

***The Modern Man's Need for Justice:
Pioneer Role of Islam and Christianity in Establishment of Social
Justice***

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True religions have always claimed that along with having an eye to the origin of creation, certainly we could obtain other human virtues as well. Worshiping God will guide us to the expansion of such human virtues. Religions have always responded to evil moral codes otherwise known as “RAZAYEL” in Islamic terms. One of the main tasks of the believers to these religions AKA “Momenin” is to fight against the evil moral codes or “Razayel”. Staying indifferent to poverty, prostitution, selfishness, hatred, murder, abuse and oppression is disapproved by religions such as Islam and Christianity. It is Impossible to be religious though stay indifferent to the sufferings of other people. Faith in God requires sensitivity and taking action to eliminate vices. Intensification of human virtues is among basic duties of Muslims and Christians.

However, paying attention to part of these virtues and ignoring some other will point to an uncertainty in the performance of religions in their endeavor for the expansion of such merits. In the line of effort to help alleviate the poverty and deprivation there have always been some pioneer figures from both Islam and Christianity. The most important point though is the performance of such religions not only toward their own followers but for the others as well. The fight against all forms of poverty in the world has always been considered as a religious duty.

However, at times, religions have failed to pay enough attention to the establishment of such virtues. The concept of social justice is one of those cases. Justice is considered as providing support for a harmonious and balanced relationship among all people while helping the needy usually ends to taking care of only one individual. Communist and socialist regimes in the past century claimed special fundamental attention to social justice. The slogan of “Equality” was considered as one of the main principles of such systems. Although the question of if they succeeded in their goal for pursuit of justice is a separate discourse, yet it is true that this venue has been the center of attention for such

schools of thought. Religions though have not played total pioneer role in anti-racism campaign but have always been part of it. Same is true for anti-colonial struggles. This weak role the religions played led Marx to the illusion of “Religion is the opiate of the masses” so made Marxists to try to relieve any kind of injustice based on those teachings. This is while so many Muslims and Christians have always been in forefront in the struggle for justice.

So it was that the communist regimes indiscriminately stood against religions with the pretext that religion is a barrier against justice. As a result, they questioned the principle of believing in God altogether. This is why the collapse of the communist systems made way to the flowering of religions in Western societies. But the communist regimes special attention to the principle of justice could not offer its believers freedom and creativity. This led liberal systems to focus their attention on people’s liberty and joy rather than being focused on justice. Finally, with the collapse of communist regimes in the world, Marx’s theory fails to achieve justice and equality. On the other hand, Marx’s criticisms of the capitalist system made them to realize their flaws and tried to overcome its problems in different ways (such as labor laws, insurance, retirement pensions, working hours, etc.) But the justice slogan was of course out of the realm of liberal capitalism. These systems ignored justice by paying it all for the freedom and innovation.

This concluded to the gradual appearance of justice movements in the recent years. Formerly, the communist principles responded to the question at hand but with the collapse of communism in the world these movements are looking for an ideology to center their demands for justice on one. The 99% “Occupy Wall Street” movement with no leadership and ideology is now disappointed with its demands.

Why should not the religions be the refuge for those seeking justice? Religions have very well proved to have leadership capacities in social presence for struggle against poverty and deprivation, corruption and vanity and have at all times been such a valuable haven for poverty reduction and removing of deprivation.

If the religions do not take the responsibility in active support and astray from social presence it is possible to witness the emergence and the bitter experience of ideas such as communism again. Had the religions succeeded to quench the thirst of masses for justice and equality in elimination of injustice and inequality we

would not have experienced decades of religions suppressing ideas of Marxism and Communism.

Recent developments in European, American and Middle Eastern countries tell us that in the present situation the world needs justice more than before. If the religions do not make it to provide for this need not only other ideas will find substantial grounds to step in but will also start to eliminate the religions because the religious thought fails to provide for human rightful needs so these movements change to be anti-religious ones. Even verbal accordance with these expectations can also prevent new aversions toward religion.

Religions from East such as Buddhism lack the capacity to assist in bringing justice. Judaism also, being a nation bounded religion cannot be concerned with others'-gentiles- agenda.

Islam and Christianity on the other hand, are two religions which embrace the message of justice for humankind to lead us all toward happiness and prosperity in a responsible manner. Today, the humankind cannot accept prosperity without justice. Islam and Christianity have to take action in making it clear to all people that justice is worthwhile in light of the religious spirituality and divine worship. This way the desire for justice will change to be desire for justice in light of religion and spirituality.

Religions and the Efforts to Globalize without Religion

However, this is not the only aspect that religions must stand up for and fight. On the other side, the new universal systems of capitalism to be able to develop and grow more needs to modify the way people look into religious principles. It needs to make people go after total pleasurable values so that it can sell more and gain more profit.

Then because the religions' mission of spiritual growth and God worshipping is opposing total materialism the capitalist idea cannot tolerate it.

The modern capitalist values try to push religion away because its profit is in contrast with the religious values. It is evident that the fight for justice also, is one

of the old enemies of the new capitalism as all the equality seeking movements consider capitalism and injustice their foremost foe.

The new globalized capitalism needs to fight with justice movements on the one side and on the other looks at religions as an obstacle for its ideal consumer market and swinger (such as sex freedom). That is why it takes all its efforts to control those movements and also rigidly believes that the social justice desires should not open way for the religions' growth. Then if any of these movements take the color of religion makes them worried. So the capitalism tries to push these movements toward being national movements or by helping them tries to take control over them.

Islam and Social Justice Claims

The Islamic educations contain a wide capacity for support of anti-suppression movements. Some of these instructions are being quoted here.

The holy prophet of Islam says: *be the enemy to oppressor and helper of the oppressed.*

This is the very same claim for justice.

In Surah "Ma'idah" the Holy Quran says: *Uh those who you are believers always go for justice and give witness for Allah.*

Imam Ali Says: *The only promise Allah asked the scholars to make was to not be silent against the glatony avarice of oppressor and the hunger of oppressed.*

These are all valuable samples of Islam's educations and efforts in struggle for social justice. The same is also visible in the history of Christianity were the Christian saints have endured torments for justice in their societies. This capability of Christianity also must be rediscovered and developed by the Christian scholars and activists.

Islamic Strategies for the Presence of Islam and Christianity in the Struggle for Justice

Based on the foretold discourse about the necessity of Islam and Christianity taking role in the struggle for justice in the world these strategies could be proposed as a roadmap toward that end:

1. In this very sensitive time we experience it is essential that Islam and Christianity become pioneers in the global struggle for justice
2. We should continually be vigilant so that the anti-religion justice movements could not be able to take control of this struggle for justice. Instead of the slogan for Justice we should raise the banner of justice along with religion and spirituality
3. Muslim and Christian religious leaders should enforce the values of justice in their religions and rectify the religious educations among their followers
4. In the struggle for justice in the society we should not take in consideration the oppressed people's religious inclination, we should want justice for all denominations and ideas either religious or not. Imam Ali says that people are either your religious brothers or are same as you in creation, then you are to work toward their rights.
5. In our complicated modern societies there are different sorts of organized oppressions invoking minimal sensation of oppression. Of our most important missions should be to decode such then give way out of these new problems.