

The Concept of Justice in the History of Iran's Islamic Revolution

Javad Aliabadi^{[a],*}; Mohammad Taghi Fakhlaei^[b]

^[a]Ph.D. Law Department at Ferdowsi University of Mashad, International Campus; Faculty Member at Payame Noor University of Esfaryen, Mashad, Iran.

^[b]Ph.D. Associate Professor. Law Department, Ferdowsi University of Mashad, Mashad, Iran.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

The concern of the emergence of an equitable life has always been with mankind throughout the history. Therefore, different approaches and how to implement the concept of justice in society have raised, especially among Islamic and Western scholars. One of the scholars who have studied the issue of justice in Islam is Imam Khomeini. A question that arises is: What is the interpretation of justice in the thoughts of Imam Khomeini? This paper will describe the characteristics of justice through the thoughts of Imam Khomeini.

Imam Khomeini, is one of the greatest thinkers of the Islam's world who has an Islamic interpretation of the meaning of justice and how it is realized in society, with the influence of Islamic thoughts in Qur'an and the Prophetic and Alawi's behaviors or manners. He knows justice as a natural thing in human nature that the great God puts it in human's nature. Imam Khomeini describes the indicators of justice in a society in this way: Respect to the talents of people in the society, being moderate in the affairs, The priority of social interests on the individual interests; Establishment of truth and justice in society and having a fair view to the human and the alleviation of poverty and exclusion from society.

Key words: Justice; Imam Khomeini; Islamic thoughts

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INTRODUCTION

Human is a social beings who cannot live alone. And for him a social life is needed to meet his needs. Anyone is looking to take the advantage of more opportunities in the society. Some of them, by using their talents, abilities and merits have further benefits of the existing facilities. In contrast, some of them do not have the same chance of using the existing facilities. These conditions make inequalities among humans and make the concern of having a fair life. Thus, the concern of a fair life is one of the goals of human being in the history and different interpretations of Justice are presented by the scholars. Imam Khomeini, the founder of Islamic Revolution and one of the great Islamic thinkers, considers the realization of justice in the society as one of his goals before and after Iran's Islamic revolution. Some questions arise here: What is the interpretation of justice in the view of Imam Khomeini, a person who has thought very much about social justice during his life? Also, What are the indicators of justice in his view? He considers the indicators of justice in this way: respect to the talents of people in the society, being moderate in the affairs, the priority of social interests on the individual interests, establishment of truth and justice in society, having a fair view to the human and the alleviation of poverty and exclusion from society. He considers the principles of the realization of justice in the society based on the 25th verse in Hadid Surah in Qur'an, "And certainly we sent nuh and ibrahim and we gave to their offspring the (gift of) prophecy and the book; so there are among them those who go aright and most of them are transgressors". This paper attempts to define justice and its indicators based on the thoughts of Imam Khomeini.

1. DEFINITIONS OF JUSTICE

The word justice means equality, equity, moderation and balance. The most common definitions of justice are: In the Islamic worldview, justice denotes placing things in their

rightful place. Thus, justice represents moral rectitude and fairness, since it means things should be where they belong. Imam Ali says: "Justice descends everything in its right place". Allame Tabatabaee has written in the definition of justice: "Each force has deserved the right to be placed in its proper place". Also, Allama Motahari believes like the others that justice means putting everything in its right and proper place and also says: "Justice is close to equality in the sense that it creates a state of equilibrium in the distribution of rights and duties". Ancient Greek thinkers Plato considers justice as a light that makes everything clear and avoid people to interfere in others' works and believes that justice is a moral virtue and an attribute of human personality, as it is in the Western tradition.

Therefore, one may conclude that justice is an obligation of Islam and injustice is forbidden. The centrality of justice to the Qur'anic value system is displayed by the following verse: "We sent Our Messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Measure in order to establish justice among the people..." (Qur'an 57:25) The phrase 'Our Messengers' shows that justice has been the goal of all revelation and scriptures sent to humanity. The verse also shows that justice must be measured and implemented by the standards and guidelines set by revelation. Islam's approach to justice is comprehensive and all-embracing. Any path that leads to justice is deemed to be in harmony with Islamic Law. God has demanded justice and, although He has not prescribed a specific route, has provided general guidelines, on how to achieve it. He has neither prescribed a fixed means by which it can be obtained, nor has He declared invalid any particular means or methods that can lead to justice. Therefore, all means, procedures, and methods that facilitate, refine, and advance the cause of justice, and do not violate the Islamic Law are valid.

The Qur'an emphasizes the balance and justice that are central to the design and order underlying Allah's creation as also in the ultimate reckoning on the Day of Judgment. The harmonious interrelationship between elements in the universe reflects the unity fundamental to Allah's creation in its totality. In other words, anyone who ponders over the mystery of the universe cannot but arrive at some idea of the balance of justice set up by the Creator. Islam thus lays a solid foundation for a harmonious relationship with all peoples, because people of all religions are equally honored by virtue of revelation and are worthy of respect by Muslims.

2. INNATE HUMAN TENDENCY TOWARD EQUITY AND JUSTICE

Human is naturally seeking for perfections and virtues and avoids evils. And the great creator of human being makes this feeling into the nature of us. Imam Khomeini according to this nature of human being knows Justice

as something innate in human's nature and existence. So, there is a tendency to justice in the society by the wise man and he escapes from the tyranny, oppression, injustice and discrimination. He believes that Justice is rooted in human nature and the tendency toward it is something natural. Human is born with it and all share in it and it is not something acquisitive and is not removable from the nature of human being. Unless the nature of the human being has some problems. So, humans are naturally inclined towards justice and hates oppression. Common nature of man tends to justice and hates oppression.

Imam Khomeini believes, the nature of justice can make positive interactions among the human population and creates a sense of vitality and joy among the people and also people are busy with works and activities in a safe environment. This concept is not individual, collective or categorical but it is an ideal purpose of human being. So, it is for all kinds of human beings in different times and places. Justice is a natural and innate concept. This happy and fresh morale can provide a safe, fresh and joyfull condition for all the people around the world and removes cruelty and oppression. So, based on the thoughts of Imam Khomeini, Justice is a natural human tendency that stops human from doing the individual activities against the society.

3. THE EXISTENCE OF PERFECT TALENTS AND MERITS IN HUMAN BEING'S NATURE

The unique Creator has placed many talents and abilities in human being that using in an appropriate way, flourish the human being. Otherwise, these talents will not nurtured. God Almighty by putting these talents in the nature of human being, makes him free to achieve to the perfect goal in the world. In 13th verse of Hojorat Surah we have: "O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware." This is the divine justice based that everyone deserves to be placed in a certain position on his or her merit. It is not possible for those who are not deserved go for higher degrees and level and it is far from the divine justice. And that man hath only that for which he maketh effort. (39th Verse of Najm Surah).

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) during his mission was started to fight with the ignorance in which the criteria values of ethnicity, class, racial were superiority and he would collapse these fake values and established the society based on the divine and Islamic values and orders. And Salmane Farsi who was someday a slave changes to be a noble. Being in a right place based on the merits of the people is very important for Imam Ali.

He says, "Justice puts everything in its place. While the forgiveness makes it out of its place. Justice is the public policy while forgiveness includes certain groups. So, justice is more superior." In Imam Khomeini's view, human being has multi-dimensional characteristic. It means that he has some features that the other creatures do not have them. Human nature includes the backend, intellect and feeling. In the nature of human being is a talent that can change his feelings to different varieties in different situations.

4. MODERATION AND TEMPERANCE IN THE AFFAIRS

Moderation and temperance in the affairs makes things move in the balance directions and disturbs the extremes in the affairs. Extremes in every situation make human being to depict different things as a proper or wrong one. In this view, the human wisdom attitude is limited. And humans are separated rather than being close to each other. Khaje Nasir believes that the perfection of human's ego is based on the moderation. His perfection is based on the moderation in three branches, recognition, lust and wrath. Imam Khomeini knows justice as a mediocrity to achieve happiness. He draws the path that if you want to reach the destination you must be in this path. Extremes in this way prevent a man to reach the prosperity. Justice in Imam Khomeini's view is based on the Islamic definition of justice and considers it as a moderation in the affairs. Man in order to achieve happiness has to move in this direction.

In terms of Imam Khomeini, the straight path is the way of that keeps human away from errors and save him and guides him to the light and brightness. "This is the straight path is the way of that keeps human away from errors and save him and guides him to the light and brightness and the great God asks human to move from darkness to the brightness and light" Imam Khomeini. In these situations, human being goes away from deviations and follows the moderate and balance path.

Thus, In terms of Imam the median balance in affairs is the basis of justice which is straight way. Moving on the straight path is possible by the balance and moderation. A righteous person, to move in the right path should follow moderation in his affairs. Justice as compared to the other virtues located in mediocrity, so, it establishes a balance among all the virtues. So, the validity of the other virtues is based on the justice and moral orders are based on it. So, in Imam Khomeini's view, justice means being moderate in affairs and moving on the straight path. It should not be any extremes in this path so if there is an extreme in the affairs, deviation will appear.

5. THE PRIORITY OF SOCIAL INTERESTS THAN THE INDIVIDUAL ONES

Islam unlike the two approaches of Liberal individualism and Pluralism and socialism, while with emphasizing on the legitimate rights and freedoms did not neglect the Social interests. Because a person is a members of the community and the happiness and perfection of man and society tied together. Motahari believes; originality is not just with the individuals and societies. Originality is tied up with individuals and society. A person has originality in character and a society has its own originality. So, the interests of the individual and society are intertwined. A person cannot make himself separate from the community.

In the the eyes of Imam Khomeini, priority will be given to community over the individual. Because, becoming a righteous man finds meaning in society. This problem is not for today, In history, all the prophets came to improve the society. So, In terms of Imam Khomeini Justice is achieved when in the community the oppression and injustice are not existed. When the most people are exploited by some others, this is not justice and that society should be improved and shortened the exploiters So everyone can have a fair right.

6. ESTABLISHMENT OF TRUTH AND JUSTICE IN THE SOCIETY

Right and wrong, justice and injustice is a historical process. Since the creation of humanity, Has been associated with humanity. This conflict have begun since Adam's children, Cain and Able, the proponents of right and wrong. Historically, there always have been a conflict between the proponents of rightness, the people who seek justice, and the advocates of evil, who were seeking to exploit people's rights. Based on the promises of God, The fans of rightness and justice are winners and oppression will be lifted from the ground.

"Say (O Muhammad): O my people! Work according to your power. Lo! I too am working. Thus ye will come to know for which of us will be the happy sequel. Lo! the wrong-doers will not be successful." An' am Surah, 135th Verse.

So, In terms of Imam Khomeini, anyone who is in the path of evil should try to improve himself. He insisted on national uprising for their rights, attempt of the government and people for their rights, duty to assist the rights of others, infringe upon the rights grabbers, Criterion of truth and falsehood to gauge the interest of the country and the people, remove the corrupt elements of society to fulfill and protect the rights of the community and centrality of rightness in collision and national planning.

7. FAIR AND EQUITABLE VIEW TO HUMANS AND REVOKE PRIVILEGES

Throughout the history of mankind, Human faced with discrimination and injustice. Some people with the special rates were beneficiaries of the social facilities and they tried to exploit the poor people. This unfair exploitation has led that one of the most important missions of prophet becomes the fight with this exploitation. Imam Khomeini considered justice as the best indicator of Islamic rule and believes that prophets were sent for making justice and fairness in the societies. "We verily sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance, that mankind may observe right measure; and He revealed iron, wherein is mighty power and (many) uses for mankind, and that Allah may know him who helpeth Him and His messengers, though unseen. Lo! Allah is Strong, Almighty." Hadid Surah, 25th Verse.

8. THE EXCLUSION OF POVERTY FROM THE SOCIETY

One of the problems of humanity in the history was the existence of poverty among the people of the society. So, one of the most important goals of prophet was the eradication of poverty in the societies. Muhammad (PBUH) was sent to a society with a deep social gap. Many of the lower classes of society who were exploited as slaves by a limited numbers of nobles. One of the goals of the Prophet was eradicating the poverty in the Community and social realization of justice among the people. He was looking for destroying the class gap formed in Ignorance period. So that, to organize and improve economic relations in the new political system, he collected Khums, Zakat and he established Beyt almal or treasury. As a result, the social justice was appeared in Madinah, a city in Sudi Arabia.

Imam Ali considered the properties and wealth of poor people as his first priority in the society. Also, he believes that for making the social justice in the society, we should pay attention to the low level and poor people in each society. From the view of Imam Khomeini, social justice is realized by the elimination of poverty in the society. As long as there is poverty in the society, and the discrepancy is in dominant in society, a limited number of the people are rich and the majority of the people are poor and this is injustice.

Imam Khomeini believes, the authorities should taste the pain of deprivation and disadvantaged among the poor levels of the people. They should know what conditions deprived people live in. It is necessary that those who are at the helm of government be familiar with the injustices and discrimination and deprivation to understand the necessity of the development of social justice and giving services to the pools. Then, according to Imam Khomeini,

Justice is achieved when the poverty and exclusion are eliminated from the society.

CONCLUSION

Social justice in the history of mankind has been concerned. Therefore, different interpretations of how the concept of realization of justice has been proposed by scholars. Imam Khomeini, the founder of Islamic Revolution and one of the great Islamic thinkers, considers the realization of justice in the society as one of his goals before and after Iran's Islamic revolution.

As we mentioned before, Human is naturally seeking for perfections and virtues and avoids evils. And the great creator of human being makes this feeling into the nature of us. Imam Khomeini according to this nature of human being, knows Justice as something innate in human's nature and existence. So, there is a tendency to justice in the society by the wise man and he escapes from the tyranny, oppression, injustice and discrimination.

Moderation and temperance in the affairs makes things move in the balance directions and disturb the extremes in the affairs. In terms of Imam the median balance in affairs is the basis of justice which is straight way. Moving on the straight path is possible by the balance and moderation.

Another element of justice in the society is the consideration of Right and wrong, justice and injustice is a historical process. Since the creation of humanity, Has been associated with humanity. This conflict has begun since Adam's children, Cain and Able, the proponents of right and wrong. In the the eyes of Imam Khomeini, priority will be given to community over the individual. Because, becoming a righteous man finds meaning in society.

Also, during the history, some people with the special rates, were beneficiaries of the social facilities and they tried to exploited the poor people. Imam Khomeini considered justice as the best indicator of Islamic rule and believes that prophets were sent for making justice and fairness in the societies.

And the last indicator of justice is removing the poverty among the people of the society. Imam Ali considered the properties and wealth of poor people as his first priority in the society. Also, he believes that for making the social justice in the society, we should pay attention to the low level and poor people in each society.

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