

A Comparative Study of Human Rights from Public Freedom View in Islam and Liberalism

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ABSTRACT

Human right in the history has always been one of the important issues of global community and great schools as Islam and liberalism considered it more. As in various concepts of human rights, two concepts including freedom and justice are main principles and Islam and Liberalism considered it more. On the other hand, these two concepts were challenging and emphasis on them was combined with special religious and common beliefs. The present study aimed to compare special interpretations of these two concepts in Islam and liberalism. The question is raised that what is the relation between freedom and justice concepts in Islam and liberalism? The study design was causative and the data were collected by library methodology and data note taking.

KEYWORDS: Islam; liberalism; Freedom; Justice; Human rights

INTRODUCTION

Various societies as the target of Islam and Liberalism experienced four tangible experiences of freedom and justice historically. The first experience is the contrast between religious concepts and social freedom in middle age society dominated by Christianity and the second experience was dedicated to Muslim countries dominated by colonial and patrimonial governments with the emergence of social freedom and turmoil were present in these communities. As in public field contrast was between freedom and order in the minds of social authorities and elites. The third experience in liberalist societies was based on capitalism system and by development of the support of private sector activities and free enterprises the justice in resources distribution was eliminated and the society was directed to the rich minorities and the poor majority. The fourth experience of the western societies was dedicated to unduly development of social freedom and its individual aspect and destroyed the family.

The mentioned experiences in various societies based on liberalism and Islam provided the ground for extend demands of social freedoms and justice among people mass and the average-income class. In addition it caused many concerns and policies in the underlying system of the societies. As on one hand, the public freedom and justice in suitable economical and political distribution were required by various people and on the other hand, the required freedom and justice were challenging with some religious ideals and the social order and this created many problems in implementation of government policies.

The present paper attempted to respond the raised question and besides maintaining the value and importance of each of two concepts of freedom and justice, their conceptual differences in Islam and liberalism were compared from government view in public field.

Pre-requirement of freedom fulfillment

Freedom is a human-based concept as Islam and liberalism school believed that freedom is dependent upon will and it is fulfilled by wisdom and ability. Thus, the main requirement of freedom is knowledge. Spinoza regarding the importance of the knowledge in freedom said political freedom value is in manifestation of wisdom freedom and he believed that a free person is the one who is guided by his wisdom (Jaspers, 1996, 18).

The second pre-requirement of freedom fulfillment is the determination and will. It is obvious that to reach freedom, it should be asked and it should be followed as a public demand and the required determination to achieve it is required.

The third element is ability. For achieving the will, the ability should exist and it is dependent upon some factors as talent, personal affordability and social and public conditions. Without justice, the adequate wisdom and ability to have freedom benefits is not provided for the mass namely subordinate and the poor. Having a true understanding of freedom in injustice ground increases inequality. Also, having a true understanding of freedom requires achieving a logical level of economical wellbeing and social development (Shojaezand, 2004, 210).

Freedom basic in Islam and Liberalism

Despite the existing views about the conflict between religion and freedom, the existing basics in Islam showed that freedom in is rooted in monotheism religion beliefs. The current human being in its acceptable ideals is dependent upon religion event, even if it is affected by the existing concepts and its underlying norm is challenged by religious beliefs. For example the belief in monotheism is the first step being taken by Muslims and it is the main reason of freedom for human being. The belief in Allah and fighting against idols and pagans is the most important step of human being freedom and being released of slavery. Human being is the only and only slave of his Allah and this belief besides physical and worldly freedom makes human being free mentally and this is the basic feature of freedom in religions and Islam. As the freedom in liberalism tries to make human being free of believing in God and human being in liberalism doesn't believe in Allah and he is the slave of his desires and atheism in liberalism make the human being the slave of his desires. In general, freedom claimed by liberalism of 18th century was given by religions such as Islam for many years ago. Verse 64 of Al-e Imran recommended human being not associate anything with Him.

(Al-e-Imran (64)) ... That we are worship None but Allah and that we shall not Associate anything, with him and do not some of us take others as the god other than Allah ...

(Safarzade, 122, 2008).

Second, human being equality with each other and in public field and in the government was raised for the first time by divine religions. Monotheism beliefs regarding one Allah and the equality of all human being in the world and enjoying all the natural gifts of life based on equality principle is another effective factor in establishment of more freedom. In Islamic teaching and in revelation, human beings are not superior to each other and they are created equally. No one is superior. As Tocqueville believed that monotheism beliefs are consistent with freedom requesting communities while in aristocrat communities it is consistent with atheism and superstitious beliefs (Seyed Natab, 1995:133).

Third, Satan means an external factor always deceiving human being and among evil and good, virtue and evil, beauty and ugliness, wrong and right he is free and this is raised in divine religions and this factor provides the basis of freedom and will. In choosing evil and good, he is free to select. Also, human being is only sublimed in his position dependent upon his freedom and will and in all religions worships, the main principles of worship is intention and without freedom, any punishment or reward is meaningless and cruel. The divine justice requires that the virtue is rewarded or the evil is punished that is based on freedom of a person to choose (Motahari, 1978, 103).

Thus, justice in divine religions is rooted in individual freedom. Islam has considered justice and individualism and existence concept of human being before liberalism. In Islam, the society as an individual ground is considered as the main constituent of human virtues and humanity traits.

Justice in liberalism is only based on external factors and it is meaningful in public field beside equality. Thus, human being equality in liberalism is social but in Islam justice has a meaningful concept including internal and external factors. In Islam justice is emerged of inside the individuality of human being and then it is manifested in public and Islam considers human being in public era equal and the only superiority criterion is piety that is internal. As it is said in verse 13 of Hojarat:

(Hogarat,13)Mankind Varity we Created you all from a male and female (Adam and Evil and appointed for you tribes and Nations to be known to each other (by specified character rustics). In Allah's the most nondurable of you and Allah his the inform infuriated owner of knowledge

(Safarzade, 1143, 2008).

Fourth, salvation is the final aim for human being in Islam and the purpose of sending Messengers is guiding human being toward salvation. The main plan of Islam is eliminating all the forces and coercion and release of all the dependency from the soul and body of human being to provide human being will by achieving mental and worldly freedom. As it is said in Al-Bagarah (verse, 256):

(Al-Bagarah-256).

There is no compulsion in accepting religion (since) truth has verity Become destined from falsehood (in the Quran and through The messenger and Miracles) whoever rejects Satan he has grasped the firmest handle that will never break off. And Allah is the knowing Hearer.

(Safarzade, 90, 2008).

In Islam, freedom of choice is the origin of achieving spiritual perfection in human being. In Islam, spiritual perfection is the reward of proper individual choices based on will and all the individual worships are accepted based on a person intention. The emphasis of Islam on ethical issues is a firm reason of freedom importance and individual freedom. As Kant said: The free and voluntary trait determines the ethical action nature (Popper, 2000, 77). The ethical action criterion in Islam in social field is such that don't consider anything you don't like for others. Respecting others freedom in social field in Islam rooted in religious beliefs is a religious basis and the difference

between this type of freedom and social freedom in liberalism considering individual freedom scope in the society only the freedom of others (Mill, 1961, 58) as in liberalism respecting the others freedom is based on law sovereignty but in Islam this order is with religious content. Thus, the failure of religious societies in achieving individual and social freedom in the history is related to other social or political factors such as individual and governmental tyranny, religious superstitions or deviation from pure religious criteria.

In the west, some theorists as Nietzsche, Spinoza, Tocqueville, Parsons and Popper referred to the Christianity basis in democracy and western civilization. Spinoza said: The more a person loves God, the freer he is (Jaspers, 1996:118). Karl Jaspers said: Nietzsche a philosopher in liberalism, socialism and democracy, even the followers have anti-Christianity views, again the basis of the Christianity is seen in these theories (Jaspers, 124, 2001).

Fredrick Nietzsche had negative evaluation of the influence and said, nowadays, philosophy, morality and humanistic views and its equality ideals are Christianity ideals with a different appearance and the root of requesting for knowledge and search for reality manifested in western science is based on Christianity. He said, Christianity is the history of our western soul (Jaspers, 2001:123).

Alexis Tocqueville believed that Christianity beliefs in the past had many influences on establishment of justice manifested in France Revolution. Indeed, Tocqueville attempted to compare Christianity morality and social equality to persuade democratic group that their ideals were rooted in Christianity beliefs (Sayed Natab, 1995, 84).

Fifth, if we consider the historical group of divine religions, it can be said that some religions including Islam and Christianity were the most important freedom quest and fighting against tyranny at the time and they mostly emphasized on fighting against injustice and they attempt to achieve freedom and their enemies were the dictators in terms of politics and religion.

Before liberalism, Islam considered the humanity dependent upon freedom and quest for wisdom (e.g. Rum, verses 8,9):

(Al-Rum 8-9.) Do they not think within themselves that Allah has not created the heavens And the earth and what is between them but based on the Necessity and not an appointed term which one day will come to the end? Do they not travel through the earth to see what the end of those nations before them was?

Indeed, Islam had critical view toward the beliefs turning into habits. They opposed to superstitious and ego-centered beliefs of people and all the desires as the barriers of human being freedom. After being established and manifested as a political system, the religions take conservatism position. As Erick Forum said, this change is the tragedy of great religions and said: when a religious bureaucracy is dominant on religions, they violate freedom principles (Forum: 1977, 103). It can be said that Islam is searching for reality and it is based on individual wisdom. Wisdom is the guidance of worldly and eternal salvation while liberalism doesn't believe in absolute reality and it is believed that discovery of absolute reality is not possible. The different perception of reality generated two different approaches to freedom. Freedom in Islam is a way to achieve ideological faith while in liberalism freedom is an unavoidable solution for living in the world with no absolute reality. Thus, in liberalism, no one imposes his idea to another person or violate another person rights. Freedom concept in Islam and liberalism is different in meaning.

On the other hand, in Islam and liberalism, individualism is emphasized but it is different. In liberalism, individualism is extreme and human being social activities are based on individual freedom and achieving personal benefit as the profit theory of Adam Smith. Karl Popper believed that individualism in the experience of democrat liberal only because of Christianity beliefs can not be led into ego-centric beliefs (Popper, 1985, 276). However, in Islam the aim of individual activities is not achieving personal benefits and it is not based on worldly approach. Altruism morality teachings in monotheism religions are not consistent with ego-centric individualism based on individual freedom in liberalism. Thus, the accepted freedoms in Islam are different from liberalism; it means that individual freedom is strategically different in these two schools.

The conceptual comparison of freedom

The conceptual difference of freedom in liberalism and Islam is raised in two questions? Freedom of what? Freedom for what? Liberalism based on secular views attempted to make free human being from the dominance of all the powers and was based on modernism. In Liberalism human being by his freedom and wisdom can take all decisions. While Islam attempts to make human being free of materialistic views and morality sins and eliminates all external and social barriers of humanistic development as tyranny and bad social ties. In Liberalism, freedom is for achieving all materialistic views and in Islam freedom is to achieve another value as knowledge, faith and justice.

Islam and liberalism views about the aim of freedom: They have different views, Islam considers thinking freedom more than belief freedom and referred to freedom of speech in Al-Zumar, verse 18:

(Al- Zumar-18) Those who listen to different speeches and preaching's (regarding religions and rites and follow the best among the variety. Those are the ones whom Allah has guided and are indeed men of wisdom. (Safarzade, 1008, 2008).

In liberalism, freedom of thinking is less considered and freedom of speech and belief is emphasized. Any religious con troll against individual desires in liberalism is a threatening action.

In Islam, other beliefs are considered also but searching for the beliefs is not emphasized. In other words, despite liberalism, Islam doesn't accept belief pluralism and liberalism itself established pluralism.

Regarding justice, it can be said that justice is rooted in religions and its morality principles. The belief in Allah and believing in human being creation as equal creatures is two bases of justice as brotherhood and equality. In this view, all people are the children of Adam and Eve and they have equal rights on nature and rights.

Thus, brotherhood principle in Islam recommends altruism, cooperation and collectivism and it enhances brotherhood and equality view. As the Holy Quran said:

(Al – Hadid- 25). Indeed we send our Messengers with signs and miracles' and revealed to them Books and Religion and gave them the criterion for establishing justice Among the people... .

(1,20,2008, Safarzade).

Justice in Islam is an important divine aim and a great religious duty. A Muslim should be just about using his body organs and establish justice in the family life and the society or the world, even in his behavior to enemies and prisoners of war. Fighting against injustice and establishing justice are emphasized in Islam. As in Al-Nissaa, verse 58, it is said:

(Alnissaa-58). ... when you judge among people, you should judge with justice... . (181,2008, Safarzade)

In individual fighh, justice was always the criterion of taking many social and political positions and they lose their position as violating justice and people shouldn't obey them. In other words, disobedience of a dictator is a religious command. In Islam justice is the criterion of recognizing law and it is the index of qualification and humanistic idealism and it is a social responsibility (Motahari, 1983, 38).

Thus, justice is opposed to any superiority of special group in the society. Injustice starts when the rulers give economical or political privileges to a group and this is the starting point of tyranny and inefficiency of injustice.

The difference of justice in liberalism and Islam is such that justice is limited to economical relations in liberalism. Thus, it can be said that freedom is dependent upon justice from two aspects. One it is a pre-requirement and second in terms of aim and result. Pre-requirement of justice means that freedom is useful only in a fair group and when all the people in the society are equal. In addition, the aim of freedom should be establishing justice in the society. In Islam, the value of freedom is evaluated based on its success in fulfilling of justice and if freedom has no effect on justice development or due to the lack of fair conditions in the society are for the benefit of the rich, it injustice will be increased and it is doomed to failure in Islam.

Today, in liberalistic industrialized communities, freedom is dedicated to any social mobility in accordance to rules but due to the deep gap between the social classes and elimination of healthy competition to achieve monopolies, this is not possible that all people can achieve them. Vernio believed that equality for the social human being is only legal equality today (Subul, 1978:26).

Conclusion

It can be said that human communities achieved many accomplishments regarding two great ideas including justice and freedom but it is far from what was expected in these schools. Historical barriers and the opposition of the enemies of freedom and justice are the reasons of failure to achieve this aim and its conceptual differences in various schools as Islam and liberalism. Thus, the contradictory view of Islam and Liberalism to these concepts with all the achievements in arising justice and freedom, made some suspicion among people. The important point in freedom and justice in religions is not limited to these two concepts and the problem is started when the people who define these two concepts achieve political power and they sacrifice justice for freedom and take dictators' approach. One of the important approaches in justice and freedom is religious approach trying to establish the link between these two ideals as monotheism teaching. Islam had obvious approaches to two concepts and they complete each other in Islam and using each one without considering another one doesn't have acceptable results. Justice and freedom are close to each other and they enhance each other. In liberalism, freedom and justice consider the economical basics and they are based on individualistic view and they try to achieve a person benefits (economical approach) and it can lead into inequality in various social classes. In liberalism, justice is limited to economical fields and in this way it is far from its ideals in government.

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