

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY AND ITS INTERPRETATION

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Abstract

As time progresses, new challenges inevitably arise, a common phenomenon in social development. In such situations, there are two main approaches for finding solutions. One is to explore and adopt new methods, while the other relies on historical experience, drawing upon a nation's religious, cultural, and educational values, and interpreting them in a way that aligns with modern needs. This article discusses the interpretation of values such as justice, social assistance, and unity in Islam, which is regarded as a sacred religion, and examines the positive aspects of applying these principles in today's context.

Keywords. Solidarity, social, justice, society, waqf institution, economy, hadith, religious duty.

Introduction

One of the biggest problems in the Islamic world today, perhaps on a global scale, is the understanding of religion. It should be emphasized that particularly the understanding of Islam and the comprehension of religious concepts and categories are often hindered by either deficiencies or excesses. One of the main reasons underlying these issues is the insufficient grasp of the concept of 'justice.' Studying the concept of justice from the perspective of Islam and philosophy is of great significance for our community, where Muslims make up the majority. This is because the concept of 'justice' in both Islam and its philosophy encompasses a broad range of meanings, which, when applied in the life of an individual, a Muslim, involves faith, ethics, and legal systems. The historical and practical application of these meanings creates a culture of justice.

"Any nation, even if it is a nation of faith and worship, will inevitably face decline if justice is replaced by oppression in that society. According to Islamic belief, one of the most important concepts that requires attention in social relations is the concept of justice. The concept of 'justice,' which includes meanings such as giving what is due and respecting rights, embodies ethical virtues such as respecting human rights and treating everyone according to their worth. It is not only an ethical, legal, philosophical, and religious principle but also a universal human value. The Qur'an and Hadith contain numerous commands and directives regarding the need for people to be just toward one another and to treat each other with fairness. The key issue emphasized in these verses and sayings is that justice should be established as the fundamental principle in social life to ensure social stability and unity. The application of social assistance and solidarity in society materializes through this. One of the most important principles of Islamic culture, and a universal human value, is the application of justice in social life. Among these key principles promoted in the Qur'an and Hadith is 'social assistance and solidarity.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) emphasized the importance of mutual brotherhood, solidarity, and unity among Muslims in his sayings, including the following



Hadith:

"You will see the believers in their mutual love, mercy, and compassion as being like a single body. When one part of the body suffers, the whole body feels the pain."

Social justice, which encompasses all layers of society and ensures that every individual is given their rightful due, is a central concept in Islam. In this regard, Islam's approach can be analyzed through three main principles:

Firstly, a key aspect necessary for social justice is the process of sharing knowledge, which is education. It is well-known that a society in which each member receives proper and correct education contributes significantly to the development of the community through their acquired knowledge. Furthermore, an individual who has been educated does not hesitate to share their knowledge with others. The act of sharing useful information or knowledge for the benefit of society and its members is one of the most important duties from both a social and religious perspective. Establishing the virtue of sharing knowledge in social life plays a vital role in establishing social justice. Specifically, in Surah Al-Baqarah, it is mentioned:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ

"Indeed, those who conceal the clear signs (verses) and guidance after We have made it clear in the Book for the people – they are the ones whom Allah curses, and those who curse will also curse them." (Surah Al-Baqarah: 159)

Similarly, the following Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) also highlights the importance of this issue: "Whoever hides knowledge after it has been asked of him, he will be clothed in a garment of fire on the Day of Judgment." This Hadith clearly shows the significance of knowledge-sharing in ensuring social justice and establishing social solidarity.

Secondly, economic support and solidarity are crucial. In any society, along with the wealthy class, there is also the existence of a poverty-stricken class, which is an inevitable reality. This natural inequality in society can lead to conflicts between the two groups. History provides us with numerous examples of such tensions. Therefore, it is essential for both the state and property owners to ensure that economic inequality is not exacerbated and that economic stability is maintained. According to Islamic philosophy and teachings, Allah, the Most Great, is the Creator of all things. Allah is the absolute owner of all wealth. Humans, created as His representatives on earth, are entrusted with managing the resources of the earth in accordance with Allah's commands and respecting the rights of others. For instance, the Qur'an states:

"Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and spend from what He has made you successors of. For those of you who believe and spend, there will be a great reward." (Surah Al-Hadid: 7) This verse indicates that for the owners of wealth, sharing their wealth with others is not only a religious duty but also a noble virtue. In today's context, it is essential to carefully consider how the owners of property share their wealth with others. According to Islamic belief, the primary duties in this regard include giving zakat, sadaqah, ushr, kaffarat, and similar forms of charitable acts. Specifically, giving zakat is a religious duty and obligation that every wealthy individual must fulfill.

Moreover, another important aspect is that the property owner creates opportunities for others to



work, earn a living, and support their families by establishing factories, companies, organizations, or similar entities. This too is considered a beneficial and charitable act for society. As the Hadith states, "The best of people are those who benefit others."

"Thirdly, it is the coordination and effectiveness of social institutions in their activities. The foundation that sustains the stability of any given society is the social institutions. Today, funds and organizations aimed at addressing issues in areas such as the environment, healthcare, women's rights, youth and children's rights, the rights of the disabled, human rights, culture, art, and technology are such institutions. Indirectly, these social institutions serve as a bridge between society and the state, playing a crucial role in connecting them."

"In Islamic culture, the uniqueness of such social institutions lies in the fact that they are established voluntarily with the aim of providing assistance to the poor and needy on a large scale. These institutions spread widely in Islamic societies and served to maintain economic balance within those communities. One such institution is the 'waqf institution.' These and similar structures have held significant importance in our society until recently. It is worth mentioning that 'social institutions inspired by Islamic values, such as the struggle against poverty and deprivation,' have played an essential role in addressing highly significant social issues. This is not only fulfilling a religious duty but also a responsible obligation that should be carried out from the perspective of the topic we have discussed."

Conclusions

"In conclusion, it can be said that Islam, through its religion and philosophy, has established a unique culture regarding values such as 'social justice' and 'social solidarity.' Along with fulfilling religious duties such as obligatory, compulsory, and sunnah practices, it is also essential to apply values like justice and solidarity in personal and social life, and to live according to these values. This is interpreted as a high duty that must be carried out both religiously and as a member of a particular society. In today's modern world, the economic issues that lead to the deterioration and fragmentation of social life and human relations do not cause concern in societies that follow Islamic culture, which is based on the principles of justice, solidarity, and mutual assistance. Even when confronted with such problems, these societies overcome them with relative ease."

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