

The Role of Islamic Beliefs in the Evolution of Human Culture and Civilization

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ABSTRACT

Before the advent of Islam, the world was scientifically and rationally in darkness. Humanity was following polytheism and superstitions. Phenomena of nature were worshipped as gods. Ancient and established objects were considered a gift of gods. Novelty and acceptance of any different belief than those of their forefathers was considered taboo. That resulted in stagnation in the scientific and cultural development. The system was set to provide authority to some humans over the others. The process of teaching and learning, the matters of state and politics, the handling of commerce and business were deemed for some particular elite and upper-class people; whereas begging, slavery and humiliation were declared the fate of poor and weaker members of the society. The concept of human equality was far from existence. There was a ban on religious and intellectual speech. The world was far away from civilization and humanity.

In the seventh century, Islam came and it drastically changed the human thought, reflection and beliefs from its very outset. Islam taught the human that what his real position in the universe is and what is the position of the universe in relation to him. Why is this universe created and what relation a human should keep with it? Who is the creator of man as well as this universe? What are His attributes and what does He demand from the man? These were some of the answers that Islam provided to mankind and brought to end its long-standing quest for their answers. When we look at the history of human being, we know that these Islamic beliefs have left their significant and profound impact on human thinking, the process of character and human civilization. Whatever academic, scientific, social and developmental progress of world civilization is seen today, it is, directly or indirectly, an outcome of Islam and its golden civilization.

The above aspects are discussed in this article. We have elaborated how Islam has revolutionized the thinking of the man and what role its belief system plays in the evolution of human civilization.

Keywords: *Civilization, Beliefs, Humanity, Culture, Societal Values*

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Introduction

The civilization and development in today's world are the results of a process and as an exercise of the law of nature. This law of nature was put forward fourteen hundred years ago. Why was the world not implementing the law of nature before this? The real reason was that the world was suffering from polytheism and superstition. The world was given the status of a sacred nature and made status the owner of good and evil; nature was considered to be god, so it was arrested in phenomenal worship or nature worship.

It is obvious that those who worshipped the sun, the moon, stars, rivers, forests, mountains, and animals as their gods and regarded them as responsible for their good and evil and made their places, the places of the sanctity; how could they be so 'disrespectful' to their gods to do research and exploration in the matter of beliefs. From where the concept of sacredness comes, the domain for exploration ends. According to the divine law, the development of the world's civilization and nature depends on research and exploration. Without exploration and research world cannot achieve any development.

When Islam arrived in the seventh century, first it changed people's thinking and their beliefs. The man found the right guidance and understood the difference between the Creator and the created. Islam gave the concept of monotheism, and polytheism and superstition were subdued. People started to view things in the universe as commodities. Hence, they started the exploration and used them for their benefit. They began to understand the rank and status of humanity, and the exact knowledge of each other's rights began to develop into an outstanding culture and civilization across the world. This revolution first came in Arabia and then traveled to Asia, Africa, Europe and then crossed the Atlantic to America. Eventually, growth came in the modern world in all walks of life.

In this article, we are discussing the fundamental beliefs and ideals of Islam, which have brought such a big revolution in the human world.

The Core Beliefs of Islam that paved the way to change the world

According to the study of Islamic teachings, Islam taught the following beliefs as the core of humanity; they paved the way for a revolution in the world:

1. Monotheism or the belief about One Creator of the universe.
2. The belief of Apostleship.
3. Belief in hereafter
4. The reason for the creation of the universe
5. Man's place in the universe.

6. Man's relationship with his creator
7. Man's relationship to the universe.
8. Human behavior among each other

1. **Monotheistic belief about the Creator of the universe.**

Islam, which gave the education on the basic beliefs explained first that the Creator of this world, is not something which should be felt with outward senses; He is not a seeing thing for the dwellers of this world but He is free of feel and look: the world has no reference and understanding of him⁽¹⁾, and for Him, no examples can be given⁽²⁾ that can perfectly describe him. There is none like Him or succeeding to Him⁽³⁾.

By looking at the creation of the universe and reflecting on its management is something that can be done with our bodily sense. This ability to observe paves our way for the understanding of our Creator. The Qur'an says:

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth; the alternation of the day and the night; the ships that sail the sea for the benefit of humanity; the rain sent down by Allah from the skies, reviving the earth after its death; the scattering of all kinds of creatures throughout; the shifting of the winds; and the clouds drifting between the heavens and the earth—‘in all of this’ are surely signs for people of understanding.”⁽⁴⁾

The man himself was invited to consider thinking in his mind as if he is a person apart from the universe itself; ponder upon his own life, his digestive systems, blood system, brain processes, cardiovascular activity, body messaging system, birth and reproductive system, death, development of cells that provide thoughtfulness and so on; by doing so, he will be able to observe the influence of a force which owns perfect knowledge, great wisdom and insight, and power. So, the Quran says:

“We will show them Our signs in the universe and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that this ‘Quran’ is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?”⁽⁵⁾

Then it was taught about the Creator's attributes:

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- (1) Surah Al-Shoora:11
 - (2) Surah Al-Nahal:74
 - (3) Surah Al-Ikhlâs:4
 - (4) Surah Al-Baqrah:164(The translations used in this article have been taken from Al-Khattab)
 - (5) Surah Haa-Meem Sajdah:5

“Say, ‘O Prophet,’ ‘He is Allah—One ‘and Indivisible’; Allah—the Sustainer ‘needed by all’. He has never had offspring, nor was He born. And there is none comparable to Him.’”⁽¹⁾

It is to be noted that there is only one God, Allah. Had there been two Gods, they would have tried to overcome each other⁽²⁾. If more than one Allah would have been there, the earth’s system would have got destroyed.⁽³⁾ He is the Creator of the universe and keeps it in order.⁽⁴⁾ If He wants to give you harm, no one can remove it. If He wants good for you, then no one can devoid you of this good; he gives good to whom He wills⁽⁵⁾.

It was also taught that the right to worship and devotion is only for Him, and no anyone else is worthy of it:

“Worship Allah ‘alone’ and associate none with Him.”⁽⁶⁾

This belief gave this thinking that your Creator is only One – the One that you cannot encompass with your physical senses. The things that are going to feel by physical senses, or which you can discover through your experience and observation, they aren’t Allah and do not have the attributes of God. Nor is your good and bad in their hands.

2. The Belief on prophethood (*Risalat*)

Islam emphasis more on the second belief, that is the belief on prophethood (*Risalat*). That means that Allah has chosen some people to guide other people. These chosen people have high qualities and abilities than the rest of the people. They brought revelations (*Wahi*) of Allah, at different times, to the people. They were sent to tell Allah’s message to the people and according to the instructions of Allah, they continued to guide them through the deeds, actions, and sayings. These selected people are called Allah’s messengers (*Rasool*) and the process of messaging is called *Risalat*.⁽⁷⁾

According to the Islamic teachings, Allah gave existence to the world to meet the physical needs of humans. A series of messengers were sent to meet their psychological and spiritual needs in order to fulfill their requirements in every way. And then the selected persons were sent to

(1) Summary of Surah Al-Ikhlās

(2) Surah Al-Mominoon:91

(3) Surah Al-Anbiya:22

(4) Surah Al-Aaraf:54

(5) Surah Younus:107

(6) Surah Al-Nisa:36

(7) Jurjani Ali Bin Muhammed Syed Shareef, *Kitab Al Tareefaat*, (Beruit: Darul Kutub Al Ilmiah, Ed.1,1983),110

people in their own language so that they get the message in a language that they associate with. The messengers commanded their people to obey Allah's commands. Those who obey, Allah has promised them the success in the hereafter. Allah also declares the importance of belief in the former prophets. The Holy Quran says:

“There is no community that has not had a warner”⁽¹⁾

“And every people had a guide. (the Prophet).”⁽²⁾

“We have not sent a messenger except in the language of his people to clarify ‘the message’ for them.”⁽³⁾

“We only sent messengers to be obeyed by Allah’s Will.”⁽⁴⁾

“Whoever obeys the Messenger has truly obeyed Allah..”⁽⁵⁾

“who were all of the righteous.”⁽⁶⁾

“We chose them and guided them to the Straight Path..”⁽⁷⁾

“These ‘prophets’ were ‘rightly’ guided by Allah.”⁽⁸⁾

“Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example.”⁽⁹⁾

“Then when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray ‘in this life’ nor suffer ‘in the next).”⁽¹⁰⁾

“Say, ‘O believers,’ ‘We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us; and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants; and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and other prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them. And to Allah we all submit.”⁽¹¹⁾

The aim of this belief was that all the prophets came for the guidance of humanity are to be recognized, followed and respected; their teachings should be followed so that humanity be safe from the beliefs, thoughts and actions which ultimately hinder the welfare of humanity.

(1) Surah Al-Fatir:24

(2) Surah Al-Ra’d:7

(3) Surah Ibraheem:4

(4) Surah Al-Nisa:64

(5) Surah Al-Nisa:80

(6) Surah Al-Anaam:85

(7) Surah Al-Anaam:87

(8) Surah Al-Anaam:89

(9) Surah Al-Ahzab:21

(10) Surah Taha:123

(11) Surah Al-Baqarah:136

3. Belief in the hereafter

Islam emphasizes on the belief in the Hereafter. This refers to the belief that one day the world will end, then the other world will establish, in which every man will be rewarded or punished for their actions. According to this belief, some can or can not see other men, but Allah sees everything and His angels are noting each process. So every human's thoughts and actions are saved for the future. Therefore the Holy Quran says:

“and fear Allah, and know that ye will (one day) meet Him.”⁽¹⁾

“and who believe in what has been revealed to you ‘O Prophet’ and what was revealed before you, and have sure faith in the Hereafter.”⁽²⁾

“This worldly life is no more than play and amusement. But the Hereafter is indeed the real life.”⁽³⁾

“But the reward of the Hereafter is far better, if only they knew.”⁽⁴⁾

“while you are certainly observed by vigilant, honourable angels, recording ‘everything’.”⁽⁵⁾

“not a word does a person utter without having a ‘vigilant’ observer ready ‘to write it down’”⁽⁶⁾

“So whoever does an atom’s weight of good will see it. And whoever does an atom’s weight of evil will see it..”⁽⁷⁾

This belief is meant to awaken the human heart and conscience so that they understand Allah and his protector angels in front of them. For this, every human should be conscious of the deeds that one is doing; the sense of the presence of Allah and the watchful angels should keep him from straying away from path. This belief advocates that one day the man be held accountable. This belief makes people feel that the way of life is not the end of life's journey but the journey continues in the hereafter. This world is the place to play its part and seed, the fruit of which will be in the hereafter. This faith plays a very important role to make human sensitive, responsible and pious.

(1) Surah Baqarah: 223

(2) Surah Al-Baqarah:4

(3) Surah Al-Ankaboot:64

(4) Surah Al-Nahal:41

(5) Surah Al-Infitar:10-12

(6) Surah Qaaf:18

(7) Surah Al-Zilzal:7-8

4. The purpose of creation of the universe

Islam has quoted the purpose of the creation of the universe that the whole universe has been created for the advantage of man. Man's work is the exploration and use of it to fulfil his needs and necessities and acquire adornments and services from it. The Holy Quran says:

“He is the One Who created everything in the earth for you. Then He turned towards the heaven, forming it into seven heavens..”⁽¹⁾

“He also created` horses, mules, and donkeys for your transportation and adornment. And He creates what you do not know.”⁽²⁾

“It is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth and sends down rain from the sky, causing fruits to grow as a provision for you. He has subjected the ships for your service, sailing through the sea by His command, and has subjected the rivers for you. He has `also` subjected for you the sun and the moon, both constantly orbiting, and has subjected the day and night for you. And He has granted you all that you asked Him for. If you tried to count Allah’s blessings, you would never be able to number them.”⁽³⁾

“O humanity! Eat from what is lawful and good on the earth and do not follow Satan’s footsteps. He is truly your sworn enemy.”⁽⁴⁾

“Ask, `O Prophet,` “Who has forbidden the adornments and lawful provisions Allah has brought forth for His servants?” Say, “They are for the enjoyment of the believers in this worldly life, but they will be exclusively theirs on the Day of Judgment. This is how We make Our revelations clear for people of knowledge.”⁽⁵⁾

5. Man's place in the universe

Islam is rightly proud of it that has the concept of human dignity and called it a masterpiece of creation of nature - “We have created the man in the best case”⁽⁶⁾ And Islam teaches that Allah not only created the human in terms of creation and appearance form to be the best of the universe but it has also given it superiority over the entire universe; the universe indirectly or directly is in the service and for the entertainment of him. In

(1) Surah Al-Baqarah:29

(2) Surah Al-Nahal:8

(3) Surah Ibraheem:32-34

(4) Surah Al-Baqarah:168

(5) Surah Al-Aaraf:32

(6) Surah Al-Teen:4

other words, the human is a master and universe his servant, who is the service of man by the will of Allah swt. Allah says:

“Indeed, We have honoured the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and privileged them far above many of Our creatures..”⁽¹⁾

6. What type of person should liaise with their creator

In this regard, the teachings of Islam are that since Allah is the true Creator and Lord of the universe, He has created all the supports for the human being. No one can relieve any difficulty or provide assistance to man, because they are created; they too need Allah for their needs and sustenance for He alone is the Lord and Creator and Cherisher of all human beings and every creation, and He should be the nucleus of all the prayers, respect and dignity, full attention and deep feelings. The man should live his life according to His instructions and way of life of the messengers sent by Him. This is the saying of Allah:

“To Allah ‘alone’ belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates whatever He wills.”⁽²⁾

“‘He is’ the Creator of all things, so worship Him ‘alone’. And He is the Maintainer of everything..”⁽³⁾

“But those ‘idols’ they invoke besides Allah cannot create anything—they themselves are created.”⁽⁴⁾

“Your Lord has proclaimed, “Call upon Me, I will respond to you. .”⁽⁵⁾

“When My servants ask you ‘O Prophet’ about Me: I am truly near. I respond to one’s prayer when they call upon Me. So let them respond ‘with obedience’ to Me and believe in Me, perhaps they will be guided ‘to the Right Way’”⁽⁶⁾

“Worship Allah ‘alone’ and associate none with Him.”⁽⁷⁾

“For whoever associates ‘others’ with Allah is like someone who has fallen from the sky .”⁽⁸⁾

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- (1) Surah Al-Israa:70
 - (2) Surah Al-Shoora:49
 - (3) Surah Al-Anaam:102
 - (4) Surah Al-Nahal:20
 - (5) Surah Al-Ghafir:60
 - (6) Surah Al-Baqarah:186
 - (7) Surah Al-Nisa:36
 - (8) Surah Al-Hajj:31

7. What kind of person should be concerned with the universe

The purpose of the universe, according to Islamic belief, is to serve man, directly or indirectly. It has been in the service of man; the universe has been given under the control of man, or designed to serve him, so that the man can use it for his needs, facilities, and conveniences. But in any case, it is not sacred for man nor it deserves his prostration, worship, honor, full attention, the focus of deep feelings and prayers. Allah says in the Quran:

“Among His signs are the day and the night, the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or the moon, but prostrate to Allah, Who created them ‘all’, if you ‘truly’ worship Him ‘alone’”⁽¹⁾

Further in this regard given verses in the “the purpose of creation of the universe” should be reviewed.

8. How people should treat with one another

In this regard, Islam, against the terms of Darwin's theory, gave this thought and belief that all humans are descendants of Adam and Eve. Their parents are the same. The complete human race is their progeny. Therefore, all human beings are brothers. Their family and tribes are different so that they could recognize each other. Color, race, language, land, wealth, and gender is not above anyone. This is the reason that Islam associates superiority with faith, piety, morality and character rather than these aspects. That then results in the logical result and requirement of faith that one should not hate another as we are all one brethren. Every person must have religious freedom. No one will interfere in any religious affairs unless it is to stop the evil in the land or bringing the other towards goodness. Repulsive thoughts should not be said about the holy figures of any religion and no one should be forced to believe. The Holy Quran says:

“O humanity! Be mindful of your Lord Who created you from a single soul, and from it He created its mate, and through both He spread countless men and women.”⁽²⁾

“O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may ‘get to’ know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware”⁽³⁾

In the Last farewell Sermon the Prophet of Islam said:

(1) Surah Ha Meem Sajdah:37

(2) Surah Al-Nisa:1

(3) Surah Al-Hujurat:13

Stay informed! Neither an Arab over foreigner (Non-Arab), nor a non-Arab over an Arab one, neither a white one over black and nor a black over the white one has any superiority. Standard of virtue is piety. ⁽¹⁾

Similarly, it is said:

“Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood”. ⁽²⁾

“You have your way, and I have my Way.” ⁽³⁾

“And say, ‘O Prophet,’ ‘This is the truth from your Lord. Whoever wills let them believe, and whoever wills let them disbelieve.” ⁽⁴⁾

“O believers!’ Do not insult what they invoke besides Allah or they will insult Allah spitefully out of ignorance. This is how We have made each people’s deeds appealing to them. Then to their Lord is their return, and He will inform them of what they used to do..” ⁽⁵⁾

The Impact of Islamic Thought

Islamic beliefs have left significant impacts on human civilization. Some of its salient aspects are summarized below:

Belief in monotheism has provided a favorable environment for intellectual and scientific development

Allama Waheeduddin Khan says about it: In the ancient polytheistic times, the environment across the world, was tailored to spread superstitious ideas. In this period of superstitious thoughts, poetry, literature and the arts, could receive some sort of development but for the academic and scientific ideas, it was quite an unfavourable situation. That is the reason that no development of knowledge and science in any country in ancient times could reach remarkable level. Greek civilization is one of the well-known civilizations of ancient times. But even it could not begin the process of science in Europe. This work began when the scientific approach reached Europe through Muslim lands. The concept of polytheism was a constraint to development theory; monotheism became

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- (1) Baihaqi, Ahmed bin Hussain, *Shiab Al Eiman*, Hadith No:5137 (Al-Riadh: Maktabat ul Rushd, Ed.1, 2003), 4/289, Abu Naeem Ahmed bin Abdullah Al-Asbahani, *Hilyat Ul Aoliya w Tabqaat Ul Asfiya*, (Bairut: Dar ul Kitab Al Arabi, 1409AH), 3/100, Ibn Hanbal Abu Abdullah Ahmed Al- Shaibani, *Musnad e Ahmed*, Hadith No: 22391, (Beriut, Moassasat ul Risalat, Ed.1, 2001AD),
 - (2) Surah Al-Baqarah:256
 - (3) Surah Al-Kafiroon:6
 - (4) Surah Al-Kahf:29
 - (5) Surah Al-Anaam:108

the winner of the doctrine of development. ⁽¹⁾ The doctrine of polytheism is contraceptive to development because through this, the man takes unholy as holy. This is the basic doctrine that became the base of the sanctity holiness of material objects. The spirit of holiness is itself a natural passion. But when one believes in other than one Allah, it is actually against natural passion. That is the root of all evils. When one considers the unholy as holy, he locked the door to the development of every kind. There are two forms of 'unholy to holy' faith. One is to believe nature holy; and the other one is to believe that certain humans are holy too in terms of their share in divinity. Both evils were found in one form or the other in the world in ancient history. This was the major cause which hindered progressive thinking. This was the mistake of considering the other things besides Allah that stopped the progress in science for thousands of years. If only one Allah is considered holy, this creates no academic and intellectual problem. Allah is beyond our jurisdiction - where we cannot pass intellectually or physically. The other things that are assumed holy things are very much in our jurisdiction. Their exploration is the beginning of science. When they are considered holy, they exit from the box of pregnable and get transferred to the worship box. In this world, the things that we see around are all creatures. They are the ones who are commonly called phenomena of nature. These phenomena of nature are the field of the scientific process. To study the phenomena of nature and control them, is called science. It is only now that all nations understand the phenomena of nature that in ancient times were considered as holy and were subject of worship. They couldn't become the subject of exploration for them. It was this intellectual error which prevented mankind for thousands of years from the scientific research in ancient times. The door to revolution opened only when the revolution of monotheism changed the mind and nature of human and removed phenomenon of nature from holiness. Islam has conducted two important works in this regard. One was to remove the mental blocks which were stopping the progress and the other that it started a period of practical development. ⁽²⁾

Advent of science

From the time of the sixth century to the tenth century European history is called the Dark Ages - when Europe was far away from culture and civilization. This was a period of intellectual darkness and fright in Europe. But this dark period was not experienced by the rest of the world at that time. Just at the time when the darkness covered the whole of

(1) Surah Al-Baqarah:42

(2) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, (Karachi: Fadhli sons Urdu Bazaar, Ed.1,1990),51-52

Europe, Islamic world was shining in the complete brightness of civilization and experienced its golden age where the science and technology was booming. Bertrand Russell confesses that this brilliant civilization of Islam flourished from India to Spain.⁽¹⁾

Development of astronomy

Abu Ishaq bin Jundub (died 767 AD) was the first to study the skies. He had drawn some rules to see distant objects and invented a telescope accordingly. Galileo (died 1642 AD) did the further development of this initial telescope.⁽²⁾ This art further progressed until it reached the age of electronic telescopes of the present time. Abu Abdullah Jabir Albnany (died 929 AD) was the first Muslim scientist who told the result of his research, that the earth revolves around the sun in an elliptical shape, which is known as Kepler's third law.⁽³⁾

Knowledge advances in medicine

Before the advent of Islam, the disease was considered the influence of the gods. For the treatment, burning off and donation to gods was considered necessary. Prophet of Islam ﷺ ended this. He said:

“Allah did not send down any disease but that he also sent its cure.” In another narration, the Prophet said, “One who has knowledge of it knows it, and one ignorant of it is ignorant.”⁽⁴⁾

For example, take smallpox disease. The disease was found in BC 1122 in China. The Egyptian pharaoh Rameses V (died 1150 BC) was also suffering from this disease; the traces of this disease have been found in the mummy corpse. It's was the Muslim physician Abu Bakr al-Razi (868 as 925 AH) who researched and wrote a book "Aljdry Walhsbh", in which he described the effects of the associated virus and the discovered its treatment. After this book reached Europe and got translated into Latin, Edward Jenner invented the vaccine for it in 1796 AD that resulted in its pacification and finally almost finished the disease from the world.⁽⁵⁾

Knowledge of Statistics and Math

Before Islam, the practice of statistics (number) and Math in each country was considered a gift of the gods. Accordingly, no shortcoming in the approach or understanding could be associated with them. These were, accordingly, not developed. The counting method of the present primarily

(1) Ibid, 56

(2) Nadvi, Ibraheem Imadi, *Muslim Scientists and their Contributions*, (Lahor: Islamic Publishers, E:4, 1996), 18

(3) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 57

(4) Sunan Ibn Mājah 3438

(5) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 75

there are 9 counts (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9) was invented by some Indian people initially. In Multan, Brahma Gupta (598-660 AD) did the initial attempt to set the way to zero, then Bhaskar (1114-1185 AD) who was born in Bijapur, India, wrote a book in Sanskrit "Lilavati" by name, in which the principle of zero was described in the most simple and easy manner. However, at that time, every new idea was seen the with eye of suspicion. So this concept of numbers could not get implemented in India at that time. It was just found in the books of some individuals. Contrary to this, with the strengthening of the Muslim caliphate in Iraq, new things were seen off by the sight of the value. The Prophet of Islam that had taught the Muslims that:

“Knowledge and believing the wisdom is the missing entity of a Muslim, where it is found he (Muslim) is the most deserving of it.”⁽¹⁾

This news when reached to the Indians, an Indian priest went to Baghdad in the time of Abbasid caliph Al-Mansur's government. The priest gave his two books as gift to Al-Mansur; One was about History and the other was about Mathematics. Al-Mansur did their translation. Khawarizmi (780-850 AD) read the books of Mathematics in Arabic. He accustomed himself with the science of Hindi Numbers. And then he stated in his book that how will the number increase to tenfold when zero will be added from 1 to 9. And then he appealed people to adopt the same Hindi way along with his own invention of multiplicative theory using the zeros. The same method was applied throughout the Arabia. In the twelfth century AD, Al-Khawarizmi's book "Al-Hisab" came to Europe translated into Latin. Europe, then, adopted the same approach too. Before that, Roman numerals were common in Europe. This method was very difficult for calculations. For example, 88 was written in Roman in this way (LXXXVIII). Dealing with large numbers was almost impossible⁽²⁾

❖ Wilfred Blunt wrote the important of this number that came from Arabia:

And supposing the tide of Islam had not been stemmed? Nothing delayed the advancement of science in the west then the clumsiness of the Roman numerals. Had the Arabic numerals, which had reached Baghdad from India towards the end of the eighth century, not been soon afterwards introduced into and adopted by Western Europe as a whole, much of that

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- (1) Tirmizi, Abu Eisa, Muhammed Bin Eisa, *Sunan Tirmizi*, Kitabul Ilm, Bab ma jaa fi Fadhl al Fiqh Ala al Ibadat, Hadith No:2687,(Riyaz: Darul Salam,E:1,1999),610
- (2) Waheed uddin Khan,*Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 80.81

scientific progress which we associated with the Renaissance in Italy might have been achieved several centuries later.⁽¹⁾

It is obvious that when Islam eliminated the environment of polytheism and superstition, importance was given to other new things. The concept of Zero was welcomed too. The seed of India received the favorable treatment from the fertile ground in Baghdad. There it became tree and reached Spain by Muslims later to spread throughout Europe.⁽²⁾

Agriculture and Irrigation

In ancient times, as the other things of nature were considered holy, the rivers were also considered sacred. It was believed that the divine spirit rested within them. Believing the rivers sacred meant that they had to be worshipped. They were offered with presents and food. This concept of holiness prevented any attempts to conquer the rivers or to construct dams for agriculture. That is why the agricultural use of rivers in ancient times was extremely limited. Advancement in irrigation belongs surprisingly to the very modern history of the human. When the unity of the revolution of Islam came, and it made implicit to the human that the river is a creation, not the creator. It is an object that worships God, and is not a god itself. It was then when it became possible that a person could think of rivers for large-scale uses for their advantage. That is why we read in history that a large-scale irrigation system existed in Muslim Spain the like of which did not exist anywhere else. Spanish Muslims brought so much development to agriculture that it became a complete art. They studied trees and explored the properties of sands and lands. Millions of square miles of desert in Spain had been turned to the fruit-bearing gardens and flourishing fields. Rice, cotton, saffron, pomegranates, peaches, etc. were found abundantly in Spain. They were gifted to Spain by Muslims. Muslims made tremendous progress in the cultivation of olives and dates in the Andalusiyah and Ashbayliyah provinces of the caliphate. Grapes production began in large scale areas of Granada and Malqa. They devised various plots of land in terms of division of water. Large streams of water for irrigation were excavated in Spain and small branches were taken out of them for delivery to areas farther away. Arid plains of Valencia became green due to this. They established a permanent department of the canals. Mentioning the development to Spanish Agriculture by Arabs, wrote the professor Philip K. Hitti writes: "The agricultural development was one of the outstanding achievements of Muslim Spain. It was a permanent gift of the Arabs for the country. Spanish Gardens are also safe today as their mark." The Arabs who were desert-men got revolutionized through the

(1) Wilfrid Blunt, *The Times*, (London: April 2, 1976)

(2) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 83-84

concept of monotheism at the hands of most noble of the Prophets and best of the creation of Allah, may Allah's countless peace and blessings be upon him ﷺ⁽¹⁾

Development in multilingual knowledge

In ancient times, it was believed that writing was a grant of the gods. And as gods' knowledge was considered sacred, so every nation considered their language as a sanctuary and believed that it was the best and its speaker was the best. In India, "Barham font" was considered sacred, in the same way as China, Egypt, Rome, Greece, etc. considered their own languages sacred. Jewish and Christian world, for centuries, believed that Hebrew was the language of Allah and called it the first language. Among the Christian authors too, this belief was dominated strongly in the second renaissance: "All languages came into being from Hebrew". When a language was considered sacred or divine, it meant that it was to be respected and the writings in it were not a subject of research or verification. That meant that no nation could think of amalgamation of research in their own language. Therefore, literature and language were not developing. It was such is 'sacred' belief that hindered their development. Belief in the monotheism of Islam ended thinking of sacredness in everything except God. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, a man of practical, ordered His companion Zayd ibn Thabit Ansari to learn Persian and Hebrew; in a short span of time, he learned both languages concurrently. The result of the research was that other than universal objects the research of language and literature flourished and language and literature developed. This revolution that began in Arabia eventually toppled the darkness of Europe when it entered there through Islamic Spain. It overwhelmed the doctrine of the sanctity of languages in Europe and development work in lingual knowledge of the various languages began in Europe and other parts of the world at the same time.⁽²⁾

The knowledge of History (Chronology)

Method of historical study in present times is that the nations are taken as a unit to study history. This means that history should not be the subject of a single individual, but rather as a subject of study of the activities of the community. In contemporary history, the study of scientific, economic, social, political and cultural conditions is carried out. As in ancient times, history was a chronology of only kings, their personal circumstances and their wars etc. This change in knowledge of history came into existence within the last few hundred years. It can be said in other words that the current study of history is the history of human beings

(1) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 85-86

(2) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 77-78

whereas what was studied before was only the history of kings. The reason for this was that the King was given the absolute right to rule over the people and because of the prevalent misguidance, he was often consider the Rab or the god or His deputy. So to include another one in history with him was consider blasphemous. The subjects were not thought to be able to remember their exploits in history. There was also no place for the great spiritual figures of Prophets in human history. That was the situation in the world in ancient times before the advent of Islam. In known human history, Abdul-Rahman Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406 AD) is the first person who changed the art of history and expanded the writing of history away from that of the king alone; common man became a topic of discussion in the study of history too. It made history something other than the sociology and history of kings alone. The founder of today's era of knowledge called Sociology is Ibn Khaldun. The fact is that Ibn Khaldun has given the modern art to the West. Ibn Khaldun brought that change to the theory of history that the famous British historian Arnold Tyne B remembers in the the following words:

“Ibn Khaldun has created a philosophy of history. It is indeed a great scientific work of its nature that is ever created by one mind in a time or at some point.” Similarly, Robert Flint has admitted the dignity of these extraordinary endeavours in the following words: Ibn Khaldun's as the ideologist of history maker does not keep his subsequent of any age or in any country, even Giambattista Vico was born three years later. Plato, Aristotle, Augustine were not in his position.”⁽¹⁾

Ibn Khaldun presented for the first time on the notion that the climate and the knowledge of the physical facts of geography are essential aspects of the study of history. He expounded that the spiritual and moral leaders with influence also deserve an elaboration in the books of history. As the discoverer of the rules of the rise and fall of nations, Ibn Khaldun is called the father of this science. In his history book, Ibn Khaldun has written pretext in which he mentions a foundation of the his view of the history of knowledge which is not based on the circumstances of kings but encompasses a wider historical perspective covering national politics, economy, culture, education, religion, morality, and civilization. Therefore researchers of history generally recognize that until the era of Ibn Khaldun,

(1) WaheeduddinKhan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 90

the art of history was in AN undeveloped state. Ibn Khaldun was the first person who started the modern history as a proper field of study.⁽¹⁾

But the question is that how was it possible for Ibn Khaldun to start something that the mankind was unaware of before? The answer is that other historians were born before the Islamic revolution and Ibn Khaldun was born after the Islamic Revolution. Ibn Khaldun was a product of the revolution. And that is what made Ibn Khaldun Ibn Khaldun. In fact, what was coming in the way of the development of art history, we call it polytheism or superstition. Before Islam, the king was understood as Rab or God's deputy and he had absolute and innumerable powers on people. Therefore the same deserved that history would only revolve around him and would only comprise of his mention. Islam abolished the doctrine of the divinity of kings and did make them equal to other men by highlighting their common ancestry from Adam and Eve. After the great revolution of human equality, it was now possible that Ibn Khaldun could bring in common public as the centerpoint of thinking instead of thinking of the king alone; this formed the basis of the new knowledge of history.⁽²⁾

Human Equality

Islamic beliefs that brought a revolution in human civilization advocate for human equality as a cornerstone of the Islamic civilization.

The desired dream of all philosophers and thinkers is the formation of human equality. But we do not see equality in ancient times. Due to the fact that under the influence of polytheism, superstition were the common commodity in everyone's thoughts. These were unrealistic ideas about physical phenomena. The same way in the world no true views were available to humans; what they saw from their forefathers over the ages became part of the traditions of nations. For example, under the same effect, the doctrine of caste system made people believe that there were some people who were born from the head of God (*Nauzobillah*), and some from the feet of God (*Nauzobillah*).⁽³⁾ Thus the prevailing distribution of high and low caste came into being. Similarly, there was a belief that kings are the descendants of gods. And the people are there to serve them. There was also a prevailing view that some people are inherently superior races and others are inherently inferior races. This racial division was advocated and applied under the supervision of polytheism and established after the continued brainwashing of humanity over the centuries.

(1) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, Summary of the page 88-96

(2) Ibid

(3) Manu, Dharam Shaster, *Urdu Translation Arshad Razi*, (Lahore:Nigarshat Publishers, 2007), 31

Islamic belief in monotheism and the concept of human equality demolished this idol of false pride and sanctity. Quran gives the verdict that all humans are the children of a man and a woman, Color, differences of race, language, etc are only the sources of the identification. Prophet of Islam declared human equality in His famous last Farewell Sermon and practically established a system of equality and justice. In the reign of the second caliph Umar Farooq, son of the governor of Egypt once flogged a Coptic. on his petition, Umar ordered Coptic to whip the governor's sons in front of his father. This is an example of the morality and equality and justice of the Muslims. He said these historic words:

“When you have begun to enthrall people, while their mothers gave birth to them free.”⁽¹⁾

The revolution first came to Arabia, then crossed into Asia and Africa, and finally entered in Europe. The majority of Europeans do not accept Islam by the religious view, but the concept of universe and human equality over there took the full Islamic perspective and took full advantage of it. It can be said that the Western Republic and scientific revolution is the secular edition of the Islamic revolution of unity. By segregating the Islamic revolution's last part, and adopting its worldly part is the second name of the modern revolution of West.⁽²⁾

Religious Freedom

Before Islam, the people did not have religious freedom. If a person adopted a religion other than the national and regional religion, he was persecuted; it was very often that such a person was burned alive in the fire, or was expelled. Ibrahim A.S's example is clear that He was persecuted because of the doctrine of monotheism; he was thrown into the fire initially and then eventually extradited. This chain had been in the cycle for thousands of years. Quran has described it this way:

“They (atheists) had been torturing Muslims because they believed in God, who is worthy of power and praise.”⁽³⁾

Hazrat Bilal, Khubaib, Khubab, Yasser, Sumaiya were persecuted and tortured by Meccans are clear examples of religious persecution. Not only did the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), preached "There is no compulsion in religion"⁽⁴⁾, and "Your religion for you, and my religion for me"⁽⁵⁾, but also he implemented it in practice. The Charter of Madinah, Najran, Treaty

(1) Shibli Nomani, *Al Farooq*, (Karachi: Darul Isha't, Ed:1, 1991), 332

(2) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*, 99-103

(3) Surah Al Burooj:8

(4) Surah Al-Baqarah:256

(5) Surah Al-Kafiroon:6

of Hudaibya are practical examples that people had the right to religious freedom.⁽¹⁾

Allama Waheeduddin Khan comments on UN Charter and on Islamic religious freedom and tolerance Revolution and writes:

“The United Nations Charter was adopted in 1948 known as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is said in Article 18 that “Everyone has the right for idea, conscience, and religious freedom. It is also included in this charter that one can change own religion secretly or openly and express their faith or to give its teaching” this UN's Charter of the United Nations did not really matter, but it is also a gift of the Islamic Revolution, before the appearance of the United Nations in more than a thousand years. The Islam finished polytheism first time in history which had kept in mind the discrimination between human and human beings. The result of the unnatural distribution has been found in constantly fluctuation of society, which was present in all the ancient times. The Islam has changed the human mind in this matter aside, the other side has started a new round of practical revolution against human freedom and human dignity in a wide scale. The journey continues in the history, until finally got into Europe the caused a new revolution in freedom and democracy. Modern Europe political revolution is a secular version of this Islamic revolution, which was established in Arabia in the seventh century before.”⁽²⁾

❖ Western intellectual DE GOBINEAU writes commenting on the attitude of Islamic religious freedom:

“If we separate the political needs from religious principle, those who in the name of religion is taken work from hand and language , no other religion than Islam will be like tolerant and peaceful religion. Which gave the such religious freedom to others. But their absolute faith was not a concern. Except in cases of Muslim empires have used every method to take care of the interests of religious unity. Religious tolerance is a strong character and complete freedom of disposition of the Muslim rules of their religion.

(1) Mehmood Sultan & Rind Bashir Ahmed, “Analytical Study on Religious Tolerance in the light of the teachings of Islam” , *PJIR,BZU Multan, Dec-2015*, 105-108

(2) Waheed uddin Khan, *Islam The Creator of Modern age*,111

So let's focus should not be limited to acts of oppression and aggression, which occurred somewhere.”⁽¹⁾

❖ Professor Arnold has offered many examples of freedom of thought and opinion in the Muslim reign; he writes:

The provinces of the Roman Empire which were conquered by Muslims fast, they suddenly found themselves in a tolerant environment that remains unknown to them many centuries.... So striking in the history of the seventh century!

Conclusion

Before Islam, the world was in polytheism and superstition. Nature was worshiped and considered sacred. Traditional and conventional things limited in their understanding were considered a donation of gods and deities. New things and new ideas were not accepted. As a result, the world was lying in darkness. There was not any scientific, cultural and social development. Islam broke this superstitious, polytheistic and idolatrous system. The true belief in the Creator of the universe, the right thoughts about the creation of the universe, set the correct position of man in the universe. How should one behave with the Creator of the universe, the universe itself, and others become crystal clear, which in turn defeated the polytheism and superstition. People's view of universal objects changed from the view of the sanctity to the view of usable things made for the benefit of the mankind.

Thus, the beginning of the exploration started. As a result, people started to conquer skies, the winds, rivers, seas and mountains. Today, after conquering moon people have reached up to Mars. The type of human freedom, the religious and intellectual freedom, the equality of all human beings, which we have, are the gifts of Islamic faith and the Islamic revolution. Thus, the beliefs of Islam bring out the world from darkness to the light.



(1) Ashrafi Hafiz Tahir Mehmood, *Tolerance in the light of Seerat e Tayebah*, 38