

## ***ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY & DEMOCRACY***

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### **Abstract**

*This research paper intends to make a comparative analysis of Islamic concepts and democratic concepts of the West. We had put our best efforts to describe the actual philosophy of the two concepts and its practicality in the modern age. Both concepts are honestly examined and describe in their full context in such a way that any hidden feature, corner or reality relating to either concept may not be remained untouched.*

*This comparative study of the above two concepts based on neutrality aiming at to reveal the actual facts and realities of the concepts and to suggest the final solution giving concepts to the problems of the entire universe.*

**Key Words:** *Ideology, Democracy, Islam, Comparison.*

### **Introduction:**

The word ideology is composed of two Greek words (Idea and logous) which means the science for Ideas or system of Ideas especially concerning social and political life. In the broader sense an Ideology is a set of beliefs, values, norms symbols, goals and practices incorporated into generalized formulation about a good society. These generalized formulations encompass salient desirable, social, economic and political relationship. This type of structure lends directions to moral reflection and activities concerned with the social development of the society. (The Dictionary of Pakistan : 153)

Ideologies are of different types one of them is an Islamic ideology, which means the complete code of life it takes a comprehensive view of life and covers all its aspect and phases. Nothing in human life and behavior is outside or beyond the Islam insists upon nothing less than the brotherhood of man. The interests of humanity are the same. Once the world realizes this great truth, there will be remaining no class interests. No narrow patriotism of race, country or religion will stand in the way of the millennium of the universal peace.

Another reliable authority clarify this point further if there is to be any aristocracy among mankind, it is to be the aristocracy of good deeds. A Muslim loves other and is loved by others. Once who neither loves, nor is loved is worth less. (Ahyalulum) Islam stresses the importance of good neighbourly relations. It teaches us:

“He is not a Muslim who satisfies his hunger by taking food while his neighbour remains hungry [Mishkat Ibn-i-Zubair]”.

On the other hand, the Christianity declares and separates religions from political and church from the state, but Islam does not believe in the separation of religion from political life (Mazhar Ul Haq 1993). Islam is the religion for mankind and its message is universal and eternal.

Those people who believe in Islamic ideology are known as Muslims. The simplest definition of Muslim is one who submits to the will of God and in his messenger Mohammad Ibn-Abdullah faith in the books of God, Faith in God's Prophets, and Faith in life after death.

Following are the five pillars of the foundation of Islamic beliefs, on which the entire structure of Islamic society stands. (1) Prayer (2) Zakat (3) Fasting (4) Pilgrimage and (5) Jihad. All these Foundations are revealed to Shariah, and us through Quran (Holy Book) which are the main sources of knowledge, and secondary sources are Ijma, Qiyas, Ijtehad. These who accepted this faith at some time during the past 1400 years passed their belief from generation le generation.

Another kind of Ideology is Democracy, which is purely a western concept of Government. According to oxford classical dictionary, this word was first emerged around the turn of 5<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC after revolts in Athens had removed a dynasty of Tyrants from power. Demokratia was what the word meant, “the rule (kratos,) of the people (Demos) (2002:14) so originally and really Democracy means the rule of the people, as a form of government it means the rule of the many and as a form of representative government it means the rule of majority.

Nature of Islamic Ideology and Democracy:

“When we say that Islam is a complete code of life it means that its guides man according to the divine or Allah Almighty laws received by mankind through his prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Islam stands for the establishment of the law of Almighty on his universe”. (1996:145)

The Islamic Ideology is based on the following characteristics:

- a) A distinctive characteristic of Islam is that it is organized, disciplined and complete way of life. Its scope is not confined to private life of a man it takes care of each and every field of human life.
- b) There is a balance between Individualism and collectivism in Islam which means that every personality or human being is responsible and accountable to God. Islam establishes harmony and balance between the Individual and society.

- c) Islam does not divide life into matter and spirit, it regards life as a unity, and does not believe in asceticism and neither avoid the materialistic things because Allah strongly censures those who refuse to enjoy his blessings the Quran says

“Say (to them) by whose order you have forbidden (unto yourself) those amenities which God has created for his bound men and those good things to eat and use which he made for you) (VII: 32)

Islam injunctions is

“Eat and drink, but exceed not (the limits)” (VII: 31)

Islam emphasized that spiritual life on the earth could be achieved by living piously.

The Quran advises us to pray as follows: our lord! Give us the good in this world and good in the hereafter (ii: 201)

- d) Islam is a religion without any mythology. It gives the lesson of simplicity, and avoid from superstitions and irrational beliefs and dogmas, unity of God and beliefs in Holy prophet and the concept of life after death are the basic of its faith. They are based on reason and sound logic.
- e) Islam is the only religion of the world that uplifts the status of woman in every sphere of life in the society either in a form of a daughter, mother, sister, and wife.
- f) Islam does not believe in race, color, language, nationality. All the men are equal, any superiority of one over another is only depends on Taqwa it means that Islam believe in Humanism as well as universalism because the message of the Islam is for the entire human race.
- g) The main essence of Islam is that it is not a man-made system as all other religions prevailing in the world are man-made systems, and not of divine origin, there is no doubt that Islam has any flaw in its laws, while other religions may contain it. ( Op.cit., p.147)

Thus, we conclude that Islam is the only religion for mankind and its message is universal and eternal.

While taking into consideration the other Ideology named Democracy, which means a substantial proportion of the citizenry directly or indirectly, participates in ruling the state. It is thus distinct from governments controlled by a particular social or group or by a single person. In a direct democracy, citizens vote on laws in an assembly as they did in ancient Greek city-state and do today in New England towns, in an indirect democracy citizens elect officials to represent them in government.

Representation is typical of most modern democracies. Today the essential features of democracy, as understood in the western world, are that citizens be sufficiently free in speech and assembly for example to form competing political parties and that voters be able to choose, among the candidates of these parties in regularly held elections. (Grolier International Encyclopedia, *vol: 19*)

Democracy makes it possible for all groups in a society to participate freely in the management of their own affairs; success of democracy depends on fair play. It involves balance and equity in allocation of national resources even handedness of the government in its dealing with citizenry demonstrable appreciation of citizens options and equal and same application of human rights to all the people.

### **Comparative Analysis of Islam & Democracy as a System of Government:**

In fact there is no religions order in Islam Mr. Majid Siddiqui says that if I were permitted to coin a word for it I shall call it Theo democracy because in it under the sovereignty and paramount of Allah, a limited popular sovereignty had been conferred on the Muslims. Under such a system, the executive head will be elected by a universal suffrage of Muslim and they are entitled to over throw him if it is needed. He is responsible to the general body of the Muslim for all his acts of commissions. All the administrative matters and those problems for which there is no clear injunction in the book of God will be settled by the unanimous vote of the Muslim. The law of God, where ever in explicit, can be interpreted by any Muslim, who has acquired sufficient knowledge of the book of God and is competent enough to form an opinion on legal matters. In this sense, you may call it a democracy. But in the presence of the law of God and the clear injunction (Sunnah) of Rasool, no Ammer, no legislative, no cabinet, no legal expert, not even the whole body of Muslims can affect the least change in it. In this sense, it is the theocracy. (Majid Siddiqui 1987)

In the Islamic state and society there is no party politics which means 'state is free from party system therefore head of Islamic state is an independent unit and may express his opinion freely and truthfully according to his conviction and not according to the wishes of anybody else. On the contrary western democracy demands complete loyalty right or wrong to his part system irrespective of any moral principle involved.

It is clearly obvious that Muslims as a whole constitute one single invisible party both religious and politically in a form of ummah. Therefore, western concept of government and institute does not suit to them. There should be different system of election, which should be entirely different from the west. (Shujaat ullah Siddiqui 1992)

Mr. NUR Ahmed EXMCA, in one of his statements of the press said that 'according to expert opinion in the true concept of Islamic democracy there was no party system as it was characterized by an absence of it and every member of Muslim

society must support to the right course without showing any spirit of partisanship. If this is the definition of Islamic democracy then there cannot exist any party faction, groups, opposition or partisanship. (Pakistan Times Lahore Nov 19, 1984)

Islam does not recognize majority vote principle because being a human being there is always a chance of error. None except the apostle Allah is infallible, since he speaks through divine guidance. There is no place in Islam for candidature and electioneering in the modern sense.

In the light of above authentic opinion about Islam, it is believed that Islam is a world order; hence, the conception of Islamic state is that of a world state, for God is the sovereign of all.

- (1) "Command is for none but God" (12:40)
- (2) He is the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. (57:5)
- (3) "Further the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) was sent by God as a mercy to all mankind" (107:21)
- (4) "He was a universal messenger of God for human being, giving them glad tidings, and warning against sin" [34-28]
- (5) "Believers are, therefore, enjoined to strive in the causes of God as they ought to strive", [79-22]

The words are perfectly general to and apply to all true and unselfish striving for the world of spiritual good and righteous living.

The ideals of Islamic state as specified above are righteous life and are further proved by the repeated voice of the Quran.

"Believe and act righteously 'which forms its leading them.

Marvelous is the definition of righteousness given in the Quran: "It is not righteousness that ye turn your face towards east or west, but it is righteousness to believe in God and the last day and the angels and the Book and the messengers to spend of your substance out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who also ask and for the ransom of slaves, to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity, to fulfill the contracts which ye have made, and to be firm and patient, in pain of suffering and adversity and throughout all the periods of panic, such are the people of truth the God fearing" (177:2)

Moreover, the supreme note is regard to the financial protection of the needy is struck in the verse:

"By no means shall ye love; and whatever the test of charity is whether you give something that you value greatly, something that you love these two verses sum up the essence ethos of Islamic laws" (1963"138)

Magnanimous life is lived in strict conformity with divine laws. The Quran is the code of right conduct which furnish men to implant and organize the will of God on earth and lead the humanity at its peak and provide them good fortune or destiny.

Righteous life cannot be achieved until and unless the evils of the society are eliminated and virtue prevails in the society.

Virtue consists in excellent morality and submission of life and conduct with the laws of God who alone knows what is good.

At this point an interesting line of thought of Greek's philosopher Plato is quoted, he mentioned in his book "The Republic" that everything was subordinate to the ideal of the philosopher king, whose unique claim of Authority is the fact that he alone knows what is good for men and state [sabine] (1964:68)

But how can a philosopher-king claim to know the real good when the philosophy itself cannot be the source of genuine knowledge, reason which forms the basis of philosophy which differs from place to place and from man to man. Further the line of thought of thought adopted by Plato results in the exclusion of law together from his ideal state. This is quite contrary to the deepest conviction of Aristotle, about the moral value of law, who in his politics" accepted from the very start, the point of view that the law must be the ultimate sovereign of a good state. Even the exists ruler, according to him cannot dispense with law because the law has an impersonal quality which no man, however good can allain and it is the golden cord of law by which state is held together.

The law as described by Aristotle, is reason unaffected by desire. Again, the emphasis is on reason but reason is only a conjecture, which cannot take the place of truth. Truth lies in what is revealed to the Prophet [PBUH] by God.

"He is knower of the hidden and the manifest" invisible (to the human eye and visible" (32:6)

"He knoweth that which is in the heaven and in the earth"[3:29]

He alone knoweth the secret. So, He discloseth not the secret to any one, except to an apostle of his choice. [72:26:27]

Secret is thus revealed to the Prophet [PBUH]. Divine laws therefore, are God's gifts rather than a discovery of human reason and, as such, lead humanity to the right path and regulate the relations between the individual and society in such a way that righteousness flows from it and the state achieves its end.

The functions of the state are generally divided into 3 organs, namely Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary is associated with the application of law and administration of justice.

In the modern sense, law making is known as legislation but in an Islamic opinion the law is already contained in the text [Quran and the Sunnah] and these are only to be enforced and extended by means of ijthad or interpretation of the text, but such interpretations should not be the result of one's choice, reasons or personal opinion but by analogical deduction i.e. reasoning by way of analogy.

The matters of religious observation and worship (Ibadat) obtain no scope for legislation in Islam as according to Al Ghazali Muslim political thinker there can be no reasoning in such matters. As far as the social affairs are concerned, legislation is only possible when it is constructed under the permissible frame of God. Even then it cannot take the form of lawmaking because laws are already revealed by God. God alone is the legislature and he says:

“We have revealed to you a book as an exposition to all things” [89:16]

Hence, there is no room for legislation in Islam except that only such rules and regulation may be framed as are necessary for administrative purposes. Islam does not recognize the liberty of legislation, for it would be incompatible with the ethical control of human action but ultimately of society.

The execution in Islam needs no clarification as it is concerned with the carrying out of the law of God which is complete in itself punishment are well defined. In case there is any difficulty the rule of necessity may be invoked.

The judiciary in Islam is independent of the executive but is bound by the Quran Sunnah, for “those who do not judge by what God has sent down are the disbelievers” (5:44)

Wrong doers (45:5)

Law breakers (47:5)

All citizens of the state including the head of the state are equal before the law. The non-Muslim inhabitants of the Islamic state enjoy a judicial autonomy, each community having its own tribunals and its own judges, applying its own laws, civil as well as penal. (Dr. M. Muslehuddin 1988)

The main characteristics of the state can be deduced from the Holy Quran may be summed up as follows Islam does not believe in clan, class group creed therefore sovereignty is not vested among the entire population of the state as God is the only and real sovereign. All legislative powers belong to God and the believers cannot frame or make any law for themselves neither they can modify any law which God has laid down. The structure of Islamic state is founded upon the laws given by the God through his Prophet Muhammad (SLM). Government of the state is the agency through which the divine laws are obeyed. ( op.cit, p. 18)

While on the other hand, democracy is founded on popular sovereignty. The people who constitute a state do not all take part either in legislation or in its administration. They have to delegate their sovereignty to their electoral representative so that they may make and enforce laws on their behalf through electoral system.

For this purpose, an electoral system is set up, under which only those persons come out successful that can dub the masses by their wealth, knowledge, cunning and false and propaganda. Although these representatives come to power by the votes of the common people and soon erect themselves into an independent authority and assume the position of over lords. His judgment are usually one, sided and he is influenced and affected by his emotions and desire to such an extent that rarely, if ever can be judge important matter with the impartiality and objectivity of scientific reasons quite often he rejects a conclusion which is rationally proved to him if it conflicts with his emotions and desired for example, the prohibition law of United State of America.

The most obvious problem with direct democracy was that it seemed as if it might be able to function only in a country that was fairly small, both in territory and population. Therefore number of theories developed suggesting this problem could be overcome by one individual representing an area or a number of people. Since this approach seemed a practice solution to the problem, it was widely adopted. (1997:135)

There are three senses in which the word represent is used that help provide an understanding of the problem. First, we often say something represents something else when it is a faithful reproduction or as exact copy of the original, second, we use the word represent for something symbolizing something else, third we use the word represent in the sense of a lawyer acting for or in place of his or her client. In democracy, an elected representative participates in the making of law but is still bound by the law.

Once promulgated the law is supreme, not those who made the law, representative can participate in changing a law, but until it is changed they go along with everyone else, must obey it. This apparently simple motion came about only after a long struggle. It was one of the basic principles demanded in the early conflicts that led to the establishment of democratic institutions. Before that, monarchy claimed that they had been appointed by God to rule the divine right of kings and were therefore above the law.

The primary purpose of the representative system in a democracy is to provide a means for citizens to exercise. Some control over political decision making, when they cannot directly make those decisions themselves. This means since the representative will not automatically be expected to serve for life some method must be devised so the people can either maintain or remove the representative from office. "This is the institution of periodic elections. Many scholars argue that the electoral system is a defining characteristic of democracy" (1960:72).

Education as a fundamental principle of democracy may be mildly controversial but it should not be Democratic, theorists such as John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau and John Stuart Mill wrote treaties an education that their political theories loosely or tightly to the need for an educate populace on the United State the founders of the U.S. democracy believed in the essential role of education in developing an effective democracy. In fact, the statement that an educated citizenry is necessary in a democracy is commonplace. What might make the controversial is that contemporary commentators no longer make the connection clearly and there is an argument over the nature of the education needed. (1987:65)

### **Conclusion:**

We may draw a number of logically valid conclusions based on concrete and authentic facts after examining the concepts of Islam and democracy. Islam as a political system and Western democracy is totally different from each other. The simple and incontrovertible facts is that so long as Islam remains the living faith of the masses there is no point in trying to swim against the main stream of ideological heritage and fountain head.

“Western democracy define as a pluralistic government system, allowing for the free expression and flow of ideas and for rival political grouping”.

Islam as claimed is the most democratic religion of the world, which places all human beings on an equal footing irrespective of creed or colour.

However, Islamic democracy, if we could be allowed to use that term, fundamentally differs from the Western type of democracy for obvious reasons. In the first place, according to Islam the real sovereign is Allah, not the people at large. It is the chosen deputies Caliphs, or vicegerents of Allah who alone is the absolute sovereign. As such these chosen people are not independent rulers. The Holy Quran is clear on the point when it says:

“And Allah is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and to Allah is the eventual coming” (XXIV: 42)

It is the universal truth that Islam denies the majority vote principle because there is always remain the chances of error.

As such an individual opinion can be sounder as against the unanimous decision of the majority in the advisory council. In any case there is no place in Islam for candidature and electioneering in the modern sense. The Apostle of Allah has left clear instructions to the effect that can aspirant to an office should not be entrusted with that office. Islamic spirit revolts and scorns at the mere idea that two three or more candidates should offer themselves for an office and indulge in pamphleteering party meeting and propaganda against one another incurring fabulous expenditure and employing all sorts of evil means to exploit the voters and ultimately the one who

excels in his resources of falsehood fraud cleverness and unscrupulousness may win the elections.

While taking into consideration of the characteristics of democracy prevailing in the present world we have to discuss the circumstances after the demise of Soviet Union in 1991 the terminology of “New World Order” becomes common emphasizing mainly on point that we are entering in the age of democratization of the world or globalization of democracy.

In the context of the threatened new world order of a particular type, do we think that Islam can combat this challenge from the west by Muslim world order or will Islam provides an alternative concluding paradigm to human history either our Muslim society also evolving towards a system of liberal democracy.

Islam & Muslims can respond to this challenge of West. Islam is defined as a system of Universal ideals and Islamic principles of Divine laws and sovereignty of Allah and Vicergency of mankind depends on these basic principles and ideals.

Keeping in view the requirements of the 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> century, if the basic principles of Islam .i.e. sovereignty belongs to Allah, Divine laws through His Prophet Mohammed (SLM) and Vicergency of mankind on the earth and related concepts of Islamic faith, free will, equality, social justice are reconstructed by the rule of Shariah through collective life provide the basic ideological setting which should be re structured in such a way so that we may get the good results in the form of a welfare society, the rule of law, and a democratic structure based on Shura government and ultimate right of the people to resist against the unlawful authority. Though Muslim generation had made implementation of these ideals in the space – time context, but whatsoever had lost by the Muslims in the different ages is the loss of sight of those ideals or failed to feel and to maintain the real spirit and goals of the Islamic ideals.

The main cause of the downfall of Muslims degradation could be given the name of hypocrisy i.e. gap between profession and action, if we want to get back to renaissance period; we have to fill this gap at the earliest. We should get back to the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SLM) we must have traces our steps because whenever Muslims had achieved these ideals with clarity of mind and courage they had left their marks on world politics. (op.cit., p. 233)

Therefore, we can say that the progressive decline of Muslim civilization throughout the history is merely a proof of the failure of the Muslims and there is no evidence of the failure of the Islamic ideals. If Muslims are willing to cope up with the modern times, they honestly have to understand these ideals of Islam in the context of

the modern requirements in accordance with the Islamic principles and are ready to implement them, and then they can get back to their renaissance.

While examining the concept of democracy, it is revealed that this concept is totally different from that of Islam, though West had borrowed much from Islam but the main difference lies in the concept of sovereignty which in Islam belongs to Almighty Allah alone, He is the sovereign of all, His Divine laws through Prophet Mohammad (SLM) to mankind served as the complete code of life there is no chances of error in the Divine laws.

In democracy, sovereignty belongs to a person or groups of class, laws are made by the people therefore there is always remained the chance of error to be present at any level as the meaning and implementation of the democracy changes with the passage of time.

The word “democracy” is still in search of its real name meaning and the way of its implementation uniformly in the world, because every state and to every person the meaning of democracy differs and its mode of implementation is different in different states. Question arises that in the present scenario, how the scholars and even a common person can think that this is the final solution-giving concept to the problems of the entire world. Pluralistic nature of the Western government further makes it impossible to inculcate and implement such unrealistic concepts in the whole world.

Though Islam is democratic in its nature but only within the framework of Al-Mighty ALLAH.

Therefore as a political system, Islam is different from Western democracy on the following grounds:

- Sovereignty belongs to ALLAH.
- It is qualitative and not quantitative.
- Rule by consent.
- Rule of law
- Both human and fundamental rights are fully ensured in Islam
- Rights and duties go together strictly and absolutely.
- Wise government implies Ijtihad.
- Collective leadership
- Rule for the general good.
- It is the rule by the very best in the entire nation and not just the ruling party.

Therefore, finally it is concluded that the Islam is the only solution to every problem of mankind because its message is for the entire universe and it is eternal in character. Even then, if the west thought that collapse of Communism required the

democracy then it should be kept in mind that collapse of Democracy require the everlasting resistance of Islam till the world exist. Hence, it is advisable for Western democratic authorities to adopt the Islamic Political system to exclude the evils from their systems.

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