondering the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) all of us are like shepherds, and everyone is responsible for his flock. The ruler is a like a shepherd for his people and is responsible for them before Allah,. Women are the responsible for his husband's home like a shepherd for his folk. We see that according to the teaching every human being is responsible for who is under his authority; we can say that these teaching depict the real meaning sence of citizens.

In the light of these fundamental teachings of the Qur'an and the bearer of the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the picture of the Islamic concept of society that comes before us depicts that a human being holds the status of an extremely responsible citizen with respect to society. In this concept of society, one of the basic means for a person to worship is to show compassion toward people and to care about them. Especially with regard to certain individuals connected to a person within society, a person has been made highly accountable, as is clear from the "hadith"(saying) of Prophet, mentioned above.

THE BASIC PILLARS OF ISLAMIC SOCIETY:

Like othersocieties Islamic society is also based on some basic concepts. There are three basis which influences the Islamic society and these are:

1. Beliefs,
2. Acts of worship, and
3. Social dealings (*mu'amalat*).

1. Islamic Creed is comprised of "Tawheed" (Oneness of God, Monotheism), 2."Risalah", (Prophethood), and "Akhirah" (the Hereafter), hold fundamental importance. In the Holy Quran there are many verses regarding the basic creed of Islam i.e Tawheed. From ancient times, the Qur'an has clarified the biased divisions of human

society through its concept of God or deity, but Quran declaring that your Lord is one; you are all the creation of that one God. In this regard only two verses are cited:

“Verily your “illah” (God) is indeed One(i,e Allah) The Lord of the heavens and of the earth, and all that is between them, and the Lord of every point of the sun’s rising.”^{vi}

HUMAN SANCTITY AND HONOUR IN ISLAM:

In many verses of the Holy Qur’an, the sanctity and honor of human life in society have been emphasized. Along with honoring human life, all those immoral behaviors have been forbidden that can cause any kind of disorder in human society. For this purpose, not only human life but also human personality has been protected, and all such immoral traits that harm a person’s dignity have been prohibited, such as mutual suspicion among people, spying, backbiting, slander, adultery, theft, and other evil habits.

WORSHIP IN ISLAM

In Islam, worship is conceived in such a way that it connects a person on one hand with their God and on the other hand with the whole of humanity—in other words, with society.

1. Five Time Prayer (*Salah*):

“*Salah*” is one of the basic pillar, among five pillars of Islam. When we reflect upon prayer, we observe that people, without any distinction of colour, race, standard of wealth, or poverty, stand’s in the same row, shoulder to shoulder, facing the same direction, behind the same imam.

2. Fasting (*Sawm*):

When we consider the wisdom behind fasting in the context of human society, it becomes clear that it practically enables one to feel the pain of the hungry and thirsty. As a result, a person is prepared to play their role for the hungry and needy people of society. That is the spirit of *sawm*

3. Zakah:

Zakah is a financial act of worship in Islam and is obligatory upon individuals who possess wealth above a specified threshold “*nisab*”. An act of worship like zakah directly connects a person with society. Its spirit is that a person removes excessive love for wealth from their heart and comes forward to help the needy, the poor, the indebted, and the underprivileged classes of society. One distinctive feature of this act of worship is that it establishes a bond of love and brotherhood between the wealthy and the deprived classes.

4. Pilgrimage “*Hajj*”:

Hajj is the name of that act of worship in which millions of Muslims from around the world, without any distinction of color or race, gather around the House of Allah (*Baytullah in makkah*), dressed in two white

garments, with unity in word and deed, they present a remarkable scene of the unity of humanity. It is this very gathering in which the Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), said:

“No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; neither does a white person have superiority over a black person, nor does a black person have superiority over a white person...”^{vii}

Islamic worship teaches us the lesson of human equality. If we reflect on these acts of worship, we will realize that they do not promote seclusion, but rather teach responsibility, they do not envision any religious elite; instead, all humans are given equal status. If someone here holds higher honor than others, it is only because of their fearness to Allah. There is no regional bias or pride of race or colour. The concept of worship we have discussed here is one in which a person grows as a responsible citizen.

CONCLUSION:

The study of the Islamic concept of society presents us with an idea of a human society based on the following principles:

1. Islam is directly connected to society, and its beliefs and acts of worship directly influence human society, forming the foundation for the concept of a welfare-oriented human state.
2. All humans are equal by virtue of being the children of their same parents. Here, if anyone can be higher or lower, it is solely based on their actions.
3. A person cannot be unaware of social welfare; they have a responsibility in this regard, and ultimately, they are accountable to God for it.
4. The Islamic concept of worship provides a balanced vision, in which a person connects with God on one side and with the people in their surrounding society on the other.

REFERENCES

ⁱ“Islam kamaashratinizam”, khalidalvi, Islamic book foundation, New delhi, p:10

ⁱⁱAl-Quran, chapter: al-hujrat, verse:13

ⁱⁱⁱ Al-Quran, Chapter:al-nisa, verse:1.

^{iv}Al-Quran, Chapter:al-baqarah, verse:177

^vBukhari, narrated by ibnumar,

^{vi} Al-quran, Chapter:37, verses:4,5